

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 372 (which corresponds to Litir 676). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk.

I was talking about the Knights Templar. Some people say that they were present at the Battle of Bannockburn on the Scottish side.

In 1307, the Pope declared them illegal. Their things – buildings, land, finance – were confiscated.

What happened to the knights themselves, however? It appears that some of them came to Scotland. Scotland was outside the Pope's control. The Pope had excommunicated the King of Scotland, Robert Bruce; ascaointeachadh – that's the Gaelic for "excommunication". Bruce murdered the Red Comyn in a church. That was the reason for his excommunication.

The Knights Templar had been in Scotland for a long time. Their headquarters were south of Edinburgh at Temple. In the old days, the settlement had a Gaelic name. That was Baile nan Trodach "the settlement of the warriors". The "warriors" were the Knights Templar.

Roslynn (Roslin) is close by. The chapel there is famous. It was in the book by Dan Brown The Da Vinci Code. Some people think there is a link between the Rosslyn Chapel and the Knights Templar. But some experts say

Bha mi a' bruidhinn mu na Ridirean Teampallach. Tha cuid ag ràdh gun robh iad an làthair aig Blàr Allt a' Bhonnaich, air taobh na h-Alba.

Ann an trì cheud deug 's a seachd (1307), rinn am Pàp mì-laghail iad. Chaidh na rudan aca – togalaichean, fearann, ionmhas – a chur an grèim.

Dè thachair do na ridirean fhèin, ge-tà? Tha e coltach gun tàinig feadhainn a dh'Alba. Bha Alba taobh a-muigh smachd a' Phàpa. Bha am Pàp air Rìgh na h-Alba – Raibeart Brus – ascaointeachadh – sin a' Ghàidhlig air "excommunication". Mhuirt am Brusach an Cuimeanach Ruadh ann an eaglais. 'S e sin as coireach gun robh e air ascaointeachadh.

Bha na Ridirean Teampallach air a bhith ann an Alba fad ùine. Bha am prìomh àite aca deas air Dùn Èideann ann an Temple. Anns an t-seann aimsir bha ainm Gàidhlig air a' bhaile sin. B' e sin Baile nan Trodach "the settlement of the warriors". B' iad na "trodaich" na Ridirean Teampallach.

Faisg air làimh, tha Ros Linn. Tha an caibeal an sin ainmeil. Bha e anns an leabhar aig Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*. Tha cuid dhen bheachd gu bheil ceangal eadar Caibeal Ros Linne agus na Ridirean Teampallach. Ach tha cuid de

that is not true.

Because Scotland was not under the spiritual control of the Pope, knights from France and other countries went to Scotland. The Knights Templar were then powerful in Scotland. And, as they [had] obtained sanctuary in Scotland, they supported Bruce's army at Bannockburn.

However, Bruce was not keen to let this be known. Why? Well, he was hoping the Pope would overturn the excommunication. It was kept secret that the Knights Templar were at Bannockburn.

Well, that's the story. Many historians say it's not true. But that doesn't stop some people from believing it. And whether it's true or not, wouldn't it make a good book or film?!

dh'èolaichean ag ràdh nach eil sin fìor.

Leis nach robh Alba fo smachd spioradail a' Phàpa, chaidh ridirean às an Fhraing agus dùthchannan eile a dh'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. Carson? Uill, bha e an dòchas gun robh am Pàp a' dol a chur às don ascaointeachadh. Chaidh a chumail dìomhair gun robh na Ridirean Teampallach aig Blàr Allt a' Bhonnaich.

Uill, 's e sin an stòiridh. Tha mòran de luchd-eachdraidh ag ràdh nach eil e fìor. Ach chan eil sin a' cur stad air feadhainn bho bhith ga chreidsinn. Agus, co-dhiù tha e fìor gus nach eil, nach dèanadh e deagh leabhar no film?!