

Notes on spelling preferences and variation in the Manx Bible

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The Bible is by far our most extensive repository of ‘standard’ Manx, of which orthography is a part. Some recent work on proof-reading the Bible text (and Apocryphal books) for *Yn Vible Ghaelgagh* online <https://manx.global.bible/> has brought into focus exactly what this standard consists of. Though in a good number of cases there is variation in spelling, often this variation displays a strong preference. I record below as preferred spellings those which dominate over alternatives in a proportion of 2:1 or more.

After that I list most of the words where the alternatives are more evenly matched.

Preferred spellings

Apostrophes and hyphens in verb forms:

Future/Conditional Dependent *n-*, and Perfect *n-*: generally *n*’ preferred

cha n’aag, nagh n’aase, mannagh n’eaisht, dy n’oshil, nagh n’eiyragh, cha n’ee-ym
er n’aase, er n’ee, er n’yannoo, er n’oardaghey

Past tense *d-*: generally no apostrophe, except *d’ee* ‘ate’

daag, daarlee, daase, daggle, dansoor, daill, deaisht, deayshil, deearree, deeasee, dettyl, duillee,
duirree, dyllee, dymmyrk
NB *jimmee* ×155 > *dimmee* ×2

Future *-ym*: variable hyphen, *-ym* preferred, and strongly after vowel, *sceabym, cheb-ym, cha greidym, bishee-ym, brah-ym, brasnee-ym, chyndaa-ym, stroie-ym, lhiggym ~ lhig-ym*

Future *-yms*, generally with hyphen:

aag-yms, brish-yms, cheb-yms, chyndaa-yms

Future relative *-ys*, generally without hyphen, except after vowel:

aagys, aarlys mayd, bwoaillys, obbys; but *hee-ys, chyndaa-ys, chea-ys, chleiy-ys, ee-ys, eïe-ys, livrey-ys, lhie-ys*

Future *-ee*, with hyphen only after vowel: *ceau-ee, stroie-ee, snaue-ee*

Plural imperative: *-jee* always with hyphen:

aarlee-jee

NB 1pl future *mayd/maynin* are always written as separate words.

Emphatic *-s* with conjugated prepositions, generally with *’s*: *aym’s, ayd’s, aynym’s, aynyd’s*, etc.

Emphatic *-s*, 1sg fut. verb *-yms, hee-ym, hee-yms*; but in forms without *y*: *’s: beam’s* (but *bee’m*), etc., *neem’s, nee’m*,

Prepositions:

ass

assym/assym’s, assyd/assyd’s, ass-jee, assdiu, assdoo

harrish

harrym, harryd, harrish, har’ee, harrin, harriu ×2/***harrishdiu*** ×17/*harrystiu* ×4, *harroo* ×1
(*harroosyn* ×3)/*harrishdoo* ×2/***harrystoo*** ×72

jeh

jee’m/jeem’s, jeed, j’ee/jeeish, jeh/jehsyn, j’in/j’inyn, j’iu/jiuish, jeu/jeusyn

lesh

lhiam, lhiat lesh, lh’ee/lh’eeish, lhien/lhienyn ~ lhianyn, lhieu/lhieuish, lhieu/lhieusyn; but predominantly *s’liesh/by-liesh/my-liesh*

marish + Noun Phrase

mârym/mârym’s, mayrt/mayrt’s, mârish/mârishyn ‘with him/it’, *mâree, mârin, mêriu, mâroo/mâroosyn*

noi + Noun Phrase, or + *ec*

m’oi, dt’oi, n’oi/n,oi-syn ‘against him/it’, *n’oïee, nyn ’oi/nyn ’oi-syn*

rish

rhym/rhym’s, rhyt/rhyt’s, rish/rishyn, r’ee/reeish, rooin/rooinyn, riu/riuish, roo/roosyn

roish

roym, royd, roish/roishyn, ro-ee ~ rhymbree, roin, reue/reueish ~ rhymbiu/rhymbiuish, roue/rouesyn ~ rhymbioo

Use of *ī*: often in participles after a vowel *-a* or *-e*: *charbaīt, imraīt, lheīt*; but not always: *craait, livreīt* ×18 ~ *livreit* ×10, *fraueit*; rarely after *-o* or *-u*: thus *goit* ×157, *sliennooit, roit, broit, stroit, soit, saait, shleeuit, scruit*

