ULSTER-SCOTS LANGUAGE GUIDES

Spelling and Pronunciation Guide

The Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group proposals

Edited by
IVAN HERBISON, PHILIP ROBINSON AND ANNE SMYTH

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for

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This work is based on the programmes and collections of the Ulster-Scots Language Society, and taken forward by the USAIG in partnership. Extracts from Philip Robinson's *Ulster-Scots: A Grammar of the Traditional Written and Spoken Language,* 2nd edition (Ullans Press, 2007) and James Fenton's *The Hamely Tongue,* 3rd edition (Ullans Press, 2007) are reproduced with permission.

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BACKGROUND

The first official mention of a publicly-funded Ulster-Scots academy occurs in section 30 of the Joint Declaration of the British and Irish governments ('Requirements of Peace and Stability' — April 2003), where an undertaking was given to 'take steps to encourage support to be made available for an Ulster-Scots academy'. Consequently, in June 2005, UK Culture Minister, David Hanson MP, set up an Implementation Group to consult upon and advise how a fully functioning Academy should be established by January 2007.

The ministerially-appointed Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group (USAIG) commenced work immediately and, with close daily oversight by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, made steady progress until November 2007, when it ceased to function.

INTRODUCTION

This publication demonstrates that agreement on standard spellings for modern Ulster-Scots can be, and indeed has been, achieved. As a result, the traditional spoken language is made more accessible in written form to public and academic bodies, and to the community at large. The agreed spelling rules outlined in this booklet represent the first outcome of the work of the Spelling Standardisation Committee of the USAIG Partnership Board. For those not familiar with the sound of Ulster-Scots, the spellings should provide a fairly consistent guide to pronunciation.

Delivering an agreed standard spelling system was one of the highest development priorities for the language. In the classroom, the introduction of these standards for modern Ulster-Scots remains an urgent need. Educationalists have long insisted that it is an essential prerequisite to the teaching of the language in schools — it certainly is as far as examinations and tests of the language in formal education are concerned — and it is also a first step in the urgent task of providing standards and quality assurance for translations and modern documentation.

The process for agreeing new and historical conventions for spelling is a complex one, but the most important aspect is the need to involve native speakers and writers. Without the consent of the users of the language, no consensus on spellings can be achieved. However, the process must involve agreement between academics and everyday users of the language. It is an ongoing process and one which will be subject to regular revision.

Background

In the early 1600s, when Scots settlers brought their written and spoken language to Ulster, their writings included a host of distinctively Scots words and spellings. For the next 400 years, however, these Scots speakers were schooled to write only in English, and so Scots spellings were progressively lost in favour of modern English conventions.

When Ulster-Scots began to write in their own tongue again in the 1700s, they largely had to re-invent a Scots spelling system outside of academia. More often than not they used English spelling and sound rules to represent how words from the spoken Ulster-Scots language should be pronounced. The rich 18th century literary tradition was a largely unknown inheritance to the speaking community in the 19th century (and remains so to the majority of today's native speakers).

Whatever new spelling conventions had been evolving in the 1700s and early 1800s, they

are still unfamiliar to modern writers because of the continued exclusion of Ulster-Scots from schools. Nowadays, most native speakers of Ulster-Scots have never seen their own language in written form at all, and when attempting to write often adopt phonetic spellings based on English vowel sounds.

This apparent anarchy in modern Ulster-Scots spellings has been unwittingly fostered, to a certain extent, by the Ulster-Scots Language Society because of its desire not to impose any editorial 'correction' on native-speaking contributors to any of its publications. The reason for this was to allow a period of experimentation, but all concerned now acknowledge that the current educational and language development situation demands a new process to establish agreed new standards. It is also acknowledged that the process must involve agreement between academics and everyday users of the language.

The need for a spelling standardisation process

Spelling standardisation is an essential element in the language planning process for the development of any European Regional or Minority language. The process, in the European context, is often fraught with difficulties and controversies. It is crucial that any spelling standardisation process fully involves the language users. Conflicts have arisen where academic orthographers have recommended spelling reforms and innovations to the language-user community without involving them in the process. Other controversies can arise with competing dialects of the language and when there is a failure to inform the process by historical precedents within the traditional literature.

The Frisian Academy has introduced spelling standardisation and spelling reforms for Frisian on the basis of maximal differentiation from Dutch. This approach was driven by a desire to eradicate Dutch influence in the language, but an equivalent 'top-down' approach for Ulster-Scots would not meet with acceptance by native speakers nor be consistent with the USAIG's vision for community involvement in the Academy.

The need for a spelling standardisation process for Ulster-Scots has been accepted as part of the language development programme by all concerned for the following reasons:—

Educational requirements — as with any other language, for Ulster-Scots to be taught to examination standard it is essential that the modern language be standardised. It is also important that educational resources to support the teaching of Ulster-Scots are consistent with these standards.

Within the dictionary programme, headwords for each Ulster-Scots entry will be based on historical spellings including those found in contemporary creative writings. However, in the English-to-Ulster-Scots part of the dictionary project it is essential

that the given Ulster-Scots form in this dictionary is consistent with agreed standards. The dictionary project therefore informs, and is informed by, the spelling standardisation process.

The transcription element of the tape recorded survey requires a spelling guide to ensure consistency and conformity with the spellings used in the other projects.

Although new terminologies (particularly those being introduced for formal and official documentation) are a separate issue from spelling standardisation, it is important that spellings in the general translation text are consistent. This is essential for quality assurance and benchmarking of translation standards.

Bible translation must be progressed using the same agreed spelling standards as the dictionary and education resources. It is likely that the usage of the Ulster-Scots Bible will be an important vehicle for establishing and promoting agreed standards in the native speaking community.

Clearly it is essential that the most visible aspects of the written modern language in public use have consistent spellings (such as in teaching materials, dictionaries, translations of official documents and the Ulster-Scots Bible). As it is also essential that each of the language development projects conform to these standards, the spelling standardisation process itself is therefore inter-dependent with the other projects in the Education and Language Development Programme.

The criteria used

In agreeing new standard spellings, the Spelling Standardisation Committee of the USAIG has attempted to balance the following precedents:

spelling conventions that have emerged by consensus among modern writers and activists in the current revival period (since 1990);

spelling forms that are used in published Ulster-Scots dictionaries and glossaries already in use (such as *The Hamely Tongue*);

spelling conventions that have been agreed by any parallel process in Scotland for Scottish-Scots. A 'standard' Scots spelling does not exist as an absolute precedent. However, a report was published by a Committee established in Scotland to consider and agree the standard spelling of Scots;

historical spelling conventions and options that are contained in the literary corpus of past writings — this means a systematic search of the electronic text-base to establish

the range of spelling options used, their chronology and their frequency;

new spelling systems that have been suggested by academic orthographers and language activists; and

spellings that best allow for an accurate representation of local differences in pronunciation.

The Committee

A 'spelling standardisation committee' was established in May 2006, under the chairmanship of Dr Ivan Herbison, to adjudicate the above criteria. The Committee was constituted as a Committee of the Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group (USAIG), facilitated by the USAIG Secretariat and the Language Development Programme teams (operating though the USAIG/USLS partnership agreements, and directly reporting to the USAIG Partnership Board). All outputs of the USAIG Partnership Board, including this current publication, have been ratified by the USAIG whose ministerial remit included the 'resourcing without delay of a number of language and educational development projects'. These specified projects include 'spelling standardisation', and it has been the responsibility of the USAIG to ensure that this project is facilitated and integrated with the partnership arrangements for the entire Ulster-Scots Language Development Programme.

The 14-member Spelling Standards Committee was chaired by Dr Ivan Herbison and the various groups and areas of interest were represented on the committee by nominees as follows:

Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group (USAIG):

Dr Ivan Herbison (Chair of Spelling Standardisation Committee), Queen's University of Belfast; Dr Philip Robinson (Chair of USAIG); Dr Ian Adamson (Vice-Chair of USAIG); Professor Alison Henry, University of Ulster

Ulster-Scots Agency:

Jim Millar, Director of Language and Education

Ulster-Scots Language Society (Nominated representatives of the Ulster-Scots speaking and writing communities):

Jack Thompson, Fiona McDonald, Philip Robinson

Ulster-Scots Academy Ltd:

Dr Roy Hewitt (deceased)

Academy of Ulster-Scots (Ullans) Ltd:

Dr Ian Adamson

Key personnel involved in the associated Language Development Partnership programmes:

Anne Smyth (Chair of Ulster-Scots Language Society), lexicographer, Dictionary Project; John Erskine, Librarian and Archivist; John Mclntyre, Project Manager, Electronic text-base and Tape-Recorded Survey; Philip Saunders, Bible Translation consultant

Academic specialists/advisers:

Professor Michael Montgomery, University of South Carolina; Dr Heather Saunders, University of Ulster

The method

The process for agreeing spelling standards for Ulster-Scots involved an interdependent partnership between native speakers and academia. The USAIG also agreed that the spelling standardisation process and the workings of the Committee must be transparent and open to a continuous consultation process, beyond the individuals concerned in the Committee. A detailed record has therefore been established on each stage of the decision-making process, so that the reasons for each decision can be reviewed and/or accounted for at a later stage.

