

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 886 (which corresponds to Litir 1,190). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I was telling you about Weem – Uaimh – in Perthshire. Its across the River Tay from Aberfeldy. There is a cave there high up on Chapel Rock. It's only small. But there is one thing that is good about it. There is a well adjacent to it. St Cuthbert was living in the cave in the seventh century.

But people do not call the well St Cuthbert's Well. They say St David's Well. I reckon that is Tobar Dhaibhidh in Gaelic but I'm not certain.

David was Sir David Menzies. He was living nearby in Castle Menzies. He was alive in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. He abandoned worldly things, and he went to live in the cave.

He created the chapel that gave its name to the Rock. Apparently, there was a large cross lying on the ground there. Pilgrims were going on their knees on the cross. They were praying there. Fragments of the cross are in Weem Kirk.

The Rev. Charles Robertson tells us that there are two caves on Weem Rock. At the bottom of the Rock, there is the second one. Its name is Toll nan Trì Nigheanan.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Weem – Uaimh – ann an Siorrachd Pheairt. Tha e air taobh thall Uisge Tatha o Obar Pheallaidh. Tha uamh gu h-àrd ann, air Creag an t-Seipeil. Chan eil i ach beag. Ach tha aon rud math mu a deidhinn. Tha tobar ri a taobh. Bha Naomh Cùithbeart a' fuireach san uaimh anns an t-seachdamh linn.

Ach chan e Tobar Chùithbeirt a chanas daoine ris an tobar. Canaidh iad *St David's Well*. Tha mi an dùil gur e sin Tobar Dhaibhidh ann an Gàidhlig, ach chan eil mi cinnteach.

B' e Daibhidh Sir Daibhidh Mèinnearach (*Sir David Menzies*). Bha esan a' fuireach faisg air làimh ann an Caisteal Uaimh. Bha e beò anns a' cheathramh agus còigeamh linn deug. Leig e seachad rudan saoghalta, agus chaidh e a dh'fhuireach anns an uaimh.

Chruthaich esan an seipeal a thug ainm don chreig. A rèir aithris, bha crois mhòr na laighe air an talamh an sin. Bha taistealaich a' dol air an glùinean air a' chrois. Bha iad a' dèanamh ùrnaigh ann. Tha pìosan beaga dhen chrois ann an Eaglais Uaimh.

Tha an t-Urramach Teàrlach MacDhonnchaidh ag innse dhuinn gu bheil dà uaimh air Creag Uaimh. Aig bonn na creige, tha an dàrna tè. 'S e an t-ainm a tha

The hole of the three girls. Toll nan Trì Nigheanan.

There is a story connected to this cave. The Lady of Weem sent her two daughters and her stepdaughter to the Rock. They were going to find a calf that was lost. The Lady gave a Bible to one of her daughters. That was to protect them against witchcraft.

The girls went to the cave. They heard a noise like the noise of a calf from the cave. The girl who had the Bible had given it to the stepdaughter. The Bible stopped the stepdaughter from going inside. There was evil in the cave. The stepdaughter was saved. Parts of the bodies of the other two were found high up in Loch Glassie. That loch was famous because a water-horse (kelpie) lived there.

oirre Toll nan Trì Nigheanan. The hole of the three girls. Toll nan Trì Nigheanan.

Tha sgeulachd co-cheangailte ris an uaimh seo. Chuir Baintighearna Uaimh a dithis nighean agus a nighean-dalta don Chreig. Bha iad a' dol a lorg laogh a bha air chall. Thug a' Bhaintighearna Bìoball gu tè de a nigheanan. Bha sin airson an dìon an aghaidh buidseachd.

Chaidh a' chlann-nighean don uaimh. Chuala iad fuaim coltach ri fuaim laoigh bhon uaimh. Bha an nighean aig an robh am Bìoball air a thoirt don nighinn-dalta. Chuir am Bìoball stad air an nighinn-dalta bho bhith a' dol a-steach. Bha olc anns an uaimh. Bha an nighean-dalta air a sàbhaladh. Bha pìosan de chuirp na dithis eile air an lorg gu h-àrd ann an Loch Glasaigh. Bha an loch sin ainmeil oir bha each-uisge a' fuireach ann.