



[Planasker School]

In the absence of roads the schools were normally sited near the sea. Our school catchment area was Marvig and Calbost and our school was sited near the sea at Marvig. It was called Planasker School which was an English corruption of the Gaelic name of the field on which the school is built. The name comes from the waterfall on the stream to the south of the school. The Gaelic word for waterfall is 'eas' and the field on which the school is built on croft 8 Marvig was known as 'Blar an Dubh', which apparently sounds to the English ear as 'Planasker'. The word dubh 'black' is applied to features of the landscape in this vicinity such as, 'Loch Dubh' etc.

Of course Marvig humour surfaced with an alternative version of the name Planasker. The story was that one of the nearby crofters came to pass the time of day with the builders of the school regularly, and he invariably asked about the plan for the school, hence when the builders saw him coming, they would say, here comes the plan-asker.

The total roll at Planasker School on its first opening day 16th April 1880 was 30 pupils. On the second day the attendance was better at 47 pupils. During the early period of the school the attendance was very irregular. All five schools in Park were three teacher schools at one time. Planasker School became a one teacher school in 1953 and the junior secondary pupils were sent to Cromore School and later on to Gravir School. The school was heated by an open peat fire for the first 40 years or so and the pupils each brought a peat to school every morning for the fire. The last pupil from Calbost was Murdo C Mackinnon who was born in 1961. The writer was one of seven new admissions from Calbost to Planasker in 1921.

In the circumstances the primary village school did reasonably well for our English education but neglected our mother tongue, the Gaelic language, which was the only speech we knew when we went to school. We never had a Gaelic lesson during the time we were at school.

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Author: Angus Macleod

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