

## **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 1,058 (which corresponds to Litir 1,362). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).*

*The other day I was watching The Repair Shop on television. People take devices or pictures or books there if they need to be repaired.*

*They are based in southern England. But they go on tour sometimes. When they were in Perthshire, a married couple came to them with an old music book. The book was at one time owned by a piper who was famous in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was Pipe Major Donald Bain. He was in the Black Watch regiment.*

*It was reported that the book's text was in Gaelic. Thus, I wanted to find out more about Dòmhnall MacIlleBhàin, or Donald Bain in English.*

*He was born in Caithness in 1819. When he was young, he was a shepherd. Then he took a place in the army. He was in North America and India. But he became famous for his service in Crimea. The British and French had an army fighting against the Russians there.*

*There was a famous battle at the River Alma. The British and French were victorious. Donald Bain was on the battlefield. He was playing the pipes, even although it was dangerous*

*An latha eile, bha mi a' coimhead an Repair Shop air an telebhisean. Bidh daoine a' toirt innealan no dealbhan no leabhraichean ann ma tha iad feumach air càradh.*

*Tha e stèidhichte ann an ceann a deas Shasainn. Ach bidh iad a' dol air an rathad uaireannan. Nuair a bha iad ann an Siorrachd Pheairt, thàinig càraid phòsta thuca le seann leabhar-ciùil. Bha an leabhar uaireigin le pìobaire a bha ainmeil anns an naoidheamh linn deug. B' esan am Màidsear-pìoba Dòmhnall MacIlleBhàin. Bha e ann an rèisimeid an Fhreiceadain Duibh.*

*Chaidh aithris gun robh teacs a leabhair ann an Gàidhlig. Mar sin, bha mi airson tuilleadh fhaighinn a-mach mu Dhòmhnall MacIlleBhàin, no Donald Bain ann am Beurla.*

*Rugadh e ann an Gallaibh ann an ochd ceud deug is naoi-deug (1819). Nuair a bha e òg, bha e na chìobair. An uair sin, ghabh e àite anns an arm. Bha e ann an Ameireagaidh a Tuath agus anns na h-Innseachan. Ach dh'fhàs e ainmeil airson a sheirbheis ann an Crimea. Bha armailt aig na Breatannaich agus na Frangaich a' sabaid an aghaidh nan Ruiseanach an sin.*

*Bha batail ainmeil aig Abhainn Alma. Rinn na Breatannaich agus na Frangaich a' chùis. Bha Dòmhnall MacIlleBhàin air blàr a' bhatail. Bha e a' seinn na pìoba, eadhon*

*for him. After that, some people called him 'The Hero of the Alma'.*

*He was so famous that he was offered an honour – [to be] the Personal Piper to Queen Victoria. Donald declined that opportunity, however. They were wanting an unmarried man. And Donald was considering taking a wife.*

*Donald was an excellent piper. He would play the pipes at events throughout Britain. In the final stage of his life, he was living in Dundee. He was heavily involved in a pipe band there. He died in 1895. He was buried in the Eastern Cemetery of Dundee with full military honours – as befitted a war hero.*

ged a bha e cunnartach dha. An dèidh sin, ghabh cuid 'Gaisgeach na h-Alma' air.

Bha e cho ainmeil, 's gun deach urram mòr a thabhann dha – Piobaire Pearsanta don Bhanrigh Bhictoria. Leig Dòmhnall an cothrom sin seachad, ge-tà. Bha iad ag iarraidh fear nach robh pòsta. Agus bha Dòmhnall am beachd bean a ghabhail.

Bha Dòmhnall fìor mhath mar phìobaire. Bhiodh e a' seinn na pìoba aig cuirmean air feadh Bhreatainn. Anns an earrainn mu dheireadh de a bheatha, bha e a' fuireach ann an Dùn Dè. Bha e an sàs gu mòr ann an còmhlan pìoba an sin. Chaochail e ann an ochd ceud deug, naochad 's a còig (1895). Chaidh a thiodhlacadh ann an Cladh Taobh Sear Dhùn Dè le làn-urram an airm – mar a bha iomchaidh do ghaisgeach cogaidh.