

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 1,076 (which corresponds to Litir 1,380). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

What was the final inter-clan battle in Scotland? Some folk name the Battle of Altimarlach. That was in 1680 in Caithness. It was between the Sinclairs of Keiss from Caithness, and Campbells from Perthshire. I wrote about it in Litrichean Beaga 342 and 343.

But some folk are of the opinion that that was not the last inter-clan battle. I was in Glen Roy in Brae Lochaber in the autumn. I stopped at a memorial next to the road. Written on it is 'The Battle of Mulroy 4th August 1688 ... the last inter-clan battle fought in Scotland'. That was eight years after the Battle of Altimarlach.

We call it Blàr a' Mhaoil Ruaidh in Gaelic. It happened on the slope of a mountain called Am Maol Ruadh. That was between the Mackintoshes from Badenoch and the MacDonalds of Keppoch from Brae Lochaber.

Those two clans had been at loggerheads for a long period. In the 15th century, the MacDonalds' land was given to the

Dè an cath eadar-cinnidheach mu dheireadh a bha ann, ann an Alba? Bidh cuid ag ainmeachadh Blàr Allt nam Mèirleach. Bha sin ann an sia ceud deug is ochdad (1680) ann an Gallaibh. Bha e eadar Clann na Ceàrdaich Chèis à Gallaibh, agus Caimbeulaich à Siorrachd Pheairt. Sgrìobh mi mu dheidhinn ann an Litrichean Beaga trì cheud, ceathrad 's a dhà (342) agus trì cheud, ceathrad 's a trì (343).

Ach tha cuid dhen bheachd nach b' e sin am batail eadar-cinnidheach mu dheireadh. Bha mi ann an Gleann Ruaidh ann am Bràigh Loch Abar as t-fhoghar. Stad mi aig carragh-chuimhne ri taobh an rathaid. Sgrìobhte oirre tha 'The Battle of Mulroy 4th August 1688 ... the last inter-clan battle fought in Scotland'. Bha sin ochd bliadhna an dèidh Blàr Allt nam Mèirleach.

Canaidh sinn *Blàr a' Mhaoil Ruaidh* ris ann an Gàidhlig. Thachair e air leathad beinne ris an canar Am Maol Ruadh. Bha e eadar Clann 'ic an Tòisich à Bàideanach agus Dòmhnallaich na Ceapaich à Bràigh Loch Abar.

Bha an dà chinneadh sin air a bhith thar a chèile fad ùine. Anns a' chòigeamh linn deug, chaidh fearann nan Dòmhnallach a thoirt do Chloinn 'ic an

<p><i>Mackintoshes. But the MacDonalds refused to give it up.</i></p> <p><i>Matters came to a head in 1688. The Privy Council of Scotland gave permission to the clan chief of the Mackintoshes to take over the MacDonalds' lands by force.</i></p> <p><i>Mackintosh had about a thousand men. The MacDonalds of Keppoch had only about half of that. But MacDonalds from other areas were there to help them.</i></p> <p><i>The Mackintosh army went to Keppoch. But the MacDonalds were waiting for them on high ground on the Maol Ruadh. They were in a favourable situation. They defeated their enemy. The MacDonalds retained their land.</i></p> <p><i>However, on Mackintosh's side a Highland Company was fighting on behalf of the Scottish Government. Because of that, some folk say that it wasn't an inter-clan battle. But I'll leave that question to the historians!</i></p>	<p>Tòisich. Ach dhiùlt na Dòmhnallaich a leigeil seachad.</p> <p>Thàinig gnothaichean gu ceann ann an sia ceud deug, ochdad 's a h-ochd (1688). Thug Comhairle Dhìomhair na h-Alba – am <i>Privy Council</i> – cead do cheann-cinnidh Clann 'ic an Tòisich fearann nan Dòmhnallach a ghabhail le fòirneart.</p> <p>Bha mu mhìle duine aig Mac an Tòisich. Cha robh ach leth dheth sin aig Dòmhnallaich na Ceapaich. Ach bha Dòmhnallaich à sgìrean eile ann airson taic a thoirt dhaibh.</p> <p>Chaidh armailt 'ic an Tòisich don Cheapaich. Ach bha na Dòmhnallaich a' feitheamh riutha air talamh àrd air a' Mhaol Ruadh. Bha iad ann an suidheachadh fàbharach. Rinn iad an gnothach air an nàmhaid. Ghlèidh na Dòmhnallaich am fearann aca.</p> <p>Ge-tà, air taobh 'ic an Tòisich bha Feachd Gàidhealach a bha a' sabaid às leth Riaghaltas na h-Alba. Air sàillibh sin, canaidh cuid nach e blàr eadar-cinnidheach a bha ann. Ach fàgaidh mi a' cheist sin aig an luchd-eachdraidh!</p>
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