

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 1006 (which corresponds to Litir 1,310). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I was telling you about John of Fordun's account of the origin of the Gaels. Simon Breac had pulled up a stone from the seabed. It was in the shape of a throne. Simon reckoned it was a gift from the gods.

Now, John admits that the stone throne perhaps did not come from the seabed. Some people maintained that it came from Egypt with Simon's father – Gaythelos. The Gaelic kings in Spain would sit on the stone when they were being sworn in as a king.

Simon took the stone to Ireland. He put it on the top of a hill in Tara – a sacred place. The kings of the Gaels in Ireland would sit on that royal throne when the status of a king was bestowed upon them.

But is that the stone that is now in the Perth Museum – the one upon which Scottish kings were crowned at Scone? Well, the Stone of Scone is not in the shape of a chair. And it's not made of marble. It doesn't look like we are speaking about the same stone.

And was it from Ireland that it came? Or did it come from a quarry near Scone itself, without having

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun chunntas aig John of Fordun mu thùs nan Gàidheal. Bha Simon Breac air clach a tharraing suas bho ghrunnd na mara. Bha i ann an cumadh cathrach. Bha Simon dhen bheachd gun robh i na tiodhlac bho na diathan.

Nise, tha John ag aideachadh gur dòcha nach tàinig a' chathair-chloiche bho ghrunnd na mara. Bha cuid a' cumail a-mach gun tàinig i bhon Èiphit le athair Simoin – Gaythelos. Bhiodh rìghrean Gàidhealach anns an Spàinn nan suidhe air a' chloich nuair a bha iad a' gabhail am bòidean mar rìgh.

Thug Simon a' chlach a dh'Èirinn. Chuir e air mullach cnuic i ann an Teamhair – àite naomh. Bhiodh rìghrean nan Gàidheal ann an Èirinn nan suidhe air a' chathair rìoghail sin nuair a bha inbhe rìgh air a buileachadh orra.

Ach an e sin a' chlach a tha a-nise ann an Taigh-tasgaidh Pheairt – an tè air an robh rìghrean Albannach air an crùnadh ann an Sgàin? Uill, chan eil Clach Sgàin ann an cumadh cathrach. Agus chan eil i air a dèanamh de mhàrmor. Chan eil e ro choltach gu bheil sinn a' bruidhinn air an aon chloich.

Agus an ann à Èirinn a thàinig i? No an tàinig i bho chuaraidh faisg air Sgàin fhèin, gun bhuntanas sam bith aice

any connection to Ireland, Spain or Egypt? I'd better not express an opinion!

John of Fordun says that the first Gaelic king in Scotland – Fergus son of Ferchad – brought it over from Ireland. That was in the year 330 BC. Most scholars say that is far too early. Anyway, John tells us that this was the same chair that Simon Breac took to Ireland. And Fergus was crowned on it as King in 'Scotia'.

However, John tells us there was a border in Drumalbane between the land of the Gaels in the west and the land of the Picts in the east. If the stone was in Scotland, it wasn't in Scone.

do dh'Èirinn, don Spàinn no don Èiphit?!
Chan eil math dhomh beachd a thoirt seachad!

Tha John of Fordun ag ràdh gun tug a' chiad rìgh Gàidhealach ann an Alba – Fearghas mac Fhearchaid – a-nall i à Èirinn. Bha sin anns a' bhliadhna trì cheud is trithead ro Chrìosd (330 BC). Tha a' chuid as motha de sgoilearan ag ràdh gu bheil sin fada ro thràth. Co-dhiù, tha John ag innse dhuinn gum b' ise an dearbh chathair a thug Simon Breac a dh'Èirinn. Agus chaidh Fearghas a chrùnadh oirre mar Rìgh ann an 'Scotia'.

Ge-tà, tha John ag innse dhuinn gun robh crìoch ann an Druim Albann eadar tìr nan Gàidheal air an taobh an iar agus tìr nan Cruithneach air an taobh an ear. Ma bha a' chlach ann an Alba, cha robh i ann an Sgàin.