

# **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 598 (which corresponds to Litir 902). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*I was telling you about St Fillan. He went to a place called 'The Strath'. It was in upper Glen Dochart. They built a church there. While they were building it, Fillan's oxen were untied from their equipment. At night, a wolf came. It ate one of the oxen.*

*In the morning, Fillan prayed to God. He was wanting the same wolf to return and to be gentle and docile. That's what happened. The wolf allowed Fillan to attach it to a plough as if it were an ox. It worked like an ox while they were building the church. After that, it left and it went back to as it was [before].*

*Fillan performed many other miracles and the people loved him. The people called the strath 'Strathfillan'.*

*That story came from Breviarium Aberdonense – The Aberdeen Breviary – that I mentioned last week. I'll finish the Litir with another story from the same book. It's about St Maolrubha – a saint with a special link to Applecross, my own country in Wester Ross.*

*Scandinavians came to*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Naomh Faolan. Chaidh e gu àite air an robh 'An Srath' mar ainm. Bha e ann an ceann shuas Ghleann Dochart. Thog iad eaglais ann. Fhad 's a bha iad ga togail, chaidh na daimh aig Faolan fhuasgladh bhon uidheam aca. Air an oidhche, thàinig madadh-allaidh. Dh'ith e fear de na daimh.

Anns a' mhadainn rinn Faolan ùrnaigh do Dhia. Bha e ag iarraidh gun tilleadh an aon mhadadh-allaidh agus gum biodh e soitheamh, socair. 'S e sin a thachair. Leig am madadh-allaidh le Faolan a chur ri crann mar gur e damh a bha ann. Dh'obraich e mar dhamh fhad 's a bha iad a' togail na h-eaglaise. An dèidh sin, dh'fhalbh e agus chaidh e air ais mar a bha e.

Rinn Faolan iomadh mìorbhail eile agus bha gràdh aig muinntir an àite air. Chuir na daoine 'Srath Fhaolain' air an t-srath sin mar ainm.

Thàinig an sgeulachd sin à Breviarium Aberdonense – The Aberdeen Breviary a dh'ainmich mi an t-seachdain sa chaidh. Cuiridh mi crìoch air an Litir le sgeulachd eile bhon aon leabhar. Tha i mu dheidhinn Naoimh Ma-ruibh – naomh le ceangal sònraichte don Chomraich, an dùthaich agam fhìn ann an Ros an Iar.

Thàinig Lochlannaich don

*Applecross. They were causing destruction in the Highlands. Clerics told them that the country was a sanctuary. That was because of Maolrubha's virtues.*

*But the Scandinavians were indifferent. They took no account of Maolrubha's heritage. They stole many things from the people. They returned to their boats. They hoisted the sails. They were departing on a course that was looking favourable for them. But, suddenly, the sea swallowed them. They were all drowned.*

*Although Maolrubha himself died on the Black Isle, the people of Applecross know where he was buried in the Clachan Cemetery. And the account in the Breviarium tells us that it was the saint himself who requested that his mortal remains be carried to Applecross.*

Chomraich. Bha iad a' dèanamh sgrìos air a' Ghàidhealtachd. Dh'inns pearsaichean-eaglais dhaibh gun robh an dùthaich na comraich. Bha sin air sgàth buadhan Ma-ruibhe.

Ach bha na Lochlannaich coma. Cha do ghabh iad sùim de dhualchas Ma-ruibh. Ghoid iad tòrr stuth bho na daoine. Thill iad do na bàtaichean aca. Chuir iad na siùil an-àirde. Bha iad a' falbh air chùrsa a bha a' coimhead fàbharach dhaibh. Cha robh fairge mhòr sam bith ann. Ach, gu h-obann, shluig a' mhuir iad. Bha iad uile air am bàthadh.

Ged a fhuair Maolrubha fhèin bàs anns an Eilean Dubh, tha fios aig muinntir na Comraich far an robh e air a thiodhlacadh ann an Cladh a' Chlachain. Agus tha an cunntas anns a' *Bhreviarium* ag innse dhuinn gur e an naomh fhèin a dh'iarr gum biodh a dhust air a ghiùlan don Chomraich.