The Committee first of all considered tables of cross-referenced data on approximately 60 different spelling 'rules'. This matrix of spelling rules and verb tables (as set out systematically in Philip Robinson's *Ulster-Scots Grammar*) had been made available to the project in electronic form. The associated word lists for each 'rule' were then supplemented and tabulated by USAIG Secretariat staff and those working in the Partnership Board Language Development project teams so that the various alternative spellings of *each* word in *each* table could be checked (electronically) in the traditional literature and contemporary writers text-base; the published Dictionaries and dictionary data-base; the published list of recommended Scots spellings; and in the electronic version of James Fenton's *The Hamely Tongue.* This represented an enormous amount of preparatory work for each committee meeting, but it enabled members to make informed decisions and focus on problematic issues, particularly when this required consultation with speakers and writers from different dialect areas and the Bible translation teams.

Some sections of this Spelling and Pronunciation Guide deal with historical and archaic

spellings, and a final section provides the spelling guide from James Fenton's *The Hamely Tongue.* This is because the spelling rules considered by the Committee related primarily to homonyms or cognate words between Ulster-Scots and English (eg. *heid, deid* and *breid* for English 'head', 'dead' and 'bread'). Distinctive Ulster-Scots words such as *nudyin* (a bunion) as found in *The Hamely Tongue* have not been respelt, and indeed the Fenton spelling system was one of the criteria considered.

The Committee also worked through the Dictionary Programme's booklet 'English/Ulster-Scots Glossary: A core vocabulary wordlist with verb tables', checking for consistency with the agreed spellings. This glossary had been compiled by Philip Robinson to be made available primarily as a much-needed classroom tool pending the production of a complete English/Ulster-Scots Dictionary. However, given the nature of the format of the Spelling and Pronunciation Guide, it was recognised that the information would not be readily accessible or usable without an English/Ulster-Scots Glossary that was consistent with these rules. Indeed, in working through the glossary, the Committee also agreed the application of these spelling rules to those words not specifically listed in the tables of examples provided. For these reasons, the Committee agreed that the glossary should be made available simultaneously with the *Spelling and Pronuciation Guide,* in order that the 'English/Ulster-Scots Glossary: A core vocabulary wordlist with verb tables' may function as a working index to the *Spelling and Pronuciation Guide.*

Finally, the editors (Ivan Herbison, Chair of Spelling Standardisation Committee; Philip Robinson, Chair of Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group; and Anne Smyth, Chair of Ulster-Scots Language Society) would like to re-emphasise that these Spelling Standards represent a necessary — if perhaps imperfect — first step in formalising the orthography of modern, written Ulster-Scots. We recognise that these rules will, and must, be subject to future revisions as has been the experience with other European Regional and Minority Languages such as Frisian in the Netherlands.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

*Part 1 outlines the development of characteristic and traditional spellings, and provides a background to those spellings that are historical. **Part 2** describes how different vowel sounds are now represented in modern Ulster-Scots, with **Part 3** providing a systematic guide to these "rules".*

***Part 4** provides the some account for consonants, with **Part 5** dealing with the "yogh" [yih] sound and its representation. Finally, the spelling system of James Fenton's The Hamely Tongue is provided in **Part 6** as a further aid to accurate pronunciation.*

For a more detailed explanation of the linguistic terms used in this booklet, see Philip Robinson's Ulster-Scots: a Grammar of the Traditional Written and Spoken Language.

***Note on diacritics (accents)**. Where accents appear on vowels in Ulster-Scots, they indicate features of pronunciation and can be omitted without any change to spelling. There are only three recommended for standard use:*

a) ï (diaeresis over 'i')

This is to represent English short 'i' in words such as 'pig' and 'pin' when it is pronounced distinctively in an Ulster-Scots homonym

   e.g. pïg/pig

b) ü (diseresis over 'u')

This is to represent English short 'u' in words such as 'pull', 'bush', 'bull' when it is pronounced distinctively in an Ulster-Scots homonym

   e.g. büsh/bush [pronounced to rhyme with 'hush']

c) è (grave accent over 'e')

This is to represent an interdental pronunciation of the preceding consonant when followed by '-er'

   e.g. eftèr/efter

PART 1:

Older Scots spelling and its legacy in modern Ulster-Scots

In the early 1600s, most Ulster-Scots were writing according to the 'rules' of Scots literacy in which they had been schooled. In other words, the great majority of Scottish settlers in Ulster, at the time of the Ulster plantation, spoke — and if literate wrote — Scots. In 1624, an extra Clerk of the Council was appointed in Dublin to deal with official correspondence which "being written in the Scotch hand are either not read or understood". Until the early 1630s even the titled Plantation landlords were writing in Scots, as this was the way in which they too had been schooled. At that time (and of course, before then), Scots had some very distinctive spellings that were to give way almost completely to English 'rules' later in the 17th century. However, traces of the Older Scots system were still being used through the 18th century. For almost a century, between 1650 and 1750, the educated settlers learned only English spelling rules, and Ulster-Scots had to survive as a spoken language. Because of the nature of their schooling, second generation Ulster-Scots landlords and their better educated tenants wrote their letters and reports in English after about 1640, even if they continued to speak Scots. At the same time, old session books of Presbyterian churches in Antrim and Down did contain entries that reveal that some old spellings and some Scots grammatical constructions were still being used many years later.

18th and 19th century Ulster-Scots writers did not use many of the Older Scots spellings. Robert Burns and the 'Scotch poets' who preceded him in Ulster and Scotland were deliberately reviving a written form for what was to them only a spoken language. For this they almost always used English grammar and spelling rules. They were largely unaware of, or had lost contact with, the earlier spelling conventions of the 17th century and before.

The following sentence from an early 17th century Ulster document illustrates many of the Older Scots spelling features:

"Ye quhilk soume of monies ye umquhile Claude Hamiltonne grantit ye zeir of god 1615" ("The which sum of money the late Claude Hamilton granted the year of God 1615").

a) Consonants in Older Scots: *quh-* for 'wh-'

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Older Scots spelling is the *quh-* used in place of 'wh-'. We find in Ulster-Scots documents between 1550 and 1650 such spellings as the following:

quha	- wha (who)
quhairto	- whairto (whereto)
quhais	- whais (whose)
quhar/quhair	- whar/whair (where)
quhat	- what
quhatever	- whatever
quhan	- whan (when)
quhilk	- whilk (which)
quhyt	- white

and *quhairof, quhairin, quhairfoir, quharas, quhorbz* ('whereby'), etc.

This feature was so widely used then that Ulster-Scots scribes even took English words (like 'which' rather than *whilk,* 'who' rather than *wha,* and so on) and used the *quh-* spelling to give: *quhich, quho, quhoum* ('whom') etc. Even some place-names fell victim to this Scots spelling form, for example *Belliquhoskin* (Ballywhiskin) in county Down and *Glenquhirrie* (Glenwhirry) in county Antrim.

Sometimes the spelling was slightly different: (*qh-* or *qu-*)*,* and abbreviations such as *qlk.* ('which'), *qo.* ('who'), *qn.* ('when') and *qrof.* ('whereof') are often found in old Antrim and Down kirk session books into the 18th century. Sometimes this feature occurred in the middle of words as well as the beginning: *umquhille,* as in *"the umquhille Mr Crawford",* means 'the late' or 'former', and is probably from 'some while' or 'some time'. In earlier times, this *quh-* spelling reflected a [*kwa*] pronunciation, and this is suggested by the apostrophe in the spelling used by Samuel Thomson, Bard of Carngranny (Antrim) in a poem of 1793: *"Had umqu'hile Spence a listener been".*

b) *tw* and *qw* in Ulster-Scots

The [kwa] sound appears to have been very extensively used in Older Scots. Indeed, it appears that the *quh-* orthographic convention in Scots (for 'wh-') originally indicated a [kwa] pronunciation. The 'q' [kwa] sound also emerges in other unexpected circumstances — for example the name 'Hugh' can be rendered [queue] or [queuey].

