

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 201 (which corresponds to Litir 505). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk.

I was in Edinburgh recently. I was in Holyrood Park. That's near the Scottish Parliament building.

In the middle of the park there is a hill. The name of [on] the hill is Arthur's Seat. But was Arthur, the King of the Britons [ever] there? I don't know.

I got a book about Edinburgh place-names – the Place Names of Edinburgh by Stuart Harris (deceased). The book was published [came out] thirteen years ago. Harris wasn't sure if there was a connection between Arthur's Seat and King Arthur

Certainly, it was named as Arthur's Seat in 1508. But in medieval times there was no sign of that name. The hill was called at that [distant] time, apparently, Craggenemarf. It was a Celtic name. It came from Gaelic or British [Cumbric]. Craggenemarf – Creag nam Marbh – the Crag of the Dead.

But Harris said there are thirteen places in Scotland in which Arthur is in the name.

Bha mi ann an Dùn Èideann o chionn ghoirid. Bha mi ann am Pàirc an Ròid, no Holyrood Park. Tha sin faisg air Taigh na Pàrlamaid.

Ann am meadhan na pàirce, tha cnoc. 'S e Suidhe Artair no Arthur's Seat an t-ainm air a' chnoc. Ach an robh Artair, Rìgh nam Breatannach, ann? Chan eil fhios a'm.

Fhuair mi leabhar mu ainmean-àite Dhùn Èideann – The Place Names of Edinburgh le Stiùbhart Harris nach maireann. Thàinig an leabhar a-mach o chionn trì bliadhna deug. Cha robh Harris cinnteach an robh ceangal ann eadar Arthur's Seat agus Rìgh Artair.

Ceart gu leòr, bha e air ainmeachadh mar Arthur's Seat ann an còig ceud deug 's a h-ochd (1508). Ach, anns na meadhan-aoisean, cha robh sgeul air an ainm sin. 'S e an t-ainm a bha air a' chnoc aig an àm ud, a rèir choltais, Craggenemarf. 'S e ainm Ceilteach a bha ann. Thàinig e bhon Ghàidhlig no bhon Bhreatannais. Craggenemarf – Creag nam Marbh – the Crag of the Dead.

Ach thuirt Harris gu bheil aon àite deug ann an Alba, anns a bheil Artair anns an ainm. Seo eisimpleir no

Here's a couple of examples: Suidhe Artair in Dumbarton and Banffshire, Beinn Artair at the head of Loch Long, Sruth Artair in Argyll and Arthur's Cairn in Aberdeenshire.

There is at least one place in Holyrood Park connected with Gaels. There is a route on the side of the hill called Piper's Walk. According to oral tradition, the name goes back to the eighteenth century. There was a group of Gaels camped on Arthur's Seat. They had a piper. He was walking on that route, playing his pipes.

Highland soldiers were there in 1745. They were preparing for the Battle of Prestonpans. But Piper's Walk didn't get its name at that time. It got the name years after that in 1778. Who were the Highland soldiers? Why were they in Edinburgh? I'll tell you that next week.

dhà: Suidhe Artair ann an Dùn Bhreatainn agus Siorrachd Bhanbh, Beinn Artair aig ceann Loch Long, Sruth Artair ann an Earra-Ghàidheal agus Arthur's Cairn ann an Siorrachd Obar Dheathain.

Tha co-dhiù aon àite ann am Pàirc an Ròid a tha ceangailte ri Gàidheil. Tha slighe air cliathaich a' chnuic air a bheil Piper's Walk. A rèir beul-aithris, tha an t-ainm a' dol air ais don ochdamh linn deug. Bha còmhlan de Ghàidheil a' campachadh air Suidhe Artair. Bha pìobaire aca. Bha esan a' coiseachd air an t-slighe sin, agus a' seinn na pìoba.

Bha saighdearan Gàidhealach an sin ann an seachd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a còig (1745). Bha iad a' deisealachadh airson Blàr Sliabh a' Chlamhain – *The Battle of Prestonpans*. Ach cha d' fhuair Piper's Walk ainm aig an àm sin. Fhuair e an t-ainm bliadhnaichean às dèidh sin ann an seachd ceud deug, seachdad 's a h-ochd (1778). Cò na saighdearan Gàidhealach a bha ann? Carson a bha iad ann an Dùn Èideann? Innsidh mi sin dhuibh an ath-sheachdain.