

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 781 (which corresponds to Litir 1,085). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you a story from the manuscript, The Wardlaw Manuscript. Donald MacAllister – a servant of the red-haired blacksmith – had found a pot full of gold. But the smith stole the pot. He hid it.

The clan chief, Fraser of Lovat, heard about the matter. He asked Donald to appear in front of him. Donald told him what had happened.

The chief of the Frasers asked the red-haired smith to appear in front of him.

'Do you know what happened to the pot and the gold?' the clan chief asked.

'I don't know about the gold,' said the smith, 'except that my daughter got a ring from Donald MacAllister.' He gave the landlord the ring as a present.

The clan chief was pleased about the ring. But he was of the opinion that the smith was telling lies. The smith was sent to prison. And Donald got a new nickname – Donald of the Gold.

The red-haired smith did not admit his guilt. He had six daughters. One of them married a man called Young Farquhar. Farquhar got hold of the gold. He forced the smith to not admit anything

Bha mi ag innse eachdraidh dhuibh à làmh-sgrìobhainn, *The Wardlaw Manuscript*. Bha Dòmhnall MacAlasdair – sgalag aig a' Ghobha Ruadh – air poit làn òir a lorg. Ach ghoid an gobha a' phoit. Chuir e am falach i.

Chuala an ceann-cinnidh, Mac Shimidh, mun ghnòthach. Dh'iarr e air Dòmhnall nochdadh air a bheulaibh. Dh'inns Dòmhnall dha mar a thachair.

Dh'iarr Mac Shimidh air a' Ghobha Ruadh nochdadh air a bheulaibh.

'A bheil fios agad dè thachair don phoit agus don òr?' dh'fhaighnich an ceann-cinnidh.

'Chan eil fios agam mun òr,' thuirt an gobha, 'ach gun d' fhuair an nighean agam fàinne o Dhòmhnall MacAlasdair.' Thug e an fhàinne seachad mar thiodhlac don uachdaran.

Bha an ceann-cinnidh toilichte mun fhàinne. Ach bha e dhen bheachd gun robh an gobha ag innse bhreugan. Chaidh an gobha a chur don phrìosan. Agus fhuair Dòmhnall far-ainm ùr – Dòmhnall an Òir.

Cha do dh'aidich an Gobha Ruadh a chiont. Bha sianar nighean aige. Phòs tè dhiubh fear air an robh Fearchar Òg mar ainm. Fhuair Fearchar grèim air an òr. Thug e air a' ghobha gun a bhith ag aideachadh

about it. And the red-haired smith died in prison.

Young Farquhar and his wife went to Letterewe in Wester Ross. English people were working there in a new iron [smelting] industry. Farquhar thought he would get a good price for the gold there. But he didn't. He sold the gold for a low price.

And where did the gold come from in the first place? There was an opinion that it was a collection that a wife of the clan chief had had, a generation or two before. A maidservant stole it. She put it in a clay pot under the ground.

The woman was prosecuted for the crime. As a punishment, she was going to be drowned in a pool they called the Park Pool. With her hands, she indicated the place where the gold was. But she was drowned before anybody found it. That was until Donald of the Gold found it years later.

càil mu dheidhinn. Agus chaochail an Gobha Ruadh anns a' phrìosan.

Chaidh Fearchar Òg agus a bhean a Leitir Iù ann an Ros an Iar. Bha Sasannaich ag obair an sin ann an gnìomhachas iarainn ùr. Bha Fearchar dhen bheachd gum faigheadh e deagh phrìs air an òr an sin. Ach cha d' fhuair. Reic e an t-òr air prìs ìosal.

Agus cò às a thàinig an t-òr anns a' chiad àite? Bha beachd ann gur e stòras a bha ann aig bean Mhic Shimidh, ginealach no dhà roimhe. Ghoid bana-shearbhant e. Chuir i ann am poit chrèadha e fon talamh.

Bha am boireannach air a dìteadh dhen eucoir. Mar pheanas, bha i gu bhith air a bàthadh ann am poll ris an canadh iad Poll na Pàirc. Le a làmhan, chomharraich i an t-àite san robh an t-òr. Ach chaidh a bàthadh mus do lorg duine e. Bha sin gus an do lorg Dòmhnall an Òir e bliadhnaichean an dèidh làimhe.