Historically, not only was the 'tw' consonant combination represented as 'qw' in Older Scots, but it was pronounced as [kwa] as well. The best known examples of this are in the *aqween* and *aqweesh* forms for 'between'. In South-West Scotland and parts of County Antrim, this also survives in the (now rare) forms of *quice, quarthy, quunty* and *qual*

('twice', 'two or three', 'twenty' and 'twelve'). *The Hamely Tongue* also records in current Antrim speech *quust* for 'twist' and *quuster* for a straw-rope 'twister'.

c) The letter 'yogh' in Older Scots → Ulster-Scots *y* (sounding as [yih])

One individual letter that was common to Older Scots and Middle English in the medieval period was called 'yogh', and was generally written: *3*. However, in Early and Middle Scots manuscripts, from the 14th century, the letters and *z* were indistinguishable as z, for example in *zouth* and *zele* ('youth' and 'zeal'). 16th century Scots printers took to printing z for both, because there was no separate font. By 1600, most Scots writers were using the z form of the letter as equivalent to 'y' in English. This rule was most frequently at the beginning of words such as *ze* ('you') and *zeir* ('year'). In both English and Scots at that time the letter 'y' could be understood to represent the old letter þ (called 'thorn' and which became 'th'). By the late 14th century, 'thorn' survived only as a letter indistinguishable from 'y'. As both languages, therefore, had *ye* for 'the' and *yat* for 'that', confusion is possible for the modern reader:

the (or, **you**) - *ye*

ye/you   - *ze/zou*

their   - *yair*

year   - *zeir*

your   - *zour*

A number of surnames retain the traces of 'yogh' letter and sound. Dalzell, although not normally pronounced 'Da-yell' in Ulster today, would often be so pronounced in Scotland. The Antrim name MacFadzean is of course pronounced [macfadge-yin], and the surnames Bailey and Taylor are pronounced [bail-ye] and [tail-yer] in Ulster-Scots, and *The Hamely Tongue* gives the spelling *bailye* for 'bailiff'. The early spellings of these names were *Bailze* and *Tailzer.* Occasionally, a name like 'William' was written Wilzame. Mawhinney is pronounced [mawhun-ye] in Co Down, and McFarlane as [macfarlyane] in parts of County Antrim.

d) Final post-consonantal *-ie* for '-y' in historical and modern Ulster-Scots

Where 'y' is found at the end of a word in English spelling, this was historically (and is) avoided in Ulster-Scots in favour of *-ie*. So, **aunty** becomes *auntie,* **Willy** becomes *Willie*

or *Wullie,* and **granny** becomes *grannie.* Of course, Scots words with no English equivalents such as *dominie* (**teacher**) also follow this pattern. In the 17th century, surnames such as Montgomery were usually spelt Montgomerie or Montgommrie, and this feature is characteristic of both Older Scots and modern usage.

> **many**   - *monie*
>
> **very**   - *verie*
>
> **any**   - *onie*
>
> **mostly** - *maistlie*

In words ending in '-ary', '-ory' or '-ery' in English, the 'a', 'o' or 'e' is often elided to produce *-rie* in Ulster-Scots.

> **history**   - *hïstrie*
>
> **victory**   - *vïctrie*
>
> **mystery** - *mïstrie*
>
> **memory** - *memrie*
>
> **library**   - *librie*

e) Final *-ye* for English final '-ay' in modern Ulster-Scots

> **hay** - *hye*
>
> **way** - *wye*
>
> **pay** - *pye*

The word *gye* (very) also has this traditional spelling to avoid confusion with *gie* ('give'). One exception to this rule is the month 'May' which does not follow the same vowel sound change:

> **May** - *Mey*

Note that the auxiliary verb 'may' is not used in Ulster-Scots, except where it has the meaning of 'had better' (eg *A may get on home fur it's late gettin').* In this case the pronunciation is an unstressed [meh]. Similarly, 'day' does not change in spelling or pronunciation except for an unstressed pronunciation [deh] in compounds like Münday and Settèrday.

f) *sh* for 's', and *sch* for '-sh-'

Some Ulster-Scots speakers have a tendency to pronounce the letter 's' as [sh]. 'Vessel', however, was written *veshel* in some of the early Ulster-Scots documents, 'sugar' was written as *shugger,* 'sew' as *shew,* and 'soon' as *shune.* According to the *Concise Scots Dictionary,* the modern Scots word *sheuch* ("a drain, or open ditch with water lying in it") is derived from an Early Middle English word *sogh,* meaning a "wet, swampy place". In each of these cases, the sh- spelling in modern Ulster-Scots contrasts with an 's-' spelling in the English or Older Scots/Middle English equivalent.

On the other hand, where 'sh' is used in the English spelling of a word to represent the same sound, for example with 'she', 'ship', 'bishop' etc, *sch* was used regularly in Older Scots *(scho, schippe, bischop,* etc), as in other Germanic languages.

The development of the Older Scots forms *suld* 'should' and *sall* 'shall' is not parallel to that from *sogh* to *sheuch.* However, it should be noted that *shud* is current Ulster-Scots for 'should'. Although the forms *sall* and *I'se* ('I shall') appear in the Ulster-Scots literary record, 'shall' or *sall* is not used today in Ulster-Scots at all.

g) Interchangeable '*v*', '*u*' and '*w*'

In Older Scots, the letters 'w', 'v' and 'u' were used interchangeably, but on occasion, the substitution of 'w' for 'v' in words like *giwe* and *hawe* for 'give' and 'have' reflected an actual contrast with English pronunciation.

Occasionally, 'f' was substituted for 'v': *serf* ('serve'), *giffen* ('given'), etc. The v in *gavel* ('gable') and *ville* ('bally', 'town') is original, and not an alteration of the 'b' in the English and Gaelic equivalents.

The Ulster-Scots poets used words like *lo'ed* for 'loved', and *co'erd* for 'covered'. In Ulster during the 1600s, 'w' was often substituted for 'v' in words such as *adwise, craew* ('crave'), *Dawid, Gawan* ('Gavin'), *lewie* ('levy'), *wozd* ('void') and *elewint* ('eleventh'). Sometimes, 'u' was also found in place of 'w' in words such as *ansuer, auin* ('own'), *duell, neuis, puer* ('power'), *sourd* ('sword'), *toune, tua* and *tuell.* 'W' was substituted for 'u' in *perswade, trew, zow* ('you'), *dowble* and *grows* ('grouse'). 'V' was used in place of 'w' for *avay, vitt, vas, vater, ve* and *varrent,* etc. The Ulster-Scots adjective *brave* ('good' or 'pleasing') is synonymous with some meanings of the Scots adjective *braw.*

h) Loss of English 'v' (and occasional substitution of *w* in modern Ulster-Scots)

In modern Ulster-Scots, the substitution of 'w' for 'v' still reflects a contrast of pronunciation with English, but the spelling usually involves dropping the 'v'.

over - *ower*

give - *gie*

given - *gien*

have - *hae*

dove - *doo*

swivel - *sweet*

devil - *deil*

leave - *lea,* (loc.) *lee*

silver - *siller*

PART 2:

Representation of vowel sounds in modern Ulster-Scots

Since the vernacular revival of Scots and Ulster-Scots literature in the early 1700s, 'English' vowel sounds (both as individual letters and in combinations) have been used to convey an approximate Scots pronunciation. However, several distinctive vowel sounds have proved to be difficult to represent, and such problems have given rise to a host of spelling variations for these words in Ulster-Scots. During the present century, some innovative devices have been borrowed from languages other than English in an attempt to resolve these questions.

