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’eey-ym
- er n’aase, er n’ee, er n’yanno, 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: beem’s (but bee’m), etc., neem’s, nee’m,

Prepositions:

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

harrish
- harrym, harryd, harrish, har’ee, harrin, harriu ×2/harrishdiu ×17/harrysti ×4, harroo ×1 (harroosyn ×3)/harrysdoo ×2/harrystoo ×72

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

lesh
- lhiam, lihats lesh, lh’ee/lh’eeish, lhien/lhienyn ~ lhianyn, lhieu/lhieuish, lhieu/lhieusyn; but predominantly s’liesh/b-iesh/my-iesh

marish + Noun Phrase
- märym/märym’s, mayrt/mayrt’s, märish/märishyn ‘with him/it’, märee, märin, mériu, märoo/märoosyn

noi + Noun Phrase, or + ec
- m’ōi, d’tōi, n’ōi/n’ōi-syn ‘against him/it’, n’ōiëe, nyn ’ōi/nyn ’ōi-syn

risht
- rhyrm/rhyrm’s, rhyt/rhyt’s, risht/rishtyn, r’ee/reeish, rooin/rooinyn, riu/riuish, roo/roosyn
Use of ç: often in participles after a vowel -a or -e: charbaït, imraït, lheït; but not always: craait, livreït ×18 ~ livreit ×10, fraueit; rarely after -o or -u: thus goit ×157, sliennooit, roït, broït, stroït, soït; saauit, schleuït, scrut

The following words are generally written with ç:

aïgh
baïe
beïll
beïyn (see below)
ben-reïn
bleïn
breïn
broïd
caid
cleïn
eïe, v., eït
eïlley (see below)
eïn/heïn
feai-ny-cruïnney
feeâth (see below)
feïë, feïëys
greïë, but greïnyn = greïnyn
greïney (see below)
jeï/yeï
jeïr/yhr/yheïr in my yhr, dy yheïr
lheïë, but theïeder
meïr/veïr
oi: see Prepositions noi
roïë
schleië, but schleioïl > schleioïl
soïlley (see below)
straid (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)
ërin
fênaðt(yn), fênee, fênit
mârym (see Prepositions)
ôney, ônid
shëgin er

Preferred spellings:
'sy(n) > sy(n)
beign > *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 sooiill, feeackle son feeackle, laue son laue, kass son kass’
cayrn = ‘heap’ (spelt carr in Cregeen and Kelly); also cayrn = ‘trumpet’
charbaït > charbaait
chouyl: choll (Cregeen) choull (Kelly)
chum > chumm
chyndait > chyndait
coardail, v., n.; cordail risk 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 wood
croink ‘hills’ usually in the Bible, though croink is to be found elsewhere.
cuir = invite, quench; cuirr = sowed, cast (net); chuirr = invited, quenched; chuirrr = sowed, cast (net)
cur-my-ner (hug eh my-ner, etc)
curnagh × 40 > curnagh × 11
da-eed > *daeed, three-feed, kiare-feed, queig-feed, shey-feed shiaqht-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
faileish = Cregeen’s sfaileays ‘glimpse of light’; Pargys Caillit also f(e)alleise, failease
fey-ny-laa ~ fey-yn-laa
flugh > *flugh
foalley: generally, the Bible distinguishes foalley ‘of flesh’ from folley ‘of blood’.
fo-chosh > fo chosh
foollilagh
fuirraght > fuirraght
gerrit
greiney > greiney, in proportion 2:1 in the Bible.
greme n., but greim/greimm, ghreim/ghreimm, greimmey v.
gyre × 61 > geyre, geayr
hee-ym × 11/hee-ymy > 2/heem × 2 (B+A), hee, hee mayd, hee-ys × 12 (B+A)
hie ee > hie
hrogh × 9 > chrogh × 3 ‘hung/hanged’ (NB chraish for hraisht suggests /xt/ and /ht/ were pronounced the same)
kied: In the Bible the spelling nyn gied is used only for ‘their permission’, and the somewhat anomalous nyn
ghread 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.
kimmagh: Cregeen takes kimmagh as a variant of kimmagh, but the senses (‘fool’ and ‘criminal’, respectively)
of the two in Bible trans. seem different.
layal > lai
leayr: b’leayr, but cha lheerar
liassaghey, liiassaghey: NB Cregeen makes a distinction between liiassaghey ‘atone, ransom, amend’; and
liiassaghey ‘allege, assert (falsely)’. This distinction seems to be observed in the OT, in the verbal
noun in part, but in the NT liiassaghey is used for both, and in the OT liiasssee for ‘amend, repair’.
lhoobey v. (× 18) > lookey (× 2); but loob n. predominantly in Bible. NB all occurrences of loob/loobyn n. (× 52)
are in Exo.
llooaar: NB s’llooaar (× 11) preferred spelling for s’llooaar (× 1)
lourane, but predominantly louraanagh, louraangs
mooads > mooads > mooad’s
mooish: unique anomalous spelling for mysh ‘around’ at Gen. 31.42
naight > niagh
nearey but naaragh(ey), naareydagh
ny-neesht ×78 > nyn-neesht ×21
ny-sodjey ‘furthermore’
ny-yeih ×410 > ny yeih ×13
ommeydan
ooil ×207 > ooil ×3; ooilaghey ×64 > ooillaghey ×18, ooillit ×17 > ooilil ×1, ooilyn ×4 > ooillyn ×1
quail ‘to meet’, quayl ‘assembly, court’, quail ‘quail’
quoi-erbee ×230 > quoi erbee ×20
r’ou i.e. row oo
raait > 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-chaslhtyn ×2 > ry chlashtyn ×1
ry-chosh
ry-cheddyn ×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.
scrieu
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-caggee ×2.
sheshaght-flaunys (sic), otherwise flaunys
shlee ‘more’ (count)
shliawn > shliawin; pl. shliawney, comp. shliawney
skelt > scelt
sliee > *shliee
sluggey but lluggey
smeyr = smeir. sg. not distinct from pl. in Bible, though in Apoc. (Ecclus) smeyr sg., smeir pl.
sooilley, sooillee, hoill > hoill, hoilley > hoilley; sooilit > soillit, sooilit
soorit ×46 > soorid ×13
taittin/daittin/haittin > daittyn/haittyn
terriu > teirroo, therriu
yiall ×32 ‘promised’ > ghiall ×3
yiare- ×197 > ghiaire- ×67
yiatt ×153 > ghiait ×11
yien ×20 > ghien ×2
yiennaghtyn ×9 > ghiennaghtyn ×3
yientyn ×9 > ghientyn ×5