The following words are generally written with *ī*:

aigh
baie
beill
beīyn (see below)
ben-rein
blein
brein
broid
caid
clein
eie, v., eīt
eilley (see below)
ein/hein
feai-ny-cruinney
feeaiih (see below)
feie, feieys
greie, but greīynyn = greinyn
greīney (see below)
jei/yei
jeir/yeir/yheir in *my yheir, dy yheir*
lheie, but lheieder
meir/veir
oi: see Prepositions *noi*
roie
schlei, but *schleioil > schleioil*
soilley (see below)
straid (see below)
void, voīn
yoīn

The following few words, with their inflected forms, are generally written with a circumflex:

cōmys
ēgin, er-ēgin
ēginagh(ey)
ērin
fēnaght(yn), fēnee, fēnit
mārym (see Prepositions)
ōney, ōnid
shēgin er

Preferred spellings:

'sy(n) > sy(n)

*beign > *begin*

beīyn strongly predominates in the Torah, *beīyn* elsewhere; *veīyn > veīyn*

boallagh = bollagh > b'oallagh

brack > breck 'spotted' in Genesis only.

breg, sg., breagyn pl.

cass, but NB *kass son kass* in Exo 21.24 in 'Sooill son sooill, feeackle son feeackle, laue son laue, kass son kass'

cayrn = 'heap' (spelt *carn* in Cregeen and Kelly); also *cayrn* = 'trumpet'

charbaīt > charbaait

chouyl: choll (Cregeen) *choull* (Kelly)

chum > chumm

chyndaīt > chyndaait

coardail, v., n.; *cordail rish* prep.
cre'n-fa ×293 > *cre'n fa* ×16
cre'n-oyr ×24 > *cre'n oyr* ×12
cre-erbee ×131 > *cre erbee* ×15
cre-woad > *cre woad*
croink 'hills' usually in the Bible, though *cruink* is to be found elsewhere.
cuir = invite, quench; *cuirr* = sow, cast (net), *chuir* = invited, quenched; *chuirr* = sowed, cast (net)
cur-my-ner (*hug eh my-ner*, etc)
curnaght ×40 > *curnagh* ×11
da-eed > **daeed*, *three-feed*, *kiare-feed*, *queig-feed*, *shey-feed shiaght-feed*, *hoght-feed*, *nuy-feed*
doayrn/ghoayrn > **doarn/ghoarn*, pl. *duirn*, but *e ghurn*, *nyn ghurn*
dorrin > *doirryn*
drilleen and *drillin* are variant forms, the latter generally more common.
drogh-yantagh, *drogh-yantee* 'evil-doer(s)', but *jeantee* 'doers'.
dy cheilley > *dy-cheilley*
eirinnagh, one -r-, two -n- is the predominant spelling.
er-ash
er-be > *erbe*
er-dy, *er-dyn*
er-dy-henney > *er dy henney*
er-dy-rieau > *er dy rieau*
er-gerrey > *er gerrey*
er-jerrey > *er jerrey*
er-mayrn > *er mayrn*
er-nonney > *er nonney*
er-rouyl > *er rouyl*
er-shaghryn > *er shaghryn*
er-y-fa
er-yn-oyr
faillish = Cregeen's *falleays* 'glimpse of light'; *Pargys Caillit* also *f(e)alleise*, *faillase*
fey-ny-laa ~ *fey-yn-laa*
fluigh > **fliugh*
foalley: generally, the Bible distinguishes *foalley* 'of flesh' from *folley* 'of blood'.
fo-chosh > *fo chosh*
fooilliagh
fuirriaght > *fuirraght*
gerrit
greiney > *greiney*, in proportion 2:1 in the Bible.
greime n., but *greim/greimm*, *ghreim/ghreimm*, *greimmey* v.
gyere ×61 > *geyre*, *geayr*
hee-ym ×11/*hee-ym* ×2/*hee'm* ×2 (B+A), *hee*, *hee mayd*, *hee-ys* ×12 (B+A)
Hew = *Ew*. John, Acts, favour *Hew*. Rom. favours *Ew*. But pl. is *Hewnyn*, exc. once *Ewnyn* in Rom.
hie ee > *hiee*
hrogh ×9 > *chrogh* ×3 'hung/hanged' (NB *chraisht* for *hraisht* suggests /xr/ and /hr/ were pronounced the same)
kied: In the Bible the spelling *nyn gied* is used only for 'their permission', and the somewhat anomalous *nyn ghied* for 'their first'; *nyn gied* = 'their first', etc. in other texts.
kione: Anomalous spelling *nyn ghing* (×59, for *nyn ging* ×3 'their heads') strongly preferred in the Bible.
kymmagh: Cregeen takes *kymmagh* as a variant of *kimmagh*, but the senses ('fool' and 'criminal', respectively) of the two in Bible trans. seem different.
latal > *lail*
leayr: *b'leayr*, but *cha lheear*
lhiassaghey, *lhiassaghey*: NB Cregeen makes a distinction between *lhiassaghey* 'atone, ransom, amend'; and *lhiassaghey* 'allege, assert (falsely)'. This distinction seems to be observed in the OT, in the verbal noun in part, but in the NT *lhiassaghey* is used for both, and in the OT *lhiasssee* for 'amend, repair'.
lhoobey v. (×18) > *loobey* (×2); but *loob* n. predominantly in Bible. NB all occurrences of *loob/loobyn* n. (× 52) are in *Exo*.
liaoar: NB *s'liaoar* (×11) preferred spelling for *s'liaoar* (×1)
lourane, but predominantly *louraanagh*, *louraanys*
mooadys > *mooads* > *mooad's*
mooish: unique anomalous spelling for *mysh* 'around' at *Gen*. 31.42

