

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 160 (which corresponds to Litir 464). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was in Gleann Cholm Cille this year. That's in Donegal in Ireland. I was there to learn a bit of Irish Gaelic. There is an educational establishment in the glen. The establishment is called Oideas Gael.

The glen has a strong link to Colm Cille, or Calum Cille [his Scottish name]. What is that? Well, Calum Cille [St Columba] was born in Donegal. And here (for you) is a story from oral tradition about him.

In the Fifth Century Saint Patrick was around. He was taking Christianity to the people of Ireland. The worst demons fled. They went to Gleann Cholm Cille. They raised a magic mist. They turned the river into a stream of fire. Patrick wasn't able to get there. But he said that a better man was going to come. He was Calum Cille.

One day Calum Cille was preaching in Donegal. A demon threw a holly stick out of the glen. It hit one of the saint's followers. That man was called Cearc. Today that place is called Srath na Circe in memory of him [as a memory of

Bha mi ann an Gleann Cholm Cille am-bliadhna. Tha sin ann an Tìr Chonaill ann an Èirinn. Bha mi ann airson beagan Gaeilge ionnsachadh. Tha ionad-foghlaim sa ghleann. 'S e Oideas Gael an t-ainm air an ionad.

Tha ceangal làidir aig a' ghleann ri Colm Cille, no Calum Cille. Ciamar a tha sin? Uill, rugadh Calum Cille ann an Tìr Chonaill. Agus seo agaibh stòiridh à beul-aithris mu dheidhinn.

Anns a' chòigeamh linn bha Naomh Pàdraig ann. Bha e a' toirt Crìosdachd do mhuintir na h-Èireann. Theich na deamhain as miosa. Chaidh iad gu Gleann Cholm Cille. Thog iad ceò draoidheil. Rinn iad an abhainn na sruth teine. Cha robh comas aig Pàdraig faighinn ann. Ach thuir e gu robh fear na b' fheàrr a' dol a thighinn. B' esan Calum Cille.

Latha a bha seo bha Calum Cille a' searmonachadh ann an Tìr Chonaill. Thilg deamhan slat cuilinn a-mach às a' ghleann. Bhuail i ann am fear de luchd-leantainn an naoimh. 'S e Cearc an t-ainm a bha air an duine sin. An-

him].

Calum Cille was angry. He threw the stick back. It hit the ground. A holly tree started to grow. That frightened the demons and they fled. Calum Cille ran after them. He was throwing stones at [on] the demons. The demons jumped into the sea. That was at Screig na nDeamhan – or Creag nan Deamhan. Calum Cille and Christianity controlled the glen.

Some people say that Calum Cille turned the demons into fish – a type called dallóga caocha. That's our dallag – or dogfish. Others say that the saint turned the demons into seals. The seals get revenge on the local people [the people of the place] today by ripping the fishermen's nets.

Calum Cille is not the only person who joins Gleann Cholm Cille and Scotland together. I'll tell you about another man next week.

diugh tha *Srath na Circe* air an àite sin mar chuimhneachan air.

Bha Calum Cille feargach. Thilg e an t-slat air ais. Bhuail i san talamh. Thòisich craobh cuilinn air fàs. Chuir sin eagal air na deamhain agus theich iad. Ruith Calum Cille às an dèidh. Bha e a' tilgeil chlachan air na deamhain. Leum na deamhain don mhuir. Bha sin aig Screig na nDeamhan – no Creag nan Deamhan. Bha smachd aig Calum Cille agus Crìosdachd air a' ghleann.

Tha cuid de dhaoine ag ràdh gun do rinn Calum Cille na deamhain nan èisg – seòrsa ris an canar *dallóga caocha*. 'S e sin an dallag againne – no *dogfish*. Tha cuid eile ag ràdh gun do rinn an naomh na deamhain nan ròin. Bidh na ròin a' faighinn dìoghaltas air muinntir an àite an-diugh le bhith a' reubadh lìn nan iasgairean.

Chan e Calum Cille an aon duine a tha a' ceangal Gleann Cholm Cille agus Alba ri chèile. Innsidh mi dhuibh mu fhear eile an ath-sheachdain.