a) The short 'i' represented by ï

For English words spelt with 'i' such as 'pig', 'hit', 'big' and 'pin', a vowel sound is used in Ulster-Scots speech for which there is no appropriate vowel letter. This pronunciation of English short 'i' is distinctively 'back' and nasal in Ulster-Scots. Such words are sometimes written as *pag, hat, bag,* etc, or even *pug, hut* and *bug,* although Ulster-Scots *u* is used for English 'i' more frequently when following 'w-' or 'wh-', such as for *whun,* 'whin' or *wun* 'win'. (The long-defunct Presbyterian paper *The Witness* was often derisively referred to as the *'Wutness').* However, the potential for confusion with English words is obvious when spellings such as 'hit', 'hat' and 'hut' were used for the same pronunciation. One revised spelling system developed in the early 1960s by Professor Robert Gregg and Brendan Adams used a diaeresis ('umlaut') over the letter 'a', (ä), giving *päg, bäg, hät.* While the only earlier use of the diaeresis in Ulster-Scots literature was with *owër* ('over'), this device has proved useful to modern Ulster-Scots writers. One alternative also used was to avoid the *ä* in favour of *ai* in words like *käng/kaing* ('king'), *thäng/ thaing* ('thing'), *räng/raing* ('ring"), etc. In a recent academic paper, James Fenton suggested a diaeresis over the 'i', giving *ï* for this feature, and spellings such as *kïng, thïng* and *rïng* are now the recommended spellings under this agreed convention.

b) The short 'u' represented by ü

For English words spelt with 'u' such as 'push', 'bush', 'pull' and 'bull', a vowel sound is used with their (shared) equivalent words in Ulster-Scots for which there is no appropriate vowel letter. Such words are sometimes written as 'puhsh' and 'puhl', but this is particularly unsatisfactory. In James Fenton's *The Hamely Tongue,* the dictionary context can be used

to explain that 'push' rhymes with 'rush', or 'pull' rhymes with 'hull': (eg **bull** (r. *hull*)). The use of a diaeresis over the letter 'u' does provide one way of indicating the distinctive pronunciation, (eg *büsh*). However, this should not be used in the case of shared words such as 'gull', 'hut', 'dull', 'rush', 'thrush', etc. where the vowel sound is the same in both English and Ulster-Scots.

c) Loss of initial vowel before 'l' and 'p' (aphæresis)

Several words such as 'elastic' and 'electric' (which begin with a vowel, followed by 'l' or 'll', and then another vowel), can lose the initial vowel sound to become *lastic* and *lectric*. Although this does not happen with all words with a 'vowel-l-vowel' beginning, the following list represents those where this feature occurs most commonly in Ulster-Scots:

lastic - elastic

lectric - electric, electricity

lapse - elapse (*"a lang time's lapsed frae ye wur hame"*)

leven - eleven

legiance - allegiance

lotment - allotment

luminate - illuminate

lympics - Olympics

ledge - allege, declare

In the opening line of James Orr's poem 'To the Potatoe' (written in Ballycarry 200 years ago), we find *ledge* used: *"I **ledge** we'd fen gif fairly quat o"* ("I **declare** we'd survive if completely rid of").

The same feature occurs with some words which begin with a vowel, followed by the letter 'p'. Two examples of this are *possle* ('apostle') and *prentice* ('apprentice').

In one instance this also occurs where the vowel is followed by 'g': *greeance* ('agreement' in formal documents), and once when followed by 'r': *rithmatick* (arithmetic).

d) Shared English and Ulster-Scots words with different spelling systems

Many pairs of words in English, for example, 'meat' and 'meet', sound the same even if they have different meanings and different spellings. A common (and historical) pronunciation of 'meat' in Scotland and Ulster is [mate]. Similarly, 'eat', 'cheat', 'seat', 'beat',

'clean' and 'cheap' can be pronounced [ate], [chate], [sate], [bate], [clane] and [chape] in many parts of Ulster and Scotland.

The most consistent Scots spelling for this feature is *-ai-*. *The Concise Scots Dictionary* records the following equivalents, all of which have some currency in Ulster-Scots:

beard　　- *baird*

cheat　　- *chait* (or - *chate)*

feasible - *faisible*

cheap　　- *chaip* (or - *chape)*

measles - *maisles*

seat　　　- *sait* (or - *sate)*

sheaf　　- *shaif*

treason　- *traison*

treat　　- *trait*

weak　　- *waik*

beast　　- *baist/baste*

beat　　　- *bait/bate*

Of course, not all words with an 'ea' spelling in English have this [ee] vowel sound in their Standard English pronunciation (like 'heart'). Other words with an 'ea' spelling in English — which do have the [ee] vowel sound, (like 'fear" and 'hear') — retain the same vowel sound and spelling in their Scots equivalents.

As a general rule, words such as 'meet' which have the same [ee] vowel sound in English, but have an 'ee' rather than an 'ea' spelling, do not have either a vowel sound or a spelling change in their Ulster-Scots equivalents. This means that words such as 'green', 'teen', 'meet', 'beef and 'week' are spelt the same in Scots as in English, apart from several exceptions. 'Queer' is pronounced and spelt *quare* throughout Ulster.

It should be stressed that while *mate* for 'meat' is quite common in Scots (and in Mid-Ulster English), the '-ee-' to [ai] vowel sound change in *maet* for 'meet' is not regular. The latter represents a localised feature in Belfast and Mid-Ulster English, although now also heard occasionally in north Down. *Meat,* incidentally, refers to any type of food in Ulster-Scots, and not just *flesch,* while any form of butcher's meat is *beef,* eg *Mawhunnyie's beef-cairt* ('Mawhinney's butchers van').

PART 3:

Spelling guide to Ulster-Scots vowel sounds

The simplest way of illustrating the vowel spelling systems used in Ulster-Scots today is by comparison with common English equivalents in the range of their shared vocabulary. It should be remembered, however, that some of these 'homonyms' can carry different meanings in Ulster-Scots from their English word equivalents.

Words spelt with the vowel '-a' in English

The short *a*-sound in modern English is represented by *e* in Ulster-Scots, except where it precedes *r*, when it can be written *ai*. This distinction reflects the traditional orthography.

a) English 'a' → Ulster-Scots *ai* (before *'r'*)

sharp - *shairp*

arm   - *airm*

art   - *airt*

cart   - *cairt*

charge - *chairge*

harm   - *hairm*

part   - *pairt*

farm   - *fairm*

b) English 'a' → Ulster-Scots *e*

apple   - *epple*

act   - *ect*

cap   - *kep*

ladder   - *lether*

hammer   - *hemmer*

after   - *eftèr*

cat   - *ket*

Notable exceptions (in accordance with the traditional spelling):

master - *maistèr*
father - *faither*

c) English 'a' → Ulster-Scots *u*

what - *whut*
was - *wus*

Words spelt with the vowel 'e' in English

a) English 'e' → Ulster-Scots *i*

ever - *iver*
never - *niver*
every - *iverie*
devil - *divil(ment)*
yet - *yit*

b) English 'e' → Ulster-Scots *u*

let - *lut*
were - *wur*

c) English 'ea' → Ulster-Scots *ei*

head - *heid* (rhymes with 'heed')
bread - *breid*
dead - *deid*

Notable exceptions (spelling only):

heard - *heerd*
thread - *threed*
deaf - *deef*
beast - *beece*

d) English 'ea' → Ulster-Scots *ai*

rear (*verb*) - *rair* (rhymes with 'fair')
beard   - *baird*
heart   - *hairt*
meal   - *mail*
measles   - *maisles*
seat   - *sait*
sheaf   - *shaif*
cheat   - *chait*
treat   - *trait*

Notable exceptions (spelling 'a-e' traditional):

beat (*verb*) - *bate*
meat   - *mate* (loc. *meat*)
weak   - *wake*

Notable exception (spelling and pronunciation):

tea - *tay*

Note: Although 'heart' does not have the same [ee] vowel sound as rear, cheat, etc. in English, the Ulster-Scots spelling and pronunciation follows the same 'ea' → *ai* pattern *hairt.*

e) English 'e' and 'ea' → Ulster-Scots *a*

well (noun) - *wal*
dwelling   - *dwallin*
wedding   - *waddin*
web   - *wab*
wrestle   - *wrassle*
twelve   - *twal*
whether   - *whather*
when   - *whan*

where   - *whar*

wet (adj.)   - *wat*

weather   - *wather*

wealth   - *walth*

welcome   - *walcum*

help   - *halp*

Notable exception (spelling and pronunciation):

shed (noun) - *shade*

Words spelt with the vowel 'i' in English

a) English 'i' → Ulster-Scots *ï*

swing - *swïng*

stick   - *stïck*

king   - *kïng*

ring   - *rïng*

big   - *bïg*

bit   - *bït*

six   - *sïx*

pin   - *pïn*

pig   - *pïg*

thing   - *thïng*

Where the Ulster-Scots equivalent of a word with short 'i' would traditionally substitute with an *a*, the diacritic may be retained (eg 'quit' → *quät;* 'ministry' → *männystrie*).