naight > *niaght*
nearey but *naaragh(ey)*, *naareydagh*
ny-neesht ×78 > *nyn-neesht* ×21
ny-sodjey ‘furthermore’
ny-yeih ×410 > *ny yeih* ×13
ommydan
ooil ×207 > *ooill* ×3; *ooilaghey* ×64 > *ooillaghey* ×18, *ooilit* ×17 > *ooillit* ×1, *ooslyn* ×4 > *ooillyn* ×1
quail ‘to meet’, *quaiyl* ‘assembly, court’, *quayl* ‘quail’
quoi-erbee ×230 > *quoi erbee* ×20
r’ou i.e. row oo
rait > *raait*
ribbeh, less frequent spelling for *ribbey* n.
roight trooid ‘run through’ (with a sword) seems to be the preferred spelling for this expression; *roit* ‘run’ elsewhere
ry-akin ×43 > *ry akin* ×5
ry-cheilley ×55 > *ry cheilley* ×4
ry-chlashtyn ×2 > *ry chlashtyn* ×1
ry-chosh
ry-gheddyn ×54 > *ry gheddyn* ×8
ry-heet ×58 > *ry heet* ×6
ry-lhiattee ×4 > *ry lhiattee* ×1
s’inshley ×19 > *s’inshilley* ×3 > *s’injilley* ×1
screeu n., *scrieu* v.
scruiit
seyir and *seiyr* are both found for ‘carpenter’ sg. (4:1 in Bib and Apo); likewise both *seyir* and *seiyr* (10:3), + 1× *sieyr*, for ‘carpenters’ pl.
shen-y-fa
sheshaght-caggee: oddly, *cheshaght-chaggee* is strongly preferred ×46 in the Bible to *cheshaght-caggee* ×1, and likewise *heshaght-chaggee* ×60 to *heshaght-caggee* ×0; but *sheshaght-caggee* ×72 is preferred to *sheshaght-chaggee* ×2.
sheshaght-flaunyss (sic), otherwise *flaunys*
shlee ‘more’ (count)
shliawn > *shliawin*; pl. *shliawney*, comp. *shliawney*
skeilt > *scelt*
sliee > **shliee*
sluggey but *lhuggey*
smeyr = *smeir*. sg. not distinct from pl. in Bible, though in Apoc. (Ecclus) *smeyr* sg., *smeir* pl.
soilley, *soillee*, *hoill* > *hoill*, *hoilley* > *hoilley*; *soilit* > *soilit*, *soillit*
soorit ×46 > *soorid* ×13
taittin/daittin/haittin > *daittyn/haittyn*
terriu > *teirroo*, *therriu*
yiall ×32 ‘promised’ > *ghiall* ×3
yiare- ×197 > *ghiare-* ×67
yiati- ×153 > *ghiat-* ×11
yien ×20 > *ghien* ×2
yiennaghtyn ×9 > *ghiennaghtyn* ×3
yientyn ×9 > *ghientyn* ×5

