

Scots Language MP3 Scots Transcript and English Translation

Transcribed and translated by Dr Dauvit Horsbroch

The following is a brief conversation between an interviewer (speaking mostly North East Scots) and a respondent (speaking North-East Scots).

In = interview

R = Respondent

1. Scots Transcription

In – Far did ye gang tae the school Neil?

R – A wis brocht up in Couter, jist ootside Aiberdeen, an thon wis far A first gaed tae the scweel, tae the local primary scweel.

In – An fit wis it like, did ye get ony Scots thare?

R – It wis a primary scweel wi twa-three hunner bairns in a tounie wi a puckle thousand fowk, pairt suburban an pairt country. Naw, we didna get ony Scots, it jist wisna alloued an the lessons wis aw in English. Haein said that, tae start wi, the war some o the bairns cuidna spik onything but Scots, sae the teachers jist haed tae thole it. As the time gaed by thay tholed it less an less tho.

In – So did ye get the strap for speakin Scots?

R – Fan I wis at the scweel in the 1960's thay wisna daein that ony mair. Bi then Aiberdeenshire wis a bittie mair forrit-lookin ye see. A'v heard aboot that kin o thing gain on in ither places in the sooth o Scotland tho, for a lang time efter.

In – An far did ye gang efter Couter?

R – A gaed tae the secondary scweel in Cults, aboot three mile along the road tae Aiberdeen.

In – Fit wis it like thare?

R – A far bigger scweel takkin in bairns fae a far bigger area. Nae sae mony bairns fae the country, an nae sae mony o them spikkin Scots.

In – But did ye get ony Scots in yer lessons in this place?

R – Ay, we did. A wee bittie poetry. A mind in the fourth year we got tae read local poets like Alexander Scott an ither eens like Hugh MacDairmid. It wis hard readin wir ain tongue, seen as we'd never deen't afore, an forby the wis a lot o literary words we didna ken.

In – Hoo did ye learn tae read an write Scots richt then, if ye didna learn it at the school?

R – Like mony worthwhile things in life, A jist haed tae learn it masel efterhin.

2. English Translation

In – Where did you go to school Neil?

R – I was brought up in Culter, just outside Aberdeen, and that is where I first went to school, to the local primary school.

In – And what was it like, did you get any Scots there?

R – It was a primary school with two or three hundred children in a little town with a few thousand people, partly suburban and partly rural. Nope, we didn't get any Scots, it just wasn't allowed and the lessons were all in English. Having said that, to begin with, there were a few children who couldn't speak anything except Scots, so the teachers just had to endure it. As time went by though they tolerated it less and less.

In – So did you get belted for speaking Scots?

R – When I was at school in the 1960's they weren't doing that any more. By then Aberdeenshire was a little more progressive you see. I've heard about that sort of thing going on in other places in the south of Scotland though, for a long time afterwards.

In – And where did you go after Culter?

R – I went to the secondary school in Culter, which is about three miles along the road towards Aberdeen.

In – What was it like there?

R – A far bigger school taking in children from a far bigger area. Not so many children from the country, and not so many of them speaking Scots.

In – But did you get any Scots in your lessons in this place?

R – Yes, we did. Just a little bit of poetry. I remember that in the fourth year we got to read local poets such as Alexander Scott and other ones like Hugh MacDiarmid. It was hard reading our own tongue, seeing as we had never done it before, and, in addition, there were a lot of literary words we didn't know.

In – So how did you learn to read and write Scots the right way if you weren't taught it in school?

R – Like many worthwhile things in life, I just had to learn it by myself in subsequent years.