

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 101 (which corresponds to Litir 405). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk

Ann an Àird Chlach tha togalach beag annasach. 'S e an t-ainm a th' air Tùr-cluig Àird Chlach no *the Ardclach Bell Tower*. Tha Àird Chlach eadar Inbhir Narann agus Baile nan Granddach. Tha an tùr air cnoc os cionn seann eaglais. Tha an eaglais ri taobh Uisge Èireann. 'S e sgìre thorrach a th' ann an Àird Chlach. Bha crodh math aig na daoine. Bha na fineachan à taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd a' goid a' chruidh.

Chaidh an tùr a thogail ann an sia ceud deug, caogad 's a còig (1655). Tha e sean ach tha e fhathast ann an deagh òrdugh. Air mullach an tùir bha an clag. Bha na daoine a' seinn a' chluig nuair a bha creachadairean ann. Bha an clag a' toirt rabhadh do mhuinntir an àite. Aig bonn an togalaich, bha cealla dhorch. 'S e prìosan beag a bh' ann. Faodaidh tu dhol ann fhathast.

Ged a tha an togalach ann, chan eil an clag ann an-diugh. Carson? Uill, innsidh mi dhuibh dè thachair – a rèir beul-aithris. Dh'fhàs na fineachan bhon taobh an iar sgèth dhen chlag. Gach turas a bha iad a' tighinn bha cuideigin a' seinn a' chluig, ag innse do mhuinntir an àite gun robh iad ann. Mar sin, ghoid feadhainn de na creachadairean an clag.

Oidhche dhorch a bha seo, chaidh buidheann bheag de chreachadairean don sgìre. Choisich iad anns an abhainn. Nuair a bha iad faisg air an eaglais, chaidh iad a-mach às an abhainn. Chaidh iad suas am bruthach. Ràinig iad an tùr. Shaoraich iad an clag. Thuit an clag don làr. Tha mi cinnteach gun do rinn e fuaim mòr!

Co-dhiù, chùm na daoine a dol. Chuir iad teine ris an togalach. Fhad 's a bha an togalach a' losgadh, roilig na creachadairean an clag sìos am bruthach don abhainn. Chaidh e a-steach don uisge ann an linne dhomhainn dhorch.

Bha e ann an sin airson ùine mhòir. Cò aige tha fios nach eil e san abhainn fhathast. Oir, a rèir beul-aithris, aig toiseach an fhicheadamh linn, nuair a bha an abhainn a' sruthadh gu làidir, bha daoine a' cluinntinn fuaim car coltach ri clag a' tighinn bhon uisge.

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Faclan is abairtean: Àird Chlach: *Ardclach*; Inbhir Narann: *Nairn*; Baile nan Granddach: *Grantown on Spey*; air cnoc os cionn seann eaglais: *on a hill above an*

old church; ri taobh Uisge Èireann: beside the Findhorn River; 's e sgìre thorrach a th' ann an Àird Chlach: Ardclach is a fertile area; crodh: cattle; bha na fineachan à taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd a' goid a' chruidh: the clans from the Western Highlands were stealing the cattle; chaidh an tùr a thogail: the tower was built; tha e fhathast ann an deagh òrdugh: it is still in good repair; mullach an tùir: the top of the tower; a' seinn a' chluig nuair a bha creachadairean ann: ringing the bell when plunderers were there; a' toirt rabhadh do mhuinntir an àite: giving a warning to the local people; aig bonn an togalaich, bha cealla dhorch: at the bottom of the building was a dark cell; gach turas a bha iad a' tighinn bha cuideigin a' seinn a' chluig: each time they were coming somebody was ringing the bell; oidhche dhorch a bha seo: one dark night; choisich iad anns an abhainn: they walked in the river; suas am bruthach: up the hillside; shaoraich iad an clag: they freed the bell; thuit an clag don làr: the bell fell to the ground; chuir iad teine ris an togalach: they set the building on fire; fhad 's a bha an togalach a' losgadh: while the building was burning; roilig X an clag sìos am bruthach don abhainn: X rolled the bell down the hillside to the river; ann an linne dhomhainn dhorch: in a deep dark pool; airson ùine mhòir: for a long time; cò aige tha fios nach eil e san abhainn fhathast: who knows that it is not still in the river; aig toiseach an fhicheadamh linn: at the start of the 20th Century; nuair a bha an abhainn a' sruthadh gu làidir: when the river was running strongly; bha daoine a' cluinntinn fuaim car coltach ri clag a' tighinn bhon uisge: people were hearing a noise rather like a bell coming from the river.

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