b) The short 'i' after 'w' or 'wh' is spelt with a *u* (eg 'witch' → *wutch*), as follows:

Willy   - *Wullie*

wind   - *wun*

whin (gorse) - *whun*

which   - *whutch*

switch   - *swutch*

whistle   - *whussle*

c) English 'i' Ulster-Scots *ee*

swim   - *sweem*

live   - *leeve*

particular - *parteeklar*

idiot   - *eedyit*

sick   - *seeck*

jig   - *jeeg*

swivel   - *sweel*

pity   - *peety*

artificial - *artyfeecial*

Words spelt with the vowel 'o' in English

a) English 'o' → Ulster-Scots *a* or *ai* (with same [ai] sound rhyming with 'rain')

The Ulster-Scots pronunciations associated with this feature are self-evident. The spellings are traditional, well-known and often used as 'markers' of Ulster-Scots writings and speech to distinguish Ulster-Scots from mid-Ulster English dialect. Historically the same vowel sound is represented in Ulster-Scots in two ways as follows:

English 'o' → Ulster-Scots *a*

stone - *stane* (rhymes with 'rain')

home - *hame*

bone - *bane*

one   - *ane* → *yin*

move - *mave* (local - County Down)

English 'o' Ulster-Scots *ai* (with the same [ai] sound)

rope - *raip*

soap - *saip*

both - *baith*

cloth - *claith*

most - *maist*

more - *mair*

b) English 'o' → Ulster-Scots *a* (sounding [*ah*] sound)

sob   - *sab* (rhymes with 'cab')

long   - *lang*

off   - *aff*

open   - *apen*

drop   - *drap* (loc. *drop* pronounced [drawp])

shop   - *shap* (loc. *shop* pronounced [shawp])

who   - *wha*

two   - *twa*

soften - *saffen*

c) English 'o' and 'oe' → Ulster-Scots *ae*

to   - *tae* (rhymes with 'say': unstressed [ta])

so   - *sae*

do   - *dae*

no   - *nae*

go   - *gae* (unstressed [ga])

toe   - *tae*

woe - *wae*

foe - *fae*

d) English 'o' → Ulster-Scots *oa*

lost   - *loast* (rhymes with 'coast')

loss   - *loass*

born   - *boarn*

cost   - *coast*

collie - *coallie*

corn   - *coarn*

dog   - *doag* (loc. *dug*)

bog   - *boag*

rock   - *roak*

pocket - *poaket*

e) English '-ow' → Ulster-Scots *-owe* (sounding as in 'how')

grow - *growe*

bowl - *bowle*

f) English 'o' → Ulster-Scots *i*

brother - *brither*

mother - *mither*

other   - *ither, tither*

son   - *sin*

g) English 'ow' and 'ou' → Ulster-Scots *oo*

These two spellings in English are historically spelt one way in Ulster-Scots as follows English 'ow' → Ulster-Scots *oo*

town   - *toon*

cow   - *coo*

brown - *broon*

now   - *noo*

allow - *olloo*

crown - *croon*

flower - *flooer*

power - *pooer*

down - *doon*

Notable exceptions (spelling and pronunciation):

crow - *craa, craw*

blow - *blaa, blow*

snow - *snaa, snaw*

row   - *raa*

English 'ou' → Ulster-Scots *oo*

cloud   - *clood*

round   - *roon*

about   - *aboot*

out   - *oot*

our   - *oor*

house   - *hoose*

mouse - *moose*

mouth - *mooth*

doubt   - *doot*

council - *cooncil*

plough - *ploo*

Notable exceptions (spelling and pronunciation):

found - *fun*

soul   - *sowI*

h) English 'oo' → Ulster-Scots *ui*

One of the best-known conventions for representing Scots vowel sounds is the *ui*-equivalent to English '-oo-' as in 'good' → *guid*. However, there are different local pronunciations of *guid* as [gid], [geed], [gud], etc (rhyming with English 'hid', or 'need', or in some areas with English 'mud').

book   - *buik*

boot   - *buit*

good   - *guid*

goose - *guiss*

moon - *muin* (loc. *meen*)

root   - *ruit*
school - *schuil*
poor   - *puir*
blood - *bluid*

Notable exceptions (spelling only):

foot - *fit*

Notable exceptions (spelling and pronunciation):

took   - *tuk*
look   - *luk*
door   - *dure,* (loc. *dorr*)
stood - *stud*
floor - *flure,* (loc. *flare*)
wood - *wud*

The shortened vowel sounds suggested by *tuk* and *stud* are also reflected in the spelling conventions of *wud, cud, shud:*

would - *wud*
could   - *cud*
should - *shud*

i) English '-old' → Ulster-Scots *-oul* (with an 'ow' sound)

old   - *auld → oul*
cold - *coul*
hold - *houl*
bold - *boul*

j) English final '-ow' → Ulster-Scots *-a* and *-ae*

elbow   - *elba*
fellow   - *fella*

yellow   - *yella*

hollow   - *holla*

narrow   - *nerra*

swallow (*n*) - *swalla*

Notable exceptions (spelling and pronunciation):

follow   - *fallae*

window   - *wundae*

swallow (*v*) - *swallae*

Words spelt with the vowel 'u' in English

a) English 'u' and 'ou' → Ulster-Scots *i*

run   - *rin*

sun   - *sin*

summer - *simmer*

such   - *sitch* (literary: *sic*)

cup   - *kip*

couple   - *kipple*

b) English 'u' → Ulster-Scots *ü* (denoting [uh] pronunciation)

push   - *püsh* (rhymes with 'hush')

pull   - *püll* (rhymes with 'hull')

bull   - *büll*

bush   - *büsh*

butcher - *bütcher*

sugar   - *shüggar*

Loss of final '-e' of English words to signify a vowel sound change in Ulster-Scots

The dropping of final '-d' in words like 'find' and 'blind' → *fin* and *blin* represents an actual vowel sound change in Ulster-Scots. Similarly, the vowel sound change in the following

words can also be represented by the omission of the final '-e'.

take   - *tak*

make - *mak*

dare   - *dar*

wade - *wad*

wake - *wak*

scare - *scar*

aware - *awar*

broke - *broke* (local: *brok*)

Note: *Divid* appears to follow a similar pattern, but is the Ulster-Scots form of 'divided' rather than 'divide'. *Time* only has a spelling and pronunciation change when used as a suffix in compounds like: *'simmertim',* and *'onietim'.*

Long 'a' represented by á, aa and aw

In Ulster-Scots (and in Scots), the letter 'a' is generally pronounced [ah] (rhyming with 'ma' and not with 'may'). However, the [ah] sound in words such as *ava* (pronounced [a-va]), can contrast with a longer [aw] sound in other words such as *awa* (pronounced [awah] or [awaw]) and *anaa* or *anaw* ('and all'). Sometimes an accent to indicate the lengthened sound of this vowel may be encountered:

awá - away

twá - two

However, this is generally avoided by modern writers, and is not recommended.

Long 'i' represented by medial 'y'

Another situation where accented vowels have been used is to indicate which particular vowel is stressed or lengthened in speech. For example the word 'minister' is often written *meenister* in Scots, but in Ulster-Scots speech the pronunciation is closer to [manny-stther] with some stress along with a change in pronunciation on the second vowel. In certain cases, medial English 'i' (and to a lesser extent medial 'a', 'e' and 'u'), are represented by medial *y* in Ulster-Scots.

minister   - *mannystèr*

covenanter - *coveynantèr*

ridicule   - *rïdicule,* (local: *redycule)*

residence - *resydence*

accident   - *eccydent*

animal   - *annymal*

barrister   - *barrystèr*

beautiful   - *beautyfu*

manifest   - *mannyfest*

maximum - *mexymum*

pitiful   - *peetyfu*

uniform   - *unyform*

crucify   - *crucyfie*

sacrifice   - *secryfice*

The use of medial 'y' in this way can also include *massycrae* for 'massacre' and *monnyfectèr* for 'manufacture', where 'y' is used in place of 'a' and 'u'.

