

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 441 (which corresponds to Litir 745). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk.

Here is the final chapter of the Strome Ferry Riot in 1883. There were a hundred and fifty police officers waiting for the protesters on the Strome pier. It was Saturday night. There was a large number of people at the Station Hotel, watching them.

There was a steamer at the pier. The workers were landing a cargo of herring. It appeared that the work would still be taking place at midnight.

Some locals came. And so did a minister from Applecross, Mr MacDonald. He was wanting the people to go home.

More and more locals were appearing. They were coming on foot and by boat. At half past eleven, there were about a hundred and fifty of them. It was feared that there would be a serious confrontation between themselves and the police.

Finally, the local people took Mr MacDonald's advice. They went home shortly before midnight. They had agreed that there would be a large public meeting on Wednesday night.

Seo a-nise a' chaibideil mu dheireadh de dh'Aimhreit an t-Sròim ann an ochd ceud deug, ochdad 's a trì (1883). Bha ceud gu leth poileas a' feitheamh ris an luchd-iomairt air cidhe an t-Sròim. B' e oidhche Shathairne a bha ann. Bha sluagh mòr aig Taigh-òsta an Stèisein, gan coimhead.

Bha bàta-smùide aig a' chidhe. Bha an luchd-obrach a' cur carago de sgadan air tìr. Bha coltas ann gum biodh an obair a' dol fhathast aig meadhan-oidhche.

Thàinig cuid de mhuinntir an àite. Agus nochd ministear às a' Chomraich, Mgr Dòmhnallach. Bha esan ag iarraidh air na daoine a dhol dhachaigh.

Bha barrachd is barrachd de mhuinntir an àite a' nochdadh. Bha iad a' tighinn air chois agus ann an eathraichean. Aig leth-uair an dèidh aon uair deug, bha mu cheud gu leth aca ann. Bha an t-eagal ann gun robh aimhreit mhòr gu bhith ann eadar iad fhèin agus na poilis.

Mu dheireadh ghabh muinntir an àite ri comhairle Mhgr Dhòmhnallaich. Chaidh iad dhachaigh goirid ro mheadhan-oidhche. Bha iad air aontachadh gum biodh coinneamh mhòr phoblach aca oidhche Chiadain.

Most of the police left. But nine of them remained at Strome ferry. And on Monday morning they started to go around with warrants. They were seeking to arrest ten people. Those men had been involved in rioting the previous week. Finally, they arrested all of them.

There was a court case. The ten people were given four months in prison. Many people thought that was too severe. Petitions were sent to the Home Secretary. The sentences were reduced to two months in prison.

Two hundred and fifty people appeared at the public meeting on Wednesday. They agreed that violence was wrong and that breaking the Sabbath was wrong. But they were cognisant that the law of the country was on the side of those who were using the railway on the Sabbath.

There was a lot of support in the community for those who went to prison. They all received monetary gifts from the local people when they got out. But that was the end of the rioting in Strome about the breaking of the Sabbath.

Dh'fhalbh a' chuid as motha de na poilis. Ach dh'fhuirich naoinear aca ann am Port an t-Sròim. Agus madainn Diluain thòisich iadsan air a dhol timcheall le barantais. Bha iad ag iarraidh deichnear a chur an grèim. Bha na daoine sin ri aimhreit an t-seachdain roimhe. Mu dheireadh, fhuair iad grèim orra uile.

Bha cùis-chùirte ann. Fhuair an deichnear ceithir mìosan sa phrìosan. Bha mòran dhen bheachd gun robh sin ro chruaidh. Chaidh athchuingean gu Rùnaire na Dùthcha. Chaidh na binnean a lughdachadh gu dà mhìos sa phrìosan.

Nochd dà cheud gu leth duine aig a' choinneimh phoblaich Diciadain. Dh'aontaich iad gun robh fòirneart ceàrr agus gun robh briseadh na Sàbaid ceàrr. Ach bha iad mothachail gun robh lagh na dùthcha air taobh na feadhainn a bha a' cleachdadh na loidhne-rèile air an t-Sàbaid.

Bha tòrr taic anns a' choimhearsnachd don fheadhainn a chaidh don phrìosan. Fhuair iad uile duais airgid bho mhuinntir an àite nuair a fhuair iad a-mach. Ach b' e sin e airson aimhreit anns an t-Sròim mu bhriseadh na Sàbaid.