

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 *jimnee* ×155 > *dimnee* ×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, aarlyys mayd, bwoaillys, obbys; but *hee-ys, chyndaa-ys, chea-ys, chleiy-ys, ee-ys, eie-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’: *beem’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, jiu/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, mêriiu, mâroo/mâroosyn*

noi + Noun Phrase, or + *ec*

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

rish

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

roish

roym, royd, roish/roishyn, ro-ee ~ rhymbée, roïn, reue/reueish ~ rhymbiu/rhymbiuish,
roue/rouesyn ~ rhymbou

Use of ÿ: often in participles after a vowel -a or -e: *charbaït, imraït, lheït*; but not always: *craait, livreït* ×18 ~ *livreït* ×10, *fraueït*; rarely after -o or -u: thus *goït* ×157, *sliennooit, roït, broït, stroït, soït, saauït, shleeuït, scruiït*

The following words are generally written with ÿ:

aïgh
baïe
beïll
beïyn (see below)
ben-reïn
bleïn
breïn
broïd
caïd
cleïn
eïe, v., *eït*
eïlley (see below)
eïn/heïn
feï-ny-cruinney
feïaïh (see below)
feïe, feïeys
greïe, but *greïnyn* = *greïnyn*
greïney (see below)
jeï/yeï
jeïr/yeïr/yheïr in *my yheïr, dy yheïr*
lheïe, but *lheieder*
meïr/veïr
oï: see Prepositions *noi*
roïe
schleï, but *schleïoil* > *schleïoil*
soïlley (see below)
straïd (see below)
voïd, voïn
yoïn

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

cômys
êgin, er-êgin
êginagh(ey)
êrin
fênaght(yn), fênee, fênit
mârym (see Prepositions)
ôney, ônid
shêgin er

Preferred spellings:

'sy(n) > sy(n)

beïgn > **begin*

beïyn strongly predominates in the Torah, *beïyn* elsewhere; *veïyn* > *veïyn*

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'

charbaït > *charbaait*

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

chum > *chumm*

chyndaït > *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*, *faillaise*
fey-ny-laa ~ *fey-yn-laa*
fluigh > **fliugh*
foalley: generally, the Bible distinguishes *foalley* 'of flesh' from *folley* 'of blood'.
fo-chosh > *fo chosh*
foilliagh
fuirriaght > *fuirraght*
gerrit
greiney > *greiney*, in proportion 2:1 in the Bible.
greme 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 lhear*
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 *lhiassay* 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, *ooylyn* ×4 > *ooillyn* ×1
quail ‘to meet’, *quaiyl* ‘assembly, court’, *quayl* ‘quail’
quoi-erbee ×230 > *quoi erbee* ×20
r’ou i.e. row *oo*
raït > *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 = *smeïr*. sg. not distinct from pl. in Bible, though in Apoc. (Ecclus) *smeyr* sg., *smeïr* pl.
soilley, *soillee*, *hoill* > *hoill*, *hoilley* > *hoilley*; *soilit* > *soilit*, *soillit*
soorit ×46 > *soorid* ×13
taittin/daittin/haïttin > *daittyn/haïttyn*
terriu > *teirroo*, *therriu*
yiall ×32 ‘promised’ > *ghiall* ×3
yiare- ×197 > *ghiare-* ×67
yiatic- ×153 > *ghiat-* ×11
yien ×20 > *ghien* ×2
yiennaghtyn ×9 > *ghiennaghtyn* ×3
yientyn ×9 > *ghientyn* ×5

Variation:

baillin = *baillhien* = *baill-lhien*
baillloo = *baillhieu*
beiyn = *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* = *bläss*
 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 = caghlaît
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
cluinnee = 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
eilley = eilley, about equally common; eillit > 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 feeed-, feud-, fud-.
foddeeaght = foddiaight
geinnagh = genniagh
ghennal- = yennal-
ghialdyn- = yialdyn-, but yiall ×32 'promised' > ghiall ×3
ghioot- × 16 = yioot- ×15
ghoin = ghowin, goin = goin, 1 of each
greeshyn = greeishyn
heigh = heiy 'gathered'
hellym = helm 'blow (trumpet)'
jeeg = jeieg
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 1Sam 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 = mooee
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 = reyggyryn = regyryn = reggyryn
roosteen = roosteeyn
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)ayst
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