

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 366. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 62 corresponds to Litir 366.*

Nuair a leugh an Siorram Achd na h-Aimhreit, agus Sabaid Mhòr Inbhir Ùige a’ dol air sràidean a’ bhaile air an t-seachdamh latha fichead dhen Lùnastal ochd ceud deug, caogad ’s a naoi (1859), dh’fhalbh a’ chuid a bu mhotha dhen fheadhainn a bha an sàs anns an ùpraid. Ach thàinig buidheann dhiubh còmhla a-rithist faisg air làimh. Bha seo aig naoi uairean feasgair, mu dhà uair a thìde às dèidh don ùpraid tòiseachadh.

’S e Gàidheil a bh’ anns an fheadhainn seo agus bha iad airson briseadh a-steach do stèisean nam poileas airson na companaich aca, a bh’ ann an grèim, a leigeil a-mach. Ach bha na poilis a’ feitheamh riutha. Bha batail ann airson deich mionaidean, ach chaidh na h-iasgairean Gàidhealach iomain air ais. Sgaoil iad an uair sin. Uile-gu-lèir, aig deireadh na h-oidhche, bha sianar air a bhith an grèim nam poileas. Chaidh aon duine a leigeil ma sgaoil air an oidhche sin, agus bha triùir eile gu bhith a’ faighinn an saorsa an làrna-mhàireach.

Ach cha b’ e sin e a thaobh aimhreit. Bha còmhlain de ghillean à Inbhir Ùige a’ coiseachd nan sràidean, a’ coimhead airson Gàidheil air an toireadh iad ionnsaigh. Bha iad ag aithneachadh nan Gàidheal bhon cuid bhonaidean. Bha mòran de na Gàidheil a’ loidseadh ann am Pulteneytown, gu deas air Abhainn Ùige. Ach gu fortanach, fhuair feadhainn aca taic bho na daoine aig an robh iad a’ loidseadh – airson faighinn air ais gu sàbhailte.

Bhiodh a’ chùirt na suidhe mar bu trice aig naoi uairean sa mhadainn air Diluain. Thòisich feadhainn air tighinn cruinn anns na sràidean taobh a-muigh taigh na cùirte cho tràth ri seachd uairean. Cha deach taigh na cùirte fhosgladh agus aig deich uairean bha an sluagh a’ fàs mì-fhoighidneach. Bha slatan fiodha aig cuid aca. Thòisich feadhainn, a bh’ air a bhith a’ sabaid le chèile oidhche Shathairne, air maoidheadh air a chèile a-rithist. Bha mu cheithir mìle duine ann. Bhruidhinn oifigearan is ministearan riutha ach cha do rinn e diofar. **Chaidh an dithis phrìosanach** – Raibeart Dòmhnallach agus fear eile – **a leigeil ma sgaoil air urras**, ach cha do shàsaich sin an sluagh.

Bha dà rud ann a cheannsaich a’ mhì-rian air an latha sin. Anns a’ chiad dol a-mach bha caiptean a’ *Princess Royal* – soitheach dìon-iasgaich an riaghaltais – an làthair. ’S ann à Leòdhas a bha e agus bha mòran de na bha an làthair eòlach air. Bha fichead dhen chriutha aige ann cuideachd airson taic a thoirt do na poilis. Agus, a bharrachd air sin, thàinig buidheann de shaighdearan don bhaile air eacarsaich.

Sgaoil an sluagh ach cha deach na h-iasgairean gu muir. Thug trì fichead constabal sònraichte am bòidean, eagal ’s gum biodh aimhreit a bharrachd ann. Chuir an Siorram fios do na h-ùghdarrasan ann an Dùn Èideann. Chaidh glè bheag de bhàtaichean gu muir Dimàirt no Diciadain agus cha robh muinntir a’ bhaile air an socair, ged nach robh sabaid a bharrachd

ann air na làithean sin. Dh'fhalbh cuid de na h-iasgairean Gàidhealach dhachaigh Diardaoin. Bha uiread de mhì-thoileachas ann agus cha robh iad ag iarraidh a bhith ann tuilleadh.

Ach gu mì-fhortanach cha robh Sabaid Mhòr Inbhir Ùige seachad. Disathairne, nochd feachdan cogaidh **air bòrd nan long** – am *Prince Consort* agus an *Jackal*. Leis gu robh saighdearan gu leòr aige a-nise, chuir an Siorram roimhe grèim fhaighinn a-rithist air Raibeart Dòmhnallach a chaidh a leigeil ma sgaoil air urras còig latha roimhe. Agus chì sinn dè thachair, agus mar a thàinig an fhòirneart gu ceann, anns an ath Litir.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** uile-gu-lèir: *altogether*; a' loidseadh: *lodging*; mì-fhoighidneach: *impatient*; eacarsaich: *exercise*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Achd na h-Aimhreit: *The Riot Act*; Sabaid Mhòr Inbhir Ùige: *The Great Fight of Wick*; a bha an sàs: *who were involved*; mu dhà uair a thìde às dèidh don ùpraid tòiseachadh: *about two hours after the mayhem started*; airson na companaich aca a leigeil a-mach: *to release their companions*; chaidh na h-iasgairean iomain air ais: *the fishermen were driven back*; sgaoil iad: *they dispersed*; bha sianar air a bhith an grèim nam poileas: *six people had been in police custody*; gu bhith a' faighinn an saorsa an làrna-mhàireach: *were to receive their freedom the following day*; cha b' e sin e: *that wasn't it [all]*; air an toireadh iad ionnsaigh: *whom they would attack*; bhon cuid bhonaidean: *from their bonnets*; gu deas air Abhainn Ùige: *south of the Wick River*; bhiodh a' chùirt na suidhe mar bu trice: *the court would usually sit*; a bh' air a bhith a' sabaid le chèile: *who had been fighting each other*; thòisich iad air maoidheadh air a chèile: *they started to threaten each other*; cha do shàsaich sin an sluagh: *that did not satisfy the crowd*; a cheannaich a' mhìrrian: *which subdued the disorder*; soitheach dìon-iasgaich: *fishery protection vessel*; cha deach na h-iasgairean gu muir: *the fishermen didn't go to sea*; thug trì fichead constabal sònraichte am bòidean: *60 special constables took their vows*; eagal 's gum biodh aimhreit a bharrachd ann: *in the fear that there would be further rioting*; bha uiread de mhì-thoileachas ann: *there was so much unhappiness*; cha robh iad ag iarraidh a bhith ann tuilleadh: *they didn't want to be there anymore*; mar a thàinig an fhòirneart gu ceann: *how the violence came to an end*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** **air bòrd nan long:** *on board the ships*. Long is here in the genitive (plural) following the compound preposition air bòrd (“on board of”). It is a somewhat irregular, or perhaps more properly, old-fashioned genitive plural. The nominative plural is longan – with a terminal –an – so one might expect the genitive plural to be the same (following a general grammatical rule). But long follows an older mode and reverts to the nominative singular form in the genitive plural. If in doubt think of the “port of the ships” on Skye – Port nan Long (*Portnalong* in English).

**Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach:** **Chaidh an dithis phrìosanach a leigeil ma sgaoil air urras:** the two prisoners were released on bail.

\* Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoineachadh le Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig.