

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 572 (which corresponds to Litir 876). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk.

The year of the sheep. When the Cheviot sheep appeared in the Highlands. 1792.

Near Alness in Ross-shire, there is a glen called Gleann Mhuire. At one time a large population lived there. But they were cleared around the year 1790. The landlord was Sir Hector Munro of Novar. He gave the rights over the land to two brothers from Lochaber – Allan and Alexander Cameron. They introduced sheep.

North of Gleann Mhuire is Strath Rusdale. The people of Strath Rusdale had cattle. But the cattle were crossing the boundaries of the estate to the Kildermorie Deer Forest. The Camerons were gathering them and keeping them in a pen. The people of Strath Rusdale had to pay to get their cattle back.

The matter came to a head in May. The Strath Rusdale cattle were in a pen in Gleann Mhuire. But the people were wanting to free them without paying a [red] penny. They sent word to the people of Ardrross. They came. They and the people of

Bliadhna nan Caorach. Nuair a nochd a' chaora mhòr air a' Ghàidhealtachd. Seachd ceud deug, naochad 's a dhà (1792).

Faisg air Alanais ann an Siorrachd Rois, tha gleann air a bheil Gleann Mhuire. Uaireigin bha sluagh mòr a' fuireach ann. Ach chaidh am fuadachadh timcheall air seachd ceud deug is naochad (1790). B' e an t-uachdaran Sir Eachann Rothach à Taigh an Fhuamhair. Thug e còraichean air an fhearann do dhithis bhràithrean à Loch Abar – Ailean agus Alasdair Camshron. Thug iadsan caoraich a-steach.

Gu tuath air Gleann Mhuire, tha Srath Rùsdail. Bha crodh aig muinntir Shrath Rùsdail. Ach bha an crodh a' dol thairis air crìochan na h-oighreachd gu Frìth Chille Mhuire. Bha na Camshronaich gan trusadh is gan cumail ann an crò. Bha aig muinntir Shrath Rùsdail ri airgead a thoirt seachad airson an crodh fhaighinn air ais.

Thàinig gnothaichean gu ceann anns a' Chèitean. Bha crodh Shrath Rùsdail ann an crò ann an Gleann Mhuire. Ach bha na daoine ag iarraidh an saoradh gun sgillinn ruadh a phàigheadh. Chuir iad fios gu muinntir Àird Rois. Thàinig iad. Shaoraich iad fhèin agus

Strath Rusdale freed the cattle.

The Camerons took the matter to court. Eight people were facing charges of rioting and violence. But the jury found them not guilty.

In July the people of Strath Rusdale were at a wedding. The men decided to drive all of the sheep in the counties of Ross and Sutherland out and across the Beaully River – the border of Inverness-shire. Two hundred people came together in Strath Oykell.

They went to the farthest extent of the parish of Lairg. They drove every sheep ahead of them except for a flock belonging to the Sheriff of Ross, Donald MacLeod. They reached Boath, east of Gleann Mhuire, on the Saturday. But that's when the rebellion ended. On Sunday morning the sheriff appeared. A group of soldiers from Fort George was with him.

The rioters dispersed. But the soldiers got hold of some of them. They were taken to Novar House as prisoners. The matter wasn't finished, however. I'll tell you more about the dispute in the next Litir.

muintir Shrath Rùsdail an crodh.

Thug na Camshronaich a' chùis gu cùirt. Bha ochdnar fo chasaid de dh'aimhreit is dochann. Ach fhuair an diùraidh neoichiontach iad.

Anns an Iuchar bha muintir Shrath Rùsdail aig banais. Chuir na fir romhpa na caoraich gu lèir ann an siorrachdan Rois is Chataibh iomain a-mach agus thairis air Abhainn Fharair – crìoch Siorrachd Inbhir Nis. Thàinig dà cheud duine cruinn còmhla ann an Srath Òiceall.

Chaidh iad gu ceann a-mach sgìre na Luirge. Dh'iomain iad a h-uile caora romhpa ach a-mhàin treud le Siorram Rois, Dòmhnall MacLeòid. Ràinig iad Na Bothachan, sear air Gleann Mhuire, Disathairne. Ach 's ann an uair sin a thàinig an t-ar-a-mach gu ceann. Madainn na Sàbaid nochd an siorram. Bha buidheann de shaighdearan à Gearasdan Deòrsa còmhla ris.

Sgap luchd na h-aimhreit. Ach fhuair na saighdearan grèim air feadhainn dhiubh. Bha iad air an cur gu Taigh an Fhuamhair mar phrìosanaich. Cha robh a' chùis seachad, ge-tà. Innsidh mi dhuibh tuilleadh mun aimhreit anns an ath Litir.