

## **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 345 (which corresponds to Litir 649). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk).

*Taisbeanadh Obar Bhrothaig or, as people say in English The Declaration of Arbroath, is important in the history of Scotland. It was written in 1320. It was written in Arbroath Abbey. It is thought that it was the Abbot himself that wrote it.*

*The manuscript was a letter to the Pope in Avignon. It was wanting the Pope, John XXII, to recognise Scotland as an independent nation. It's the nobles of Scotland that signed it.*

*You'll know the history. The English kings were aiming to take Scotland over. Edward I started in 1296. He didn't desist even when he lost at Stirling Bridge in 1297.*

*In 1314, a Scottish army defeated an English army at Bannockburn. But the English were still attempting to defeat Scotland. The Pope excommunicated [Robert the] Bruce. Why? Well, he murdered the Red Comyn inside a church. The Declaration was also arguing on behalf of Bruce.*

*The manuscript was written in Latin. But it was translated to other languages. Here is the most famous*

Tha Taisbeanadh Obar Bhrothaig no, mar a chanas daoine ann am Beurla *The Declaration of Arbroath*, cudromach ann an eachdraidh na h-Alba. Bha e air a sgrìobhadh ann an trì cheud deug is fichead (1320). Bha e air a sgrìobhadh ann an Abaid Obar Bhrothaig. Thathar a' smaoinichadh gur e an t-Aba fhèin a sgrìobh e.

Bha an làmh-sgrìobhainn na litir don Phàp ann an Avignon. Bha i ag iarraidh air a' Phàp, Iain XXII, aithne a thoirt do dh'Alba mar nàisean neo-eisimeileach. 'S iad uaislean mòra na h-Alba a chuir an ainmean rithe.

Bidh sibh eòlach air an eachdraidh. Bha na rìghrean Sasannach ag amas air Alba a ghabhail thairis. Thòisich Eideard I ann an dà cheud deug, naochad 's a sia (1296). Cha do sguir e eadhon nuair a chaill e aig Drochaid Shruighlea ann an dà cheud deug, naochad 's a seachd (1297).

Ann an trì cheud deug is ceithir-deug (1314), rinn armailt Albannach a' chùis air armailt Sasannach aig Allt a' Bhonnaich. Ach bha na Sasannaich fhathast a' feuchainn ris a' chùis a dhèanamh air Alba. Chuir am Pàp am Brusach a-mach às an Eaglais. Carson? Uill, mhuirt e an Cuimeanach Ruadh am broinn eaglais. Bha an Taisbeanadh cuideachd ag argamaid às leth a' Bhrusaich.

Bha an làmh-sgrìobhainn air a sgrìobhadh ann an Laidinn. Ach chaidh eadar-theangachadh gu cànanan eile. Seo an

*section of it, translated into Gaelic: as long as but a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be brought under English rule. It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom – for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.*

*That section is powerful. It's not surprising that it often appears in public, particularly in English. But I want to look at another section, rather than this one. We'll do that next week. The other section gives us a picture of the identity of the Scottish nobles. And the place of the Gaels in that. For now, cheerio.*

earrann as ainmeile dheth, air eadar-theangachadh gu Gàidhlig: *fhad 's a mhaireas ceud duine againn beò, cha leig sinn air chor sam bith leis na Sasannaich smachd a ghabhail oirnn. Gu fìrinneach, chan ann airson glòr, no airgead no urram a tha sinn a' sabaid, ach airson saorsa – airson sin a-mhàin, rud nach leig duine onarach seachad ach le a bheatha fhèin.*

Tha an earrann sin cumhachdach. Chan eil e na iongnadh gu bheil e a' nochdadh gu tric gu poblach, gu sònraichte ann am Beurla. Ach tha mi airson sùil a thoirt air earrann eile, seach an earrann seo. Nì sinn sin an ath-sheachdain. Tha an earrann eile a' toirt dhuinn dealbh dhen fhèin-aithne a bha aig na h-uaislean Albannach. Agus àite nan Gàidheal ann a sin. An-dràsta, beannachd leibh.