Long 'o' → Ulster-Scots ó (in English '-oa-' words)

Shared English/Ulster-Scots words with an 'oa' spelling such as 'road', 'boat', 'goat', 'coat' etc, are pronounced locally [row-ad], [bow-at], [go-at], [co-at] in Ulster-Scots. In these situations, some writers have used an accent to indicate a vowel which is pronounced distinctly and separately from the adjacent vowel. As this is a local feature, it is only recommended for use by writers intending to indicate their local dialect.

road - *róad*

boat - *bóat*

goat - *góat*

coat - *cóat*

toast - *tóast*

PART 4:

Modified consonants in modern Ulster-Scots

a) *ch* in Ulster-Scots for English 'gh'

The Germanic 'ch' sound, as in 'loch', or 'lough', is one of the most characteristic sounds in Scots and Ulster-Scots. English spellings of words like 'light', 'bright', and 'night' were used by Ulster-Scots poets of the early 19th century, but their rhyming systems made it clear that the reader should understand that a guttural '-ch' pronunciation was intended. During the mid 1800s some of our writers such as Robert Huddleston of Moneyreagh began to introduce apostrophes as an indication of the correct pronunciation. Thus we find in some poems of the 1850s spellings such as *li'ght, bri'ght* and *ni'ght.* In Older Scots, and from the late 19th century on in Ulster-Scots, this feature has been consistently represented by a '-ch' spelling.

night	- *nicht*
right	- *richt*
tight	- *ticht*
light	- *licht*
eight	- *echt*
bright	- *bricht*
brought	- *brocht*
fight	- *fecht*
fought	- *focht*
bought	- *bocht*
rough	- *ruch*
daughter	- *dochtèr*
high	- *heich*
height	- *heicht*
enough	- *eneuch*
laugh	- *lach*
sight	- *sicht*
wrought	- *wrocht*

aught   - *ocht*

weight   - *wecht*

tough   - *teuch*

straight   - *strecht*

b) English 's' → Ulster-Scots *sh*

The behaviour of the consonant 's' in combination with 'h' and 'ch' in Ulster-Scots has already been examined in the light of the documentary and historical record. English words with an 's' spelling are frequently spelt with 'sh' in Ulster-Scots if they are modified to this sound in Ulster-Scots. For example, 'sew' can be written *shoo* in Ulster-Scots, although the surname 'Shaw' is sometimes written in a revived form as *Schaw,* reflecting its 17th century spelling, and 'sugar' as *shüggar* to reflect the vowel sound change.

sew   - *shoo*

suit   - *shuit* (of clothes)

harness - *harnish*

breast   - *breesht*

least   - *leasht*

nervous - *nervish*

feast   - *feasht*

priest   - *preesht*

soon   - *shane*

c) Older Scots *quh-* for 'wh-' in modern Ulster-Scots

In Ulster-Scots, as is the case generally in Scotland and Ireland, words beginning with 'wh-' such as 'white', 'whales', 'when', etc. are pronounced with an initial 'hw' sound as in Old English, (and not as [wite], [wales] and [wen] as in modern English). As outlined above, the Older Scots spelling for this feature was *'quh-',* and this spelling is used as an alternative literary form or in formal register in a limited number of words only.

who   - *wha* (lit: *quha)*

what   - *whut* (lit: *quhat)*

where - *whar, whaur* (lit: *quhar)*

when - *whan* (lit: *quhan)*

why   - *why* (lit: *quhy)*

Noteable exceptions (spelling and pronunciation):

whore - *hoor*

whole — *hale* ('whole' cannot be pronounced with the [hw] sound, and in Ulster-Scots the form *hale* is used — *"Tha hale wide worl is ill divid")*.

Note that the other 'wh' words, like 'while', 'white' and 'whole' in English and *wheen* in Ulster-Scots are not found with *quh* spellings in modern writings. *While* is often used instead of 'time' — *'Ye'r a lang while gettin doon thaim stairs'. Whiles* is used in place of 'sometimes' — *'A'm late gettin oot o ma bed, whiles'.*

d) Interdental pronunciation of 't', 'd' and 'nn' when followed by an 'r'

The consonants 't', 'd' and 'nn' are modified in Ulster-Scots pronunciation when they are followed by an 'r'. In English, these consonants are pronounced by touching the tip of the tongue on the roof of the mouth as they are sounded. In Ulster-Scots the same consonants are pronounced as 'tth', 'dth' and 'nnth' by touching the tip of the tongue on the back of the top teeth as they are sounded. This feature has been represented in spelling either by adding a 'th' after the consonant (eg *watther* for 'water'), or by the use of a grave accent over the following vowel (eg *wattèr* for 'water'). In this way 'Ulster-Scots' becomes *Ulstèr-Scotch* or *Ulsther-Scotch.*

water   - *wattèr* or *watther*

shoulder - *shoodèr* or *shoother*

ladder   - *leddèr* or *lether*

after   - *eftèr* or *efther*

wonder   - *wunnèr* or *wunther*

general   - *genèral* or *gentheral*

winter   - *wuntèr* or *wuntther*

Representation of this feature has been one of the most difficult issues in the spelling standardisation process. It is therefore worth outlining the recent history of how this problem has been tackled by orthographers and language users.

In some cases the use of a 'th' or 'dh' is sufficient to represent the sound of 't' and 'd', so

giving us *butther, sthrae* (straw), *dhrap* (drop), *shoodher* (shoulder), but in some cases it is impractical. 'Tractor', for example, would become *tthraycther,* and 'tree' would become *tthree.* The Ulster-Scots pronunciation of 'tree' should not be confused with the numeral 'three', because in 'tree' the 'tr' sounds are modified to [ttrh-]. In fact, the difference between interdental 't', 'd' and interdental 'th', 'dh' is that the first are stop consonants (sounded by a firm closure of the tongue between the teeth), while the second are spirants (sounded so that the passage of breath does not wholly cease).

In the 1960s Professor Gregg and Brendan Adams addressed this orthographic problem, and advocated capitalising the letters 'T' and 'D' (even in the middle of words) when they were affected along with a following 'r' sound. Thus we find spellings in their transcriptions such as:

DReekh

DReer

DRawin

guTTers

claaTTer

TRue

beTTer

DRänk

TRäcks

However, no other writers or language users have adopted this convention. Instead some have turned to the use of an accent over the vowel immediately following the modified consonants to achieve the same result: *drèech, drèer, guttèrs, bettèr,* etc. Of course, the traditional alternative of inserting an 'h' is often found also: *dhreech, gutthers, betther,* etc.

In James Fenton's dictionary, *The Hamely Tongue,* this feature is described, but no orthographic device is necessary in his work where a particular word such as *butter* can have a pronunciation guide inserted after: eg **butter** (-**tth**-).

Certain words with '-nn-' and '-nd-' spelling in English such as 'wonder' can be represented as *wunner* or *wundher* in Ulster-Scots literature. However, the most common pronunciation is not [wunner] (with the 'n' sounded by touching the tongue on the roof of the mouth) or [wun-dher] (with a distinct 'd' audible). Rather, the '-nn-' is sounded by touching the tongue

on the back of the teeth, and is represented now as *wunnèr.* This pronunciation is found with many words which — like *danner/dander-* can be spelt either with '-nn-' or '-nd-'. In the Gregg/Adams spelling system described above (where the letters 't' and 'd' were capitalised to represent their 'interdental' — ie tongue between the teeth -pronunciation), they also advocated capitalising the letters '-nn-' for the same reason: eg *daNNer and wuNNer.*

In *The Hamely Tongue* words like 'under' are represented as *unther,* rather than the more conventional *unner,* to indicate the correct pronunciation. The word 'winner' using this spelling system, becomes *wunther,* while 'winter' is *wunter,* with a pronunciation reminder (tth-) after the headword in the dictionary entry. The 'interdental' sounding of '-nn-' does produce a barely perceptible, soft 't' or 'th' sound, but without allowing a full 't' or 'tth' sound as in *wunter* or *wunter* [wuntther]. The following words with '-nd-' spellings in their English equivalents are provided in *The Hamely Tongue:*

under   - *unther* (here spelt *unnèr)*

underground - *unthergrun* (here spelt *unnèrgrun)*

thunder   - *thunther* (here spelt *thunnèr)*

wander   - *wanther* (here spelt *wanner)*

Anderson   - *Antherson* (here spelt *Andèrson)*

render   - *renther* (here spelt *rennèr)*

The following words with '-n-' or '-nn-' spellings in their English equivalent are also provided in *The Hamely Tongue:*

banner - *banther* (here spelt *bannèr)*

dinner   - *dinther* (here spelt *dennèr)*

general - *gentheral* (here spelt *genèral)*

mineral - *mintheral* (here spelt *minèral)*

In all these examples the '-nn-' and '-nd-' modification only occurs when these consonants are followed by an 'r'. Like *dannèr,* other Ulster-Scots words with no English equivalents can sometimes be spelt '-nd-' or '-nn-', but usually the '-nn-' forms dominate in the literature. *Rander,* or more commonly *ranner* ('to ramble on without meaning'), is given as *ranther* by Fenton, *raNNer* by Gregg/Adams, and now standardized as *rannèr.* The use of the diacritic is, however, optional and its omission does not otherwise alter the spelling.

