

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Na Ridirean Teampallach (2)

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 676. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 372 corresponds to Litir 676.

Bha mi a’ bruidhinn mu na Ridirean Teampallach agus mar a dh’èirich an smuain gun robh iad an làthair aig Blàr Allt a’ Bhonnaich, a’ toirt taic do dh’armailt na h-Alba. Ann an trì cheud deug ’s a seachd (1307), bha iad air an dèanamh mì-laghail. Chaidh na rudan a bhuineadh dhaibh – togalaichean, fearann, ionmhas – a chur an grèim.

Dè thachair do na ridirean fhèin, ge-tà? Uill, a rèir choltais, bha iad air an cur an grèim, no dh’atharraich iad an ainmean is theich iad, no thug iad ballrachd a-mach ann am buidhnean ridireachd eile, no theich iad gu dùthchannan a bha taobh a-muigh smachd a’ Phàpa. Bha Alba am measg nan dùthchannan sin. Bha am Pàp air Rìgh na h-Alba – Raibeart Brus – ascaointeachadh às dèidh gun do mhuirt e an Cuimeanach Ruadh ann an eaglais ann an Dùn Phris bliadhna roimhe. A rèir an stòiridh, chaidh mòran Ridirean Teampallach à dùthchannan eile gu ruige Alba, far an robh iad sàbhailte.

Bha na Ridirean Teampallach air a bhith ann an Alba roimhe sin agus tha iad co-cheangailte ri seann ainm-àite Gàidhlig ann an Lodainn. Fhuair iad cead bho Rìgh Daibhidh I ionad a chur air chois deas air Dùn Èideann. ’S e *Temple* an t-ainm a th’ air an àite an-diugh. Ach chan e sin an t-ainm a bh’ air anns a’ cheathramh linn deug. Bha ainm Gàidhlig air an uair sin – *Baltrodoc* – no **Baile nan Trodach** “settlement of the warriors”, a rèir Uilleim MhicBhàitair. Cò bh’ anns na “trodaich” sin ach na Ridirean Teampallach.

Tha dà abhainn air a bheil “Uisge Easg” mar ainm faisg air a chèile ann am meadhan Lodainn, deas air Dùn Èideann. Tha Teampall – no Baile nan Trodach – faisg air an Easg Dheas. Agus, air bruaichean Easg Thuath, tha àite ann a tha mòran nas ainmeile – Ros Linn. Tha an caibeal sin ainmeil air feadh an t-saoghail, às dèidh gun do nochd e anns an leabhar aig Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*. Tha mòran ag ràdh gu bheil ceangal eadar Caibeal Ros Linne agus na Ridirean Teampallach, ach ’s iomadh sgoilear a tha ag àicheadh sin gu làidir.

Chan ann an Lodainn a-mhàin a bha fearann aig na Ridirean Teampallach ann an Alba. Bha fearann mòr aca ann am Moireibh, agus àiteachan eile cuideachd.

Tha cuid dhen bheachd, leis nach robh Alba fo smachd spioradail a’ Phàpa às dèidh an ascaointeachaidh, gun deach ridirean às an Fhraing agus dùthchannan eile gu ruige Alba. Bha na Ridirean Teampallach cumhachdach ann an Alba an uair sin. Agus, leis gun d’ fhuair iad tèarmann ann an Alba, thug iad taic do dh’armailt a’ Bhrusaich aig Blàr Allt a’ Bhonnaich.

Ge-tà, cha robh am Brusach airson sin fhoillseachadh oir bha e an dòchas gum biodh am Pàp deònach cur às don ascaointeachadh. Mar sin, chaidh a chumail dìomhair gun robh na Ridirean Teampallach ann aig Blàr Allt a' Bhonnaich.

Uill, 's e sin an stòiridh. Tha mòran de luchd-eachdraidh ag ràdh nach eil fianais sgrìobhte sam bith ann a tha a' toirt taic dha. Ach chan eil sin a' cur stad air feadhainn bho bhith ga chreidsinn. Agus cò tha ag ràdh nach dèanadh e deagh leabhar no film?!

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Faclan na Litreach: Ridirean Teampallach: *Knights Templar*; Dùn Phris: *Dumfries*; meadhan Lodainn: *Midlothian*; Ros Linn: *Roslin/Rosslyn*; caibeal: *chapel*; Moireibh: *Moray*.

Abairtean na Litreach: an làthair aig Blàr Allt a' Bhonnaich: *present at the Battle of Bannockburn*; a' toirt taic do dh'armailt na h-Alba: *assisting the army of Scotland*; chaidh na rudan a bhuineadh dhaibh – togalaichean, fearann, ionmhas – a chur an grèim: *the things that belonged to them – buildings, land, finance – was taken*; dh'atharraich iad an ainmean is theich iad: *they changed their names and fled*; thug iad ballrachd a-mach ann am buidhnean ridireachd eile: *they took out membership in other orders of knights*; smachd a' Phàpa: *the control of the Pope*; bha am Pàp air Raibeart Brus ascaointeachadh: *the Pope had excommunicated Robert Bruce*; às dèidh gun do mhurt e an Cuimeanach Ruadh: *after he had murdered the Red Comyn*; chan ann an Lodainn a-mhàin: *it's not only in Lothian*; leis gun d' fhuair iad tèarmann ann an Alba: *because they got sanctuary in Scotland*; cha robh am Brusach airson sin fhoillseachadh: *Bruce did not want this to be known*; gum biodh am Pàp deònach cur às don ascaointeachadh: *that the Pope would be willing to reverse the excommunication*; chaidh a chumail dìomhair: *it was kept secret*; tha mòran de luchd-eachdraidh ag ràdh nach eil fianais sgrìobhte sam bith ann a tha a' toirt taic dha: *many historians say that there is no written evidence that supports it*; chan eil sin a' cur stad air feadhainn bho bhith ga chreidsinn: *that doesn't stop some people believing it*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Baile nan Trodach: *while this might today appear to mean “settlement of the quarrelsome people”, trod has an older meaning than “quarrel, scold” – ie “fighting, combat”. Thus Baile nan Trodach was “place of the warriors”. This nuance of the word is obsolete in modern Scottish (and Manx) Gaelic but still exists in Irish, where trodaí has the principal meaning of “fighter, combatant” and a secondary meaning of “quarrelsome person”. Watson writes, in his seminal work, “The Celtic Place-names of Scotland”: .. “there can be little or no doubt that the name was given with reference to the Knights [Templar], who fought for the Holy Sepulchre in the Crusades – a valuable indication of Gaelic activity in Lothian about the middle of the twelfth century”. The place-names Temple and Ballentrodoch appear to have co-existed until the eighteenth century, when the Gaelic name finally fell into disuse.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: 's iomadh sgoilear a tha ag àicheadh sin: *many a scholar denies that*.

Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA