

In 1878 the sewing mistress was Miss Barbara Grant and she was still there in 1880, but in Oct 1886 the sewing mistress is Miss Jessie Grant.

In May 12, 1890 the sewing mistress is reported as having resigned and Miss C Macdonald was appointed.

The sewing mistress sometimes had to assist with the general teaching duties.

Miss Maggie White when she took over from William Grant reported that all the pupils sew, but do not knit.

There is no further mention of sewing until 1942, when the H.M.I.'s report says that the sewing is of good standard but suggests a choice of less ambitious garments be given in view of the reduced numbers of pupils.(4)

In 1881 Mr Grant complains of very unsatisfactory attendances of the higher standards. Some are employed at home almost every 2nd day. Some are daily absent and of those who daily attend, they are beginning to fall back in their standard of work in spite of all my efforts to qualify them. MR Innes, H.M.I. reports payment of grant for History and Geography recommended with hesitation because of poor attendance. Despite reports of parents being called upon to request children to attend, little success was reported.(5)

Their instances reported of so few children returning from holiday that an extra week's holiday had to be granted, as in 1880.

In 1893, 63 children were on the roll, of whom only 5 attended regularly in one week.

Poor attendances due to illness:-

Nov/Dec, 1884 - only five pupils sometimes in attendance

Oct, 1890 - late harvest

Aug, 1891 - attendances so poor that attendance officer sent around to warn offending parents.

Mar, 1887 - measles and chickenpox - school closed by Dr Sturrock, Golspie

Apr 26, 1889 - Parents fearing to send pupils to school for fear of diphtheria outbreak.

Mar, 1892 - Closed because no children came.

Apr, 1892 - Closed by medical officer due to outbreak of whooping cough.

Feb, 1896 - Skin eruption was common amongst the children, affecting their attendance. Seen in May by Dr Sutherland since some still affected.

Jan, 1897 - Mumps epidemic.

1908 - Poor attendance due to whooping cough.

1920 - Influenza, complicated in Mar, 1920 by whooping cough.

Oct, 1924 - Dr Bremner closed the school between 9th and 24th due to measles, epidemic so bad closure extended for another week.

After visits of Mr Howie, the dentist, a number of absences were always noted.

At first research on Rearquhar School proved difficult.(1)

The dimensions of the classrooms:-

1. The schoolroom - In 1878 40.2 x 17.10 x 14.3 high
In 1925 32.7 x 16.7 x 14.3 high
2. The classroom - In 1878 11.4 x 17.10 x 14.3 high
In 1925 18.11x 16.7 x 14.3 high (2)

On May 18,1880 at a school inspection there were 70 pupils present,and on Feb 9,1882 there were 82 pupils present,and in Mar,1884 84 pupils present.

A progress report on the pupils in Oct 1900 stated that pupils were not allowed to leave school without a Labour Certificate nor the Merit Certificate.(3)

On the 24th of September,1880 Mr Innes,H.M.Inspector suggested that the schoolroom needed to be washed occasionally as the floor was dirty.On the 8th of March 1878,books were sent by the board called Readers.They were given 13 Standard One,2 Standard Two and 8 Standard Three.In 1879 H.M.I. suggested the desks should have slate racks,and on the 24th December,1880 he states that the infant apparatus that he advised purchasing on his last visit should be got at once.He also complained that the door latches were inconvenient in use and it would necessary to improve the latches or remove them,as the door had to be opened by a process of hammering.
On the 8th of January,1912 the grate in the classroom had been removed on the Saturday and not replaced,and the children were dismissed at 2.45p.m. because the teacher reports it was impossible to keep the younger children without a fire.

In Jan 1884 a singing master was appointed,but name is unknown.

In Oct 1896there was a new Comp. Officer appointed - Mr Angus Ross,and at the Board's request he was to teach the pupils to sing,and the pupil teacher,John MacBeath,undertook to teach them drill.The board supplied songbooks and these ideas must have been adopted enthusiastically since two weeks the pupils had musical drill.On the 10th of April,1900 they were still singing notes.

In 1901 six new drawing slates were received,and in Nov 1901,nature drawing,free arm drawing and designing work was commenced at the school.At that time the inspector's report stated that the singing was fairly good,and the sewing neat.

The 12th of November,1902 the inspector suggested the pupils sing with greater heartiness.

The school re-opened on Sept 15,1914 but closed the next day because it had not been cleaned out.(4).

May 13,1926 - Attendances reported as still worse - only 14 present, and the coughing of those present was so terrible that a 4-hour day was marked and the pupils dismissed.

Poor Attendances due to other reasons:-

1. Employed driving peats and working in the fields. They also worked at the harvest, at potato planting and gathering and, although they had official holidays for these, if any of these were late for any reason, then the children stayed away from school. In Jan, 1920 the children were off for clipping turnips.

2. Jan 26 - Feb 8 - closed due to stormy weather

3. Jan, 1895 - closed due to bad weather and, because of time lost that year between Jan and May, 1895 from illness and bad weather, children often attended on a Sat. to make up for lost time.

4. Jan/Feb, 1897 - School closed at times due to bad weather, and after re-opening, on Feb 1st - 2 pupils, Feb 2nd - 1 pupil, so they closed school until 19th Feb.

5. Jan/Feb, 1901 - Bad snow storm and bad roads - attendance as low as 3, and one day no pupils attended. Roads in dreadful state in March due to snow storms.

5. Dec, 1901/Jan, 1902 - Snow storms so bad that roads impassable at times and no pupils attended some days. These storms continued into Feb.

6. Dec, 1906 - Feb, 1907, snow storms so bad that attendances were poor and sometimes no children attended. (6)

Staff:-

William Grant - Born 1850 and appointed Nov, 1872 to Free School at Birichen. In 1875 reported as passing an examination and obtaining a position in the Third Division of the class list. (7) X 8

He married the teacher from Balvraid in 1900 at the age of 50, and they went to Strath Halladale and had one daughter. He tendered his resignation from Rearquhar School and left in 1899. of the reasons he gives for leaving is "owing to the extreme irregularity of certain children, whom I could not get to attend regularly."

An H.M.I. report on 25.05.1875 suggested the teacher's time would be well spent during spare hours in acquiring a knowledge at least of the elementary portions of military drill, with a view to instructing his pupils in such drill.

In 1889 the H.M.I. report by C.J.B. Milne stated the children to be quiet, orderly and honest, and school is conducted with painstaking fidelity.

On Dec, 1890, in spite of asking the board for help, no monitors had been appointed at that time, and Grant asked 2 senior boys to help him with pupils.

In Aug,1891,H.M.I. states he appreciates the difficulties of Mr Grant,and says he should not attempt too much unless better supported.Occasionally he was asked by the board to attend court in a prosecution case.

In Apr,1891 he complains of having no assistance,and is unable to help by giving extra tuition to those attending irregularly.

Miss Barbara Grant - Sewing Teacher - transferred from Birichen to Rearquhar when the school opened and was still sewing teacher in 1880,but in 1886 the sewing teacher was Miss Jessie Grant.

Alexander Campbell was appointed pupil teacher at Rearquhar in 1884,leaving in July,1888.His date of birth is June,1868.

Monitors:-

In 1889,the board appointed Robert Sutherland and Lexy MacLeod as monitors,but Robert Sutherland refused to accept the office,and Lexy MacLeod left in Mar,1890.

On Mar 17,1890 they appointed Johan Mackay and Jane/James? Grant as monitors.In Dec 1890,no monitors and 2 senior boys being used.

By 1891 the sewing mistress, Miss C. MacDonald is helping him. In Nov, 1891 Lizzie Macleod is helping him. She left in Oct, 1893 and Lizzie Oman was appointed, and by June, 1894 Alexander Campbell, ex pupil teacher, was asked to help out. By June, 1895 Miss Munro from Dornoch School was asked to assist for a few weeks before H.M.I. was due.

In Nov, 1895 Lizzie Oman left, and on Dec 2, 1895, John MacBeath was appointed pupil teacher by the board.

In 1898 the pupil teacher was transferred to Embo p.s., and on Jan 16, 1899 William David MacBeath was appointed monitor, and in Oct, 1899 he was appointed pupil teacher for 4 years, and the board stated he was to receive lessons in Dornoch P.S. - otherwise he was to be taught at Rearquhar.