It is now recommended that diacritics are only used to represent this feature when the consonants 't', 'd' and 'nn' are followed by '-er' (and not when an alternative spelling with additional '-h' or '-th' is traditional), as follows:

better   - *bettèr*
butter   - *buttèr*
after   - *eftèr*
water   - *wattèr*
counter - *coontèr*
canister - *kenystèr*
dinner   - *dennèr*
under   - *unnèr*
daughter - *dochtèr*
letter   - *lettèr*
wonder   - *wunnèr*
wander   - *wanner*
winter   - *wuntèr*
hundred - *hunnèr*

Notable exceptions (traditional spellings):

shoulder - *shoother*
ladder   - *lether*
cinders - *shunthers*

This spelling 'rule' may also be used with the following Ulster-Scots words which have no English equivalents:

dannèr

foondèrt

dumfoondèrt

rannèr

scunnèr

e) 'the' and 'they'' as *tha* and *the'* in modern Ulster-Scots

In Ulster-Scots today, the definite article 'the' is spelt *tha* when the English spelling is not used, not just because it sounds different, but to avoid confusion with the following:

⬜ 'tonight', 'today', 'tomorrow'', and 'together', is *thenicht, theday, themorra,* and *thegither.* Here *the-* is an abbreviation of 'this', eg 'this night', and so 'this year' also becomes *theyeir* and 'this morning' becomes *themoarn.*

⬜ 'they', the personal pronoun, is *the,* or *the'* in Ulster-Scots. Most writers include an apostrophe *(the'),* to avoid confusion with the definite article.

So, a sentence like: "They were all at the dance tonight", becomes: *"The' wur aa at tha daunce thenicht".*

f) The glottal stop for 'tt' when followed by an 'l'

One of the most characteristic features in rural Ulster-Scots speech is the glottal stop. The glottal 't' is sounded by a 'coughing' or catching action which closes the top of the throat, rather than by the action of the tongue touching the roof of the mouth. There are no orthographic conventions to indicate its presence in earlier Scots or in English, so its history cannot be traced from the documentary record. In Danish an apostrophe is used to indicate the glottal stop, but given the conventions adopted elsewhere this would be liable to confuse in Ulster-Scots.

The consonant 't' is often modified in this way when it is preceded by a vowel and followed by the letter 'l'. The 't' is not sounded by an action of the tongue but by a coughing or catching action which closes the top of the throat. This feature is represented by 'ttl' (eg 'metal' to *mettle*):

metal - *mettle*
bottle - *bottle*
nettle - *nettle*
rattle - *rattle*
petal - *pettle*

g) English initial 'c-' → Ulster-Scots *k-*

There are characteristic vowel changes in some Ulster-Scots words where the English equivalent begins with a 'c-'. This is particularly common with the 'a' to *e* vowel change,

and is represented by a spelling change from 'ca-' → *ke-*. Otherwise, the vowel change would suggest a sibilant *c*. Note, however, that when the same vowel sound change occurs before an '-r', (which is represented in Ulster-Scots by *ai*), the *k-* spelling should not be used (eg *cairt* for 'cart', not *'kert'*).

Similarly, when the vowel change after an initial 'c' is from [uh] to [eh], the spelling change is from 'cou-' or 'cu-' → *ki-*.

cap   - *kep*

cat   - *ket*

catch   - *ketch*

comb   - *kame*

cackle   - *keckle* (loc. *keechle)*

country - *kintrie*

couple - *kipple*

cup   - *kip*

h) English '-ing' → Ulster-Scots *-in* (without apostrophe)

The present participle ending ('-ing' in English) is always pronounced [-in], and is written -*in* in modern Ulster-Scots (eg *sleepin* 'sleeping', *waakin* 'walking', *footèrin* 'fidgeting' etc).

This feature is so well-known that it barely requires comment, other than noting that the usual 19th century practice of using apostrophes to indicate all missing letters (from the English equivalent words) is no longer considered appropriate in modern Scots or Ulster-Scots.

i) English '-ngth' endings → Ulster-Scots *nth*

When 'ng' is not in a final position, but is following by 'th' in English words such as 'length', 'strength' etc, it becomes *nth* in Ulster-Scots:

length   - *lenth*

strength - *strenth.*

j) English medial '-ng-' → Ulster-Scots soft *g* sound

The consonants 'ng' are modified in Ulster-Scots pronunciation when followed by the letters 'l' or 'r'. So the 'g' in a word like 'anger' is not sounded with a hard 'g' sound as in

English, but with a similar pronunciation to the 'ng' sound as in English 'singer'. This is represented by dropping the following vowel and replacing it with an apostrophe, (eg *langle* and *angle* in Ulster-Scots are sometimes spelt *lang'l* and *ang'l*).

anger   - *ang'r*

hunger - *hung'r*

finger   - *fing'r*

angle   - *eng'l*

tangle   - *teng'l*

dangle - *dang'l*

ingle   - *ing'l*

single   - *sing'l*

strangle - *streng'l*

stronger - *strang'r*

Note: '*Danger*' does not follow this rule as the pronunciation in Ulster-Scots is the same as in English.

k) English medial '-mbl-' → Ulster-Scots *-mml-*

fumble - *fummle*

humble - *hummle*

crumble - *crummle*

gamble - *gemmle*

l) English medial '-mb-' → Ulster-Scots *-mm-*

number - *nummer*

member - *memmer*

Comber - *Cummer*

Note that *September, November* and *December* may change to *Septemmer, Novemmer* and *Decemmer,* but these variants are only local.

m) English '-old' → Ulster-Scots *-oul* (rhyming with 'howl')

Final '-d' is lost in words such as 'old', 'cold', and 'hold' to give *oul, coul,* and *houl*. These spellings and pronunciations are now shared between vernacular Ulster-English and Ulster-Scots, with the Scots (and Ulster-Scots literary) forms of *auld* and *haud* being rarely heard in speech in Ulster today. Typical of the earlier usage by many of the Ulster-Scots poets are the following lines:

'Laigh in a vale there hauds a fair' (Thomson)

'But haud ye, a jiffey' (Sloan)

hold - *houl*
cold - *coul*
old   - *oul (loc: aul)*
sold - *soul*
told - *toul*

n) Loss of final '-d' in '-nd' words

The loss of the final '-d' in 'and', 'hand' and 'land' (to give *an, han* or *haun,* and *lan* or *lann*) is a characteristic feature of all Ulster vernacular speech, both Ulster-English and Ulster-Scots. 'And' is usually spelt *an* (historically with an apostrophe: *an',* although some writers have used *aun*).

The '-d' is elided in final position in English (becoming a final *-n* or *-l* in Ulster-Scots). However, in positions other than final, it takes a double *n* as its reflex (e.g. handling *-hannlin*).

hand   - *han*
and   - *an*
blind   - *blin*
pound - *pun,* or *poon*
round - *roon*
land   - *lan*
found - *fun*
find   - *fin*
ground - *grun*
cold   - *coul*

field   - *fiel*

Notable exceptions (in spelling and pronunciation):

kind - *kine*
mind - *mine*

o) Loss of final '-t' in '-pt' words

kept   - *kep*
slept - *slep*
tempt - *temp* (but p.t. *temptit*)
swept - *swep*

p) Loss of 'l' before 't' and 'd'

salt   - *saut*
malt   - *maut*
multure - *mootèr*
shoulder - *shoother*

q) Final '-ic' → Ulster-Scots *-ick*

music   - *musick*
physic   - *physick*
paralytic   - *paralytick*
mathematic - *mathmatick*
gaelic   - *gaelick*
arithmetic   - *rithmetick*

r) Final '-all' → Ulster-Scots *-aa*

Perhaps no feature of Scots pronunciation and spelling is better known than the loss of '-ll' from the ending of words such as 'all' and 'fall' giving *a'* and *fa'* in traditional writings. These are characteristic of Ulster-Scots too, although the forms *al, cal, hal,* etc. are also

common:

    all   - *aa*
    call - *caa*
    ball - *baa*
    fall - *faa*
    wall - *waa*

Notable exception (spelling only)

    hall - *how* (traditional spelling in place-names)