Variation:
baillin = baillhien = baill-lhien
baillloo = baillhieu
beîyn = beîyn
bishagh, n. Generally the form bishagh ‘increase’ is used. But bishaght seems to be a real, rarer, alternative.
brlakey = 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 = brelleen = brelleen = brellein
brinneen = brennein = brenneein
bwoirrinagh = bwoirrynagh
by-lesh = by-lesh
byrragh = brragh
caarlys = caardys
caghlait = caghlait
cauagey = cooagey
chaggil = chuggle
chiamble: pl. is chiambleyn or chiambyllyn.
chied er ny ruggey in OT, chied-er-ny-ruggey in NT.
chia \times 12 = choo \times 7
cleieet = cleight = cleiyht = cleiyt ‘dug’
clleigh/chleigh = cleiy / chleiy
cluineen = clynnee = clinne
coar/choar = coayr/choayr
conningyn = conninyn
craie = cray
crubb = crybbit
cur rish = cur-rish, proportions about even
dangeyr – dangere, dangeyragh = dangeragh
dewlyys = delyys
dhatt = datt
doarn = doayrn
dossan = dohssan
eilley = eïlley, about equally common; eillit > eillit
er e hon: er y hon- ‘for him’ are equally frequent. One cannot say the former is an error,
though maybe less ‘standard’.
farkiagh = farkiaght
feeaih = feeaïh; pl. feeaïhee
feudagh, feudys: the stem is variously feud-, feud-, fud-
foodeeaght = foodeaght
giennagh = genniagh
ghialdyn- = yialdyn-, but yiall \times 32 ‘promised’ > ghiall \times 3
ghioot- \times 16 = yioot- \times 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
keeayl = keeayll
     NB gen. kione e cheiley (= cheilley in other texts. but 1 x coayl e cheiley in Apocrypha), kione nyn geiley
keoi = keoïe = keoie
lhiettrimmys = liettrimys = liettrimys
lhig-syn = lhiggym, and so with many other verbs that can have double consonants.
loaghee \times 4 in 1Sam 6 = lughee
lowance = lowanse
loys/s’loys/by-loyys \times 19 = lhoys/by-lhoys \times 13; NB *s’lhoys
main-oie = mean-oie, but vean-oie
mainshter = mainshyr
mee hene ~ mee-hene, oo hene ~ oo-hene, etc.
mee-cheeayllid = mee-cheilid = mee-cheeild
meein = meen
meiley = meilley ‘bowl’
meshtall- = 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 = freilys relative future of freyill
reggyryn = reggyryn = regyryn = reggyryn
roosteen = roosteeyn
sansheraght = sonsheragh
sauee = saue-ee
shirg- = shyrg-
shoalteyr = shiolteyr
shooyl: future stem either shooll or shooyl(l); shooyl-jee = shooll-jee
shuin ~ dy hioonyn
sleayd- = soed-
s’heea = sheea
siheesaid = sh(e)ayst
smalyn = smaylyn
sooil: thooill = tooill
straid = straid, in proportion 65:37 including inflected forms.
streeughyn = streeughyn
taa = taah
thack = tack
thassane =tassane
thorran = torran
tobbyr = tubbyr, but tobbyr-oonlee, tubbyryn
traashtit = traishtit
whuaiyl = whaiyl
yarragh = yiarragh
yuilley = ghuilley