

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 837 (which corresponds to Litir 1,141). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

In 1568 the Mackenzies got hold of the Redcastle estate on the Black Isle. In the civil war against Charles I, they were on the side of the king. Thus, Cromwell's army wrecked the castle.

It was in a poor state for a long time. Early in the 18th century, it was rebuilt. In 1745, people say that the Young Prince – Charles Edward Stuart – was staying there.

He was trying to convince the laird to send soldiers to the Jacobite army. The pair were chatting at breakfast time. They were reaching agreement.

However, the laird's wife was supportive of the Hanoverians. She deliberately poured boiling water over her husband's foot. He couldn't thus lead a troop of soldiers. And Prince Charles lost the opportunity for Mackenzies of Redcastle to be in his army.

Shortly after that, the estate was owned by Grants from Glen Urquhart. One of the lairds and

Annas a' bhliadhna còig ceud deug, seasgad 's a h-ochd (1568) fhuair Clann 'ic Coinnich grèim air oighreachd a' Chaisteil Ruaidh anns an Eilean Dubh. Anns a' chogadh chatharra an aghaidh Theàrlach I, bha iad air taobh an Rìgh. Mar sin, rinn arm Chrombail sgrios air a' chaisteal.

Bha e ann an staid through airson greis mhòr. Tràth anns an ochdamh linn deug, chaidh ath-thogail a dhèanamh air. Ann an seachd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a còig (1745), tha daoine ag ràdh gun robh am Prionnsa Òg – Teàrlach Eideard Stiùbhart – a' fuireach ann.

Bha e a' feuchainn ri toirt air an uachdaran saighdearan a chur gu Arm nan Seumasach. Bha an dithis a' cabadaich aig àm bracaist. Bha iad gu bhith a' tighinn gu aonta.

Ge-tà, bha bean an uachdarain taiceil do na Hanoibhèirianaich. Dhòirt i, a dh'aona-ghnothach, uisge goileach thairis air cas an duine aice. Cha b' urrainn dha, mar sin, dhol aig ceann feachd. Agus chaill Teàrlach Òg an cothrom Clann 'ic Coinnich a' Chaisteil Ruaidh a bhith anns an arm aige.

Goirid an dèidh sin, bha an oighreachd le Granndaich à Gleann Urchardain. Chaidh fear de na h-

his son fell out with each other. Instead of keeping the estate in the family, the laird gave it to Fettes College in Edinburgh. And today there is a farm near the castle called Fettes Farm.

The castle was owned finally by the Baillies. At the start of the second [world] war, the government requisitioned it. Soldiers and RAF personnel were living there.

Ammunition such as bombs, was stored near the castle. It [they] was taken to the Redcastle Railway Station. From there, it [they] went to the aerodrome at Fearn. The Redcastle Station and railway line do not exist today.

The people who owned the castle were going to develop it after the war. But they found out that the roofing timbers were badly rotted. They removed the roof. And Redcastle today is a ruin.

uachdarain agus a mhac a-mach air a chèile. An àite an oighreachd a chumail aig an teaghlach, thug an t-uachdaran gu Colaiste Fettes ann an Dùn Èideann i. Agus an-diugh tha baile-fearainn faisg air a' chaisteal air a bheil *Fettes Farm* mar ainm.

Bha an caisteal leis na Baillies mu dheireadh. Aig toiseach an dàrna cogaidh, ghabh an riaghaltas grèim air. Bha saighdearan agus feadhainn aig Feachd Rìoghail an Adhair a' fuireach ann.

Bha uidheaman gunnaireachd, leithid bhomaichean, air an stòradh faisg air a' chaisteal. Bha iad air an toirt gu Stèisean Rèile a' Chaisteil Ruaidh. Às a sin, chaidh iad chun an raoin-adhair ann am Manachainn Rois. Chan eil stèisean no loidhne-rèile a' Chaisteil Ruaidh ann am bith an-diugh.

Bha na daoine leis an robh an caisteal a' dol ga leasachadh an dèidh a' chogaidh. Ach fhuair iad a-mach gun robh na cabraichean air grodadh gu mòr. Thug iad am mullach dheth. Agus tha an Caisteal Ruadh an-diugh na thobhta.