Notable exception (spelling and pronunciation)

    knoll - *knowe* (rhymes with [cow])

When these words are used to form compound words, such as 'altogether', the 'l' or 'll' element can still be omitted even though it is not in a final position (*aathegither*).

s) English final '-ful' → Ulster-Scots *-fu*

There are numerous compound words formed with '-ful' which in Ulster-Scots become '-fu'. fistful — *nievefu*

    powerful - *pooerfu*
    pityful   - *peetyfu*
    wonderful - *wunnerfu*

Note that this is a traditional spelling, but that the pronunciation is always [-fa].

t) English final '-ull' Ulster-Scots *-u*

    full - *fu*
    pull - *pu*

u) Ulster-Scots final '-it' for English '-ed' in past tense verb forms

The Scots past tense verb ending in '-it' or '-t' (rather than '-ed' or '-d') is a well-established

historical form which also reflects a pronunciation difference with English.

baked   - *baket*
laughed - *lacht*
walked   - *waakt, dannèrt*
tipped   - *coupt*
wrestled - *wrasseltt*
opened   - *apen't*

Noteable exceptions:

knew   - *knowed*
caught - *ketched*

The following tables set out in summary how verb forms change differently in English and Ulster-Scots to indicate the past.

PLAIN VERBS: Past Tense forms with a '-d' ending in Ulster-Scots and English

English verb	English past tense	Ulster-Scots verb	Ulster-Scots past tense
(beat)		*whale*	*whaled*
(build)		*big*	*bigged*
(endure)		*thole*	*tholed*
(hurry)		*hie*	*hied*
(select)		*wale*	*waled*
(trade)		*dale*	*daled*
allow	**allowed**	*alloo*	*allooed*
belong	**belonged**	*belang*	*belanged*
call	**called**	*caa*	*caad*
die	**died**	*dee*	*deed*
divide	**divided**	*divide*	*divid*
draw	**drew**	*draa*	*draad*
follow	**followed**	*follae*	*follaed*

hear	heard	*hear*	*heerd*
live	lived	*leeve*	*leeved*
loosen	loosened	*loose*	*loosed*
pay	paid	*pye*	*pyed*
please	pleased	*plaise*	*plaised*
roll	rolled	*rowl*	*rowled*
say	said	*say*	*sayed*

PLAIN VERBS: Past Tense forms with a "-t" ending in Ulster-Scots

English verb	English past tense	Ulster-Scots verb	Ulster-Scots past tense
(carry)		*cairt*	*cairtit*
(compel)		*gar*	*gart*
(cry)		*greet*	*greetit, gret*
(direct)		*road*	*roadit*
(dodge)		*jook*	*jookt*
(manage)		*hannle*	*hannelt*
(nudge)		*dunt*	*duntit*
(remember)		*mine*	*mindit*
(scatter)		*skail*	*skailt*
(sicken)		*scunnèr*	*scunnèrt*
(shout)		*guldèr*	*guldèrt*
(stroll)		*dannèr*	*dannèrt*
(teach)		*lairn*	*lairnt*
(tip over)		*coup*	*coupt*
act	acted	*ect*	*ectit*
ask	asked	*ax, ast*	*axt, ast*
connect	connected	*connect*	*connectit*
count	counted	*coont*	*coontit*
drop	dropped	*drap*	*drapt*
drown	drowned	*droon*	*droondit*

fill	filled	*fill*	*fillt*
gather	gathered	*gether*	*gethert*
heed	heeded	*heed*	*heedit*
hunt	hunted	*hunt*	*huntit*
join	joined	*join*	*joint*
kill	killed	*kïll*	*kïllt*
laugh	laughed	*lach*	*lacht*
lift	lifted	*lïft*	*lïftit*
look	looked	*luk*	*lukt*
need	needed	*need*	*needit*
part	parted	*pairt*	*pairtit*
pick	picked	*pïck*	*pïckt*
plaster	plastered	*plestèr*	*plestèrt*
salt	salted	*saut*	*sautit*
shift	shifted	*shïft*	*shïftit*
start	started	*stairt*	*stairtit*
stop	stopped	*stap*	*stapt*
stretch	stretched	*streetch*	*streetcht, streekit*
talk	talked	*taak*	*taakt, taakit*
turn	turned	*turn*	*turnt*
walk	walked	*waak*	*waakt, waakit*

ENGLISH STRONG VERBS: Past Tense forms with a vowel sound change in English

English verb	English past tense	English past participle	Ulster-Scots verb	Ulster-Scots past tense	Ulster-Scots past participle
come	came	have come	*cum*	*cum*	*hae cum*
drink	drank	have drunk	*drink*	*drunk*	*hae drunk*
hang	hanged	have hung	*hing*	*hung*	*hae hung*
run	ran	have run	*rin*	*run*	*hae run*
sing	sang	have sung	*sïng*	*sung*	*hae sung*

swim	swam	have swum	*sweem*	*swum*	*hae swum*

IRREGULAR ENGLISH PLAIN VERBS:

English verb	English past tense	English past participle	Ulster-Scots verb	Ulster-Scots past tense	Ulster-Scots past participle
catch	**caught**	**have caught**	*ketch*	*ketched*	*hae ketched*
tell	**told**	**have told**	*tell*	*toul (telt)*	*hae toul, (hae telt)*

ENGLISH STRONG VERBS: Past Tense forms with a vowel sound change in English, and a Past Participle form with "-n" ending in English also

English verb	English past tense	English past participle	Ulster-Scots verb	Ulster-Scots past tense	Ulster-Scots past participle
beat	**beat**	**have beaten**	bate	bate	hae bate
break	**broke**	**have broken**	brek	broke, *(loc.)* brok	hae broke
eat	**ate**	**have eaten**	eat	et	hae et
fall	**fell**	**have fallen**	faa	fell	hae fell
give	**gave**	**have given**	gie	gien (gied)	hae gien, (hae gied)
grow	**grew**	**have grown**	growe	grew (growed)	hae grew (hae growed)
know	**knew**	**have known**	know	knowed	hae knowed
lie	**lay**	**have lain**	lie	layed	hae layed
ride	**rode**	**have ridden**	ride	rid	hae rid
see	**saw**	**have seen**	see	seen	hae seen
swear	**swore**	**have sworn**	sweer	sweered	hae sweered
take	**took**	**have taken**	tak	tuk (taen)	hae tuk (taen)
write	**wrote**	**have written**	write	writ	hae writ

ENGLISH STRONG VERBS: Verb forms which do not change in English for Past Tense or Past Participle

English verb	English past tense	English past participle	Ulster-Scots verb	Ulster-Scots past tense	Ulster-Scots past participle
hit	**hit**	**have hit**	*hit*	*hut*	*hae hut*
let	**let**	**have let**	*let*	*lut (let)*	*hae lut (let)*
put	**put**	**have put**	*pit*	*püt*	*hae püt*

v) English final "-n't" in negated auxiliary verbs → Ulster-Scots -*nae*

isn't   - *isnae*

aren't   - *irnae*

wasn't   - *wusnae*

don't   - *dinnae*

doesn't   - *disnae*

didn't   - *didnae*

hasn't   - *haesnae*

haven't   - *hinnae*

hadn't   - *hadnae*

won't   - *winnae*

wouldn't   - *wudnae*

can't   - *cannae*

couldn't   - *cudnae*

weren't   - *wudnae*

shouldn't - *shudnae*

mustn't   - *maunnae*

daren't   - *darnae, durstnae*

mightn't   - *michtnae*

w) The loss of the consonant 'r'

In speech, *fae* is often preferred to the traditional written Scots *frae* ('from'). Indeed, so widespread is the *fae* usage in some dialects of Scots that *frae* is regarded as a 'literary' form, despite the fact that *fae* also occurs frequently in modern Scots writing. In some Ulster-Scots areas, particularly the marginal ones, the situation is much the same, except

that a similar dropping of the 'r' can extend to those words which begin 'thr-'. So 'throw', 'through', 'three' and 'throat' can be *th'ow* (rhymes with 'so'), *th'oo, th'ie* and *th'oat* in some local Ulster-Scots dialects. This feature is also common in Belfast speech, and in urban Ulster-Scots. Similarly, *throughither* ('untidy') is sometimes pronounced [thoo-orr]. The