

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 371 (which corresponds to Litir 675). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk.

The Battle of Bannockburn took place in June 1314. A Scottish army defeated an English army. Some people say that the Scots had a special force of knights. They were extremely skilful at fighting. They were the Knights Templar. I can't say that it's true. But here is the story...

The Knights Templar took their name from Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. They were protecting Christians who went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. They wore white clothing, with a large red cross. They became famous.

And they grew wealthy and powerful. Not every Christian group liked them, however.

In the twelfth century, the tide started to turn in favour of the Muslims. Little by little, the Knights Templar lost their strongholds in the Middle East. They were in Cyprus for a while. But they lost their place in Cyprus also.

But they were still powerful in Western Europe. European kings were suspicious of them, however. The kings were of the opinion that the Knights were too powerful.

Bha Blàr Allt a' Bhonnaich ann san Ògmhios trì cheud deug is ceithir-deug (1314). Rinn armailt Albannach a' chùis air armailt Shasannach. Tha cuid ag ràdh gun robh feachd shònraichte de ridirean aig na h-Albannaich. Bha iad uabhasach sgileil ann an sabaid. B' iad sin na Ridirean Teampallach. Chan urrainn dhomh a ràdh gu bheil e fìor. Ach seo an stòiridh...

Fhuair na Ridirean Teampallach an ainm bho Theampall Sholaimh ann an Ierusalem. Bha iad a' dìon nan Crìosdaidhean a chaidh air eilthreachd don Tìr Naoimh. Bha aodach geal orra, le crois mhòr dhearg. Dh'fhàs iad ainmeil.

Agus dh'fhàs iad beartach agus cumhachdach. Cha robh a h-uile buidheann Crìosdaidh measail orra, ge-tà.

Anns an dàrna linn deug, thòisich cùisean air a dhol leis na Muslamaich. Mean air mhean, chaill na Ridirean Teampallach na daingnichean aca anns an Ear-mheadhanach. Bha iad ann an Cìopras airson greis. Ach chaill iad an t-àite aca ann an Cìopras cuideachd.

Ach bha iad fhathast cumhachdach air taobh an iar na Roinn Eòrpa. Bha rìghrean Eòrpach amharasach mun deidhinn, ge-tà. Bha na rìghrean dhen bheachd gun robh na Ridirean ro

They were afraid of the Knights.

The Pope was based in France. He was a Frenchman. The King of France, Philip IV, was pushing the Pope to declare the Knights Templar outlawed. He said they were blasphemous and idolatrous.

But the King had large debts. He had got money from the Knights Templar. Perhaps Philip was seeing this as a way to eliminate his debts.

In 1307, the King gave an order. The kings of Europe had to confiscate all the money, land and buildings belonging to the Knights.

But how was Scotland involved in the affair? We'll take a look at that next week.

chumhachdach. Bha eagal orra ro na Ridirean.

Bha am Pàp stèidhichte san Fhraing. 'S e Frangach a bha ann. Bha Rìgh na Frainge, Philip IV, a' cur ìmpidh air a' Phàp na Ridirean Teampallach a dhèanamh mì-laghail. Bha e ag ràdh gun robh iad toibheumach agus iodhalach.

Ach bha fiachan mòra air an Rìgh. Bha e air airgead fhaighinn bho na Ridirean Teampallach. 'S dòcha gun robh Philip a' faicinn seo mar dhòigh gus na fiachan aige a dhubhadh às.

Ann an trì cheud deug 's a seachd (1307), thug an Rìgh òrdugh seachad. Bha aig rìghrean na Roinn Eòrpa ri airgead, fearann agus togalaichean nan Ridirean a chur an grèim.

Ach ciamar a bha Alba an sàs anns a' ghnothach? Bheir sinn sùil air sin an-ath-sheachdain.