

## 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 344 (which corresponds to Litir 648). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*I was in Wales recently. I was in the north, in Snowdonia or Eryri. That area is beautiful. And the language is strong.*

*I saw things that were easy to understand for a Gael. There was a sign for a pont isel – drochaid ìosal (low bridge). I was on a traeth – tràigh (beach). And I saw words like mynydd, moel, allt, ynys and afon – like monadh, maol, allt, innis and abhainn.*

*The highest mountain (Snowdon in English) is called Yr Wyddfa. I asked a man what that means. “A burial mound,” he replied. I was going to ask how it got the name. But, before I said anything, he started to explain it. Like ourselves, they have many stories connected to the land.*

*There was at one time a giant. He was called Rhita Gawr. There were two kings in the land who were struggling with each other for primacy. Rhita Gawr created an army. He defeated the kings. He cut the beards off the kings. He made himself a hat with the beards.*

*Twenty-six other kings in Britain heard about it. They weren't happy. They sent an army to Snowdonia. But the Giant defeated them. He cut the*

Bha mi anns a' Chuimrigh o chionn ghoirid. Bha mi anns a' cheann a tuath, ann an Snowdonia no Eryri. Tha an sgìre sin brèagha. Agus tha an cànan làidir.

Chunnaic mi rudan a bha furasta a thuigsinn do Ghàidheal. Bha sanas ann airson *pont isel* – drochaid ìosal. Bha mi air *traeth* – tràigh. Agus chunnaic mi faclan mar *mynydd*, *moel*, *allt*, *ynys* agus *afon* – coltach ri monadh, maol, allt, innis agus abhainn.

'S e Yr Wyddfa a tha air a' bheinn às àirde (Snowdon ann am Beurla). Dh'fhaighnich mi de dhuine dè tha sin a' ciallachadh. “Barpa,” fhreagair e. Bha mi a' dol a dh'fhaighneachd ciamar a fhuair e an t-ainm. Ach, mus turt mi càil, thòisich e air a mhìneachadh. Coltach rinn fhèin, tha tòrr stòiridhean aca co-cheangailte ris an tìr.

Bha uaireigin famhair ann. 'S e an t-ainm a bha air Rhita Gawr. Bha dithis rìghrean anns an dùthaich a bha a' stri le chèile airson ceannas. Chuir Rhita Gawr armailt ri chèile. Rinn e a' chùis air na rìghrean. Bheàrr e na feusagan far nan rìghrean. Rinn e ad dha fhèin leis na feusagan.

Chuala sia rìghrean fichead eile ann am Breatainn mu dheidhinn. Cha robh iad toilichte. Chuir iad armailt gu ruige Eryri. Ach rinn am Famhair a'

*kings' beards off them. With these beards, he made himself a coat.*

*But Rhita Gawr wasn't satisfied. He sent a message to Arthur. He wanted his beard in order to patch his coat. Arthur refused. He was angry. He went to Snowdonia with his army. Arthur and the Giant fought with each other. Arthur killed the Giant with his sword.*

*Where the Giant lay dead, there was no mountain. Arthur ordered a cairn to be built over the giant's body. The people threw stones on it. And that's how the mountain called Yr Wyddfa today came into being. I couldn't care less if it's true or not – it's a good story!*

chùis orra. Bheàrr e feusagan nan rìghrean dhiubh. Leis na feusagan ùra seo, rinn e còta dha fhèin.

Ach cha robh Rhita Gawr riarichte. Chuir e teachdaireachd gu Artair. Bha e ag iarraidh fheusaig airson brèid a chur air a' chòta aige. Dhiùlt Artair. Bha e feargach. Chaidh e gu Eryri le armailt. Bha sabaid ann eadar Artair 's am Famhair. Mharbh Artair am Famhair le a chladheamh.

Far an do làigh am Famhair marbh, cha robh beinn ann. Thug Artair òrdugh seachad càrn a thogail thairis air corp an Fhamhair. Thilg na daoine clachan air. Agus 's ann mar sin a thàinig a' bheinn air a bheil Yr Wyddfa an-diugh gu bith. Tha mi coma co-dhiù tha e fìor gus nach eil – 's e deagh stòiridh a tha ann!