

## 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 451 (which corresponds to Litir 755). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*I was telling you about Norman Morrison, 'the King of the snakes'. He was also well-known in his career as a policeman. He established the Scottish Police Federation.*

*In his autobiography My Story, he reports that his superiors were unhappy that some of the police officers were in the union. That was against the rules. But Norman was of the opinion that the union was necessary. The police wages were so low. And their working hours were so long.*

*Between 1913 and 1918, the union worked in secrecy. Norman thought it was time to bring it into the open. In February 1919, the Chief Constable went to Oban. He wanted to speak to the officers there. Norman was a sergeant in Oban.*

*Norman was called in on his own. The Chief Constable said to him that he had to leave the union or leave the service. He would have five minutes, standing at attention, to make his decision. Norman said he would leave the service.*

Tha mi air a bhith ag innse dhuibh mu Thormod MacIlleMhoire, 'Rìgh nan Nathraichean'. Bha e ainmeil cuideachd na dhreuchd mar phoileas. Chuir e air dòigh Caidreachas nam Poileas ann an Alba.

Ann an fhèin-eachdraidh aige *My Story*, tha e ag aithris gun robh àrd-urrachan na seirbheis mì-thoilichte gun robh cuid de na h-oifigearan ann an aonadh. Bha sin an aghaidh nan riaghailtean. Ach bha Tormod dhen bheachd gun robh aonadh riatanach. Bha tuarastal nam poileas cho truagh. Agus bha na h-uairean obrach aca cho fada.

Eadar naoi ceud deug 's trì-deug (1913) agus naoi ceud deug 's ochd-deug (1918), bha an t-aonadh ag obair ann an dìomhaireachd. Bha Tormod dhen bheachd gun robh an t-àm ann a thoirt don fhollais. Anns a' Ghearran naoi ceud deug 's naoi-deug (1919) chaidh an t-Àrd-chonstabal don Òban. Bha e airson bruidhinn ris na h-oifigearan an sin. Bha Tormod na shàirdseant anns an Òban.

Chaidh Tormod a ghairm a-steach na aonar. Thuirt an t-Àrd-chonstabal ris gu feumadh e an t-aonadh fhàgail no an t-seirbheis fhàgail. Bhiodh còig mion-aidean aige, na sheasamh gu dìreach, airson a cho-dhùnadh a dhèanamh. Thuirt Tormod gum fàgadh e an t-

*But the people of Oban were angry. They wrote to the Prime Minister, Lloyd George. After a week, Norman got his job back.*

*The police had a strike in 1919. The government realised it had to do something. They put acts through the Parliament. They created the Police Federation in Scotland and a separate Federation in England and Wales.*

*The leaders of the police service were not pleased with Norman, however. They transferred him from Oban. They tried to get him to retire early on health grounds.*

*Norman said, 'The man who sells his principles for material gain ... is at the same level as the beasts of the field.' He had his principles. He kept to them rigidly.*

*Norman died in Campbeltwon in 1949. He was recognised as the 'Father of the Police Federation' and 'King of the Snakes'. What a life he had.*

seirbheis.

Ach bha muinntir an Òbain fiadhaich. Sgrìobh iad chun a' Phrìomhaire, Lloyd George. An ceann seachdain, fhuair Tormod a dhreuchd air ais.

Bha stailc aig na poilis ann an naoi ceud deug is naoi-deug (1919). Thuig an riaghaltas gu feumadh iad rudeigin a dhèanamh. Chuir iad achdan tron Phàrlamaid. Chruthaich iad Caidreachas nam Poileas an Alba agus Caidreachas eile ann an Sasainn 's a' Chuimrigh.

Cha robh àrd-urrachan nam poileas toilichte le Tormod, ge-tà. Chuir iad a-mach às an Òban e. Dh'fheuch iad ri toirt air a dhreuchd a leigeil seachad tràth air adhbharan slàinte.

Thuir Tormod, 'Tha an duine a reiceas a phrionnsabalan airson àrdachadh tuarastail ... aig an aon ìre ri beathaichean an achaidh.' Bha a phrionnsabalan aige. Chùm e riutha gu daingeann.

Chaochail Tormod ann an Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain ann an naoi ceud deug, ceathrad 's a naoi (1949). Bha e aithnichte mar 'Athair Caidreachas nam Poileas' agus 'Rìgh nan Nathraichean'. Abair beatha a bha aige.