

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 382 (which corresponds to Litir 686). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

The road between Loch Ness and the Isle of Skye passes through Glenmoriston. There is a cairn in the glen. It's beside the main road.

The cairn commemorates a Jacobite hero, one Roderick MacKenzie. He was killed in that place in 1746. That was three months after the Battle of Culloden. But why was Roderick famous? Well, perhaps he saved the life of Bonnie Prince Charlie. How? Because some people were thinking that he was the Prince.

Roderick was from Edinburgh. He might have had ancestral connections to Kintail. He was in a famous Jacobite troop, the "Elcho Troop". Roderick was very like (Young) Charlie in appearance. People were often thinking that he was the Prince!

The Elcho Troop was at the Battle of Culloden. After the battle, they scattered. It was every man for himself. Roderick was in Glenmoriston three months after the battle. Perhaps he was going to Kintail.

Redcoat soldiers were looking for Prince Charles. There was a reward for capturing or killing the Prince. A group of soldiers met

Tha an rathad eadar Loch Nis agus An t-Eilean Sgitheanach a' dol tro Ghleann Moireastan. Tha càrn anns a' ghleann. Tha e ri taobh an rathaid mhòir.

Tha an càrn mar chuimhneachan air gaisgeach Seumasach, fear Ruairidh MacCoinnich. Chaidh a mharbhadh anns an àite sin ann an seachd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a sia (1746). Bha sin trì mìosan an dèidh Blàr Chùil Lodair. Ach carson a tha Ruairidh ainmeil? Uill, 's dòcha gun do shàbhail e beatha Theàrlaich Òig Stiùbhairt. Ciamar? Leis gun robh cuid a' smaoineachadh gum b' esan am Prionnsa.

Bha Ruairidh à Dùn Èideann. 'S dòcha gun robh buntanas sinnsireil aige do Chinn Tàile. Bha e ann am feachd ainmeil Seumasach, an "Elcho Troop". Bha Ruairidh uabhasach coltach ri Teàrlach Òg ann an dreach. Bha daoine gu tric a' smaoineachadh gum b' esan am Prionnsa!

Bha Elcho Troop aig Blàr Chùil Lodair. Às dèidh a' bhatail, sgaoil iad. Bha gach duine an urra ri a bheatha fhèin. Bha Ruairidh ann an Gleann Moireastan trì mìosan an dèidh a' bhlàir. 'S dòcha gun robh e a' dol a Chinn Tàile.

Bha saighdearan dearga a' coimhead airson Theàrlaich Òig. Bha airgid-cinn air a' Phrionnsa. Thachair feachd shaighdearan ri Ruairidh ann an

Roderick in Glenmoriston. There was conflict. Roderick was badly wounded. Just before he died, he cried, "You have killed your Prince!"

The soldiers were thinking that they [had] killed the Prince. They cut Roderick's head from his body. They took it away in order to confirm that it was Charles's head. Cumberland was thinking the Prince was dead. He returned to England.

Finally, the government understood that Charles was still alive. But the Prince had fled. Roderick's heroism gave him time.

On the other side of the road from the cairn, close to the river, there is a gravestone. It marks the place where Roderick's headless body was buried. And to this day, in July every year, some people gather at the grave. They commemorate and remember Roderick MacKenzie's heroism.

Gleann Moireastan. Bha còmhrag ann. Bha Ruairidh air a leòn gu dona. Direach mus d' fhuair e bàs, dh'èigh e, "You have killed your Prince!"

Bha na saighdearan dhen bheachd gun do mharbh iad am Prionnsa. Gheàrr iad ceann Ruairidh far a bhodhaig. Thug iad air falbh e airson dearbhadh gur e ceann Theàrlaich a bha ann. Bha Cumberland a' smaoinichadh gun robh am Prionnsa marbh. Thill e a Shasainn.

Mu dheireadh thall, thuig an riaghaltas gun robh Teàrlach fhathast beò. Ach bha am Prionnsa air teicheadh. Thug gaisgeachd Ruairidh ùine dha.

Air taobh eile an rathaid bhon chàrn, faisg air an abhainn, tha clach-uaighe ann. Tha i a' comharrachadh an àite far an deach bodhaig Ruairidh, gun cheann, a thiodhlacadh. Agus fhathast, anns an Iuchar a h-uile bliadhna, bidh feadhainn a' tighinn còmhla aig an uaigh. Bidh iad a' comharrachadh is a' cuimhneachadh gaisgeachd Ruairidh MhicCoinnich.