

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 873 (which corresponds to Litir 1,177). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I was telling you about St Drostan. He is named in the Book of Deer. I'll give you an account of him from the Aberdeen Breviary or Breviarium Aberdonense.

It's not clear where he was born. But the book tells us that he belonged to the royal race of the Scots.

His parents gave him over to an uncle – St Columba. He [Columba] was living in Ireland. There Drostan received a religious education.

Drostan was then living in a place called Dalquongale. The scholars reckon that is Dercongal near Dumfries. People call it Hollywood today. The old abbot died there. Drostan then became the abbot.

He was there a while. Then he left to live in remote places. He was living as a hermit in wild, uninhabited places. He built a church in Glen Esk in the upland of Angus.

The Aberdeen Breviary tells us that Drostan was connected to one miracle. He restored the sight of a blind priest called Simon.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Naomh Drostan. Tha e air ainmeachadh ann an Leabhar Dhèir. Bheir mi cunntas dhuibh air bho Leabhar Ùrnaighean Obar Dheathain no *Breviarium Aberdonense*.

Chan eil e soilleir cà' n do rugadh e. Ach tha an leabhar ag innse dhuinn gun do bhuineadh e do chinneadh rìoghail nan Albannach.

Thug a phàrantan e dha uncail – Naomh Calum Cille. Bha esan a' fuireach ann an Èirinn. An sin, fhuair Drostan ionnsachadh creideimh.

Bha Drostan an uair sin a' fuireach ann an àite ris an canar Dalquongale. Tha na sgoilearan a' dèanamh dheth gur e sin Dercongal faisg air Dùn Phris. 'S e Hollywood a chanas daoine ris an-diugh. Chaochail an seann aba an sin. Bha Drostan an uair sin na aba ann.

Bha e ann greis. An uair sin, dh'fhalbh e a dh'fhuireach ann an àiteachan iomallach. Bha e a' fuireach mar aonaran ann an dìthreabhan. Thog e eaglais ann an Gleann Easg ann an Monadh Aonghais.

Tha Leabhar Ùrnaighean Obar Dheathain ag innse dhuinn gun robh Drostan co-cheangailte ri aon mhìorbhail. Thug e fradharc às ùr do shagart dall dom b' ainm Simon.

He died in Glen Esk. His bones were taken to Aberdour. That's the place where he and Columba landed when they got land for a monastery in Deer. The bones were put in a stone tomb in Aberdour.

Many people who were suffering from various diseases, would go there. They would be cured there. As happened with Bede's son, health would come to them.

Drostan is well remembered in Aberdour. There is St Drostan's Church and Drostan's Well there. Place-names remember him in Glen Esk as well. But there he is called 'Droustie'. There are Droustie's Meadow and Droustie's Well.

There are places in Glenurquhart, Badenoch, Strathspey and Caithness connected to him. And there are many churches in Scotland called 'St Drostan's'. It's worth remembering that holy man.

Chaochail e ann an Gleann Easg. Chaidh na cnàmhan aige a thoirt a dh'Obar Dobhair. Sin an t-àite far an tàinig e fhèin is Calum Cille gu tìr nuair a fhuair iad fearann airson manachainn ann an Dèir. Chaidh na cnàmhan a chur ann an tuam cloiche ann an Obar Dobhair.

Bhiodh mòran daoine, a bha a' fulang le galaran de dh'iomadh seòrsa, a' dol ann. Bhiodh iad a' faighinn leigheas ann. Mar a thachair leis a' ghille aig Bede, thigeadh slàinte thuca.

Tha Drostan air a chuimhneachadh gu mòr ann an Obar Dobhair. Tha Eaglais Naoimh Dhrostan agus Tobar Dhrostan ann. Tha ainmean-àite ga chuimhneachadh ann an Gleann Easg cuideachd. Ach an sin 's e 'Droustie' a tha air. Tha *Droustie's Meadow* agus *Droustie's Well* ann.

Tha àiteachan ann an Gleann Urchardain, Bàideanach, Srath Spè agus Gallaibh co-cheangailte ris. Agus tha iomadh eaglais ann an Alba air a bheil 'Eaglais Dhrostan' mar ainm. Is fhiach an duine naomh sin a chuimhneachadh.