

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 814 (which corresponds to Litir 1,118). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about the website 'The Gaelic Story at the University of Glasgow'. In the 17th century, people with Gaelic names were often on the lists of graduates at the university. There were two groups in particular – the gentry and those who were training for the [church] ministry.

Among them were the MacDougalls of Dunollie in Argyll. Early in the 17th century, their clan chief was Sir John MacDougall. He sent his four sons to the University of Glasgow for their education.

Another clan that was connected to the university around that time was the MacDonalds of Sleat on Skye. The university was seeking funds. That was to develop buildings. Among those who sent them money was Dòmhnall Gorm Òg, the head of the MacDonalds of Sleat. He gave them £100. That was to develop a new library. The year after that, Dòmhnall Gorm sent his son James to the University of Glasgow as a student.

Ruairidh Mòr MacLeod was the head of the MacLeods of

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun làraich-lìn 'Sgeul na Gàidhlig aig Oilthigh Ghlaschu'. Anns an t-seachdamh linn deug, bha daoine le ainmean Gàidhealach gu tric air na liostaichean de luchd-ceumnachaidh aig an oilthigh. Bha dà bhuidhinn ann gu sònraichte – na daoine-uaisle agus feadhainn a bha a' trèanadh airson na ministrealachd.

Am measg sin bha teaghlach MhicDhùghaill Dhùin Olaidh ann an Earra-Ghàidheal. Tràth anns an t-seachdamh linn deug, b' e an ceann-cinnidh aca Sir Iain MacDhùghaill. Chuir esan a cheathrar mhac a dh'Oilthigh Ghlaschu airson an cuid foghlaim.

B' e cinneadh eile a bha ceangailte ris an oilthigh mun àm sin – Dòmhnallaich Shlèite às an Eilean Sgitheanach. Bha an t-oilthigh a' sireadh taic-airgid. Bha sin airson togalaichean a leasachadh. Am measg na chuir airgead thuca, bha Dòmhnall Gorm Òg, ceannard Dòmhnallaich Shlèite. Thug esan ceud not dhaibh. Bha sin airson leabharlann ùr a leasachadh. A' bhliadhna às dèidh sin, chuir Dòmhnall Gorm a mhac Seumas a dh'Oilthigh Ghlaschu mar oileanach.

Bha Ruairidh Mòr MacLeòid na cheannard air Clann MhicLeòid Dhùin

Dunvegan and Harris. His sons – Iain Mòr, William and Norman – went to the University of Glasgow.

The Campbells were strongly connected to the University of Glasgow. In the 17th century, Archibald Campbell, the head of the Campbells, sent his two sons to the university. Archibald was among the most powerful people in Scotland at that time. He was heavily involved in the Covenanting Wars. He was on the side of the Covenanters.

At that time, the Bible was not available in Gaelic. But the Argyll Synod of the Church of Scotland published a Gaelic catechism. They chose a team of seven people to do the work. Six of them had graduated from the University of Glasgow.

Shortly after that, the Synod made a collection of fifty psalms in Gaelic. Graduates of the University of Glasgow were among those who put that together. And people who had gone through the university were in the majority in a group who were going to do a translation of the Old Testament into Gaelic. It didn't happen, however. I'll tell you about it next week.

Bheagain agus na Hearadh. Chaidh na mic aige – Iain Mòr, Uilleam agus Tormod – a dh'Oilthigh Ghlaschu.

Bha na Caimbeulaich co-cheangailte ri Oilthigh Ghlaschu gu mòr. Anns an t-seachdamh linn deug, chuir Gilleasbaig Caimbeul, Mac Cailein Mòr, a dhithis mhac don oilthigh. Bha Gilleasbaig am measg nan daoine a bu chumhachdaiche ann an Alba aig an àm sin. Bha e an sàs gu mòr ann an Cogaidhean nan Cùmhnantach. Bha e air taobh nan Cùmhnantach.

Aig an àm sin, cha robh am Bìoball ri fhaighinn ann an Gàidhlig. Ach dh'fhoillsich Seanadh Earra-Ghàidheal de dh'Eaglais na h-Alba Leabhar-cheist Gàidhlig. Thagh iad sgioba de sheachdnar airson an obair a dhèanamh. Bha sianar aca air ceumnachadh à Oilthigh Ghlaschu.

Goirid an dèidh sin, rinn an Seanadh cruinneachadh de chaogad salm ann an Gàidhlig. Bha luchd-ceumnachaidh à Oilthigh Ghlaschu am measg na chuir sin ri chèile. Agus bha daoine a bha air a dhol tron oilthigh anns a' mhòr-chuid ann am buidheann a bha a' dol a dhèanamh eadar-theangachadh dhen t-Seann Tiomnadh gu Gàidhlig. Cha do thachair e, ge-tà. Innsidh mi dhuibh mu dheidhinn an-ath-sheachdain.