

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 1005 (which corresponds to Litir 1,309). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

In the old accounts about the Stone of Scone, not everybody was in agreement about its appearance. Some said it wasn't a big lump of sandstone, but a piece of marble in the shape of a chair/throne. One of them was John of Fordun from Aberdeenshire. I'll give you a summary of what he wrote in his book Chronica Gentis Scotorum in the fourteenth century.

When Moses was alive, a son of a Greek king was expelled from his country. That was Gaythelos. He obtained sanctuary in Egypt. He married Scota, Pharaoh's daughter.

About that time, the children of Israel were fleeing from Pharaoh's army. They reached the Red Sea. Here is a passage from the Bible: '... the Lord made the sea recede with a strong east wind ... he turned the sea into dry land and the waters parted.'

The Egyptians went to the middle of the sea, that was now dry. The waters returned upon them by the Lord's wish. The Egyptians were all drowned.

Gaythelos had refused to participate in the expulsion of the Jews. Thus, he was expelled from the kingdom. Himself, his wife and other gentry. They put together a fleet. They

Annas na seann chunntasan mu Chlach Sgàin, cha robh daoine air an aon ràmh mu a coltas. Bha cuid ag ràdh nach e cnap mòr de chloich-ghainmhich a bha innte, ach pìos màrmoir ann an cumadh cathrach. B' e fear dhiubh sin John of Fordun à Siorrachd Obar Dheathain. Nì mi geàrr-chunntas de na sgrìobh e anns an leabhar aige *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* anns a' cheathramh linn deug.

Nuair a bha Maois beò, chaidh mac aig Rìgh Greugach a chur a-mach às an dùthaich aige. B' esan Gaythelos. Fhuair e comraich anns an Èiphit. Phòs e Scota, nighean Pharaoh.

Mun àm sin, bha clann Israeil a' teicheadh bho armait Pharaoh. Ràinig iad a' Mhuir Ruadh. Seo earrann às a' Bhìoball: '... thug an Tighearn air an fhairge dhol air a h-ais le gaoth làidir on ear ... rinn e 'n fhairge na talamh tioram, agus roinneadh na h-uisgeachan.'

Chaidh na h-Èiphitich gu meadhan na fairge, a bha a-nise tioram. Thill na h-uisgeachan orra, le toil an Tighearna. Bha na h-Èiphitich uile air am bàthadh.

Bha Gaythelos air diùltadh pàirt a ghabhail ann am fuadachadh nan Iùdhach. Mar sin, chaidh a chur a-mach às an rìoghachd. E fhèin, a bhean agus uaislean eile. Chuir iad cabhlach ri chèile.

left to find other lands. They reached Spain.

You'll remember that Gaythelos' wife was called Scota. It's from her that the people got the name 'Scot' – although that was relevant to the Irish as much as the people of Scotland. Gaythelos represents 'Gàidheal Glas' from whom came the Gaels.

The people of Spain were threatening them. Gaythelos asked his sons to leave in order to find an unpopulated land. His favourite son was Simon Breac, according to John of Fordun.

Simon reached the coast of Ireland. His vessel was in an anchorage. When the anchors came up, there was a stone with them. It was made of marble and in the shape of a chair. I'll tell you more about it in the next Litir.

Dh'fhalbh iad a lorg thìrean ùra. Ràinig iad an Spàinn.

Bidh cuimhne agaibh gur e Scota a bha air bean Ghaythelos mar ainm. 'S ann bhuaipe a fhuair an sluagh an t-ainm 'Scot' – ged a bha sin a' buntainn ris na h-Èireannaich a cheart cho math ri muinntir na h-Alba. Tha Gaythelos a' riochdachadh 'Gàidheal Glas' – às an tàinig na Gàidheil.

Bha muinntir na Spàinne a' maoidheadh orra. Dh'iarr Gaythelos air a mhic falbh, feuch tìr gun sluagh a lorg. B' e a mhac a b' fheàrr leis Simon Breac, a rèir John of Fordun.

Ràinig Simon costa na h-Èireann. Bha an soitheach aige ann an acarsaid. Nuair a thàinig na h-acraichean an-uachdar, bha clach nan cois. Bha i dèante de mhàrmor agus ann an cumadh cathrach. Innsidh mi dhuibh tuilleadh mu a deidhinn anns an ath Litir.