Variation:

baillin = *baillhien* = *baill-lhien*
baillloo = *baillhieu*
beïyn = *beïyn*
bishagh, n. Generally the form *bishagh* ‘increase’ is used. But *bishaght* seems to be a real, rarer, alternative.
blakey = *blâkey*
blasht(yn) = *blast(yn)* = *blayst(yn)* = *blaysht* = *blass*
 but *blaystal* > *blastal*
booa/vooa = *boa/voa*

bowaghyn = *bow'ghyn* = *bowghyn*
braa = *brâ*
breinaghey = *breinnaghey*
breinid = *breinnid*
brey = *breh*
brilleen = *brellein* = *brelleen* = *brellein*
brinneen = *brennein* = *brenneein*
bwoirrinagh = *bwoirrynagh*
by-liesh = *by-lesh*
byrragh = *birragh*
caarjys = *caardys*
caghlaait = *caghlaït*
cauaigey = *cooagey*
chaggil = *chaggle*
chiamble: pl. is *chiambleyn* or *chiambyllyn*.
chied er ny ruggey in OT, *chied-er-ny-ruggey* in NT.
chiu ×12 = *choo* ×7
cleieet = *cleight* = *cleiyht* = *cleiyt* ‘dug’
cleigh/chleigh = *cleiy/chleiy*
chuinnee = *clynnee* = *clinnee*
coar/choar = *coayr/choayr*
conningyn = *conninyn*
craie = *cray*
crubbit = *crybbit*
cur rish = *cur-rish*, proportions about even
dangeyr – *dangere*, *dangeyragh* = *dangeragh*
dewilys = *dewlys*
dhatt = *datt*
doarn = *doayrn*
dossan = *dhossan*
eillee = *eillee*, about equally common; *eïllit* > *eillit*
er e hon: *er y hon-syn* and *er e hon-syn* ‘for him’ are equally frequent. One cannot say the former is an error, though maybe less ‘standard’.
farkiagh = *farkiaght*
feeaih = *feeaih*; pl. *feeaihee*
feeudagh, *feeudys*: the stem is variously *feeud-*, *feud-*, *fud-*.
foddeeaght = *foddiaght*
geinnagh = *genniagh*
ghennal- = *yennal-*
ghialdyn- = *yialdyn-*, but *yiall* ×32 ‘promised’ > *ghiall* ×3
ghioot- ×16 = *yioot-* ×15
ghoin = *ghowin*, *goin* = *goïn*, 1 of each
greeshyn = *greeishyn*
heigh = *heiy* ‘gathered’
hellym = *helm* ‘blow (trumpet)’
jeeg = *jeeig*
kainlere, *cainlere* in OT, *cainleyr* in NT; but *cainle* > *kainle*
keeyl = *keeyll*
 NB gen. *kione e cheiley* (= *cheilley* in other texts. but 1 x *coayl e cheiley* in Apocrypha), *kione nyn geiley*
keoi = *keoie* = *keoie*
lhiettrimmys = *liettrimys* = *lhietrymys*
lhig-ym = *lhiggym*, and so with many other verbs that can have double consonants.
loaghee ×4 in *ISam* 6 = *lughee*
lowance = *lowanse*
loys/s'loys/by-loys ×19 = *lhoys/by-lhoys* ×13; NB *s' *lhoys*
main-oie = *mean-oie*, but *vean-oie*
mainshter = *mainshtyr*
mee hene ~ *mee-hene*, *oo hene* ~ *oo-hene*, etc.
mee-cheeyllid = *mee-cheilid* = *mee-cheilid*

meein = *meen*
meiley = *meilley* ‘bowl’
meshtall- = *meshteyll-* = *meshtyll-* = *meshtyr(ys)*
moee = *mooe*
mortar = *morter*
mucyn = *muckyn*
nhegin = *negin*
nhione = *nione*
parteeas = *paarteeas*
preis = *preish*
pyshoonagh ~ *pushoonagh*: *pyshoonagh* is a more common spelling. *Pushoonagh* is preferred in Thomas Christian’s *Pargys Caillt*.
reayllys = *reaillys* = *freillys* relative future of *freayll*
reygyryn = *reyggvryn* = *regvryn* = *reggyryn*
roosteen = *roosteyn*
sansheraght = *sonsheragh*
sauee = *saue-ee*
shirg- = *shyrg-*
shoalteyr = *shiolteyr*
shooyl: future stem either *shooill* or *shooyl(l)*; *shooyl-je* = *shooill-je*
shuin ~ *dy hioonyn*
sleayd- = *sleod-*
s'lhea = *shlea*
slheeadid = *slhe(e)aist*
smalyn = *smaylyn*
sooill: *thooill* = *tooill*
straid = *straid*, in proportion 65:37 including inflected forms.
streeuaghyn = *streeughyn*
taa = *taah*
thack = *tack*
thassane = *tassane*
thorran = *torran*
tobbyr = *tubbyr*. but *tobbyr-oonlee*, *tubbyryn*
traashtit = *traishtit*
whuaiyl = *whaiyl*
yarragh = *yiarragh*
yuilley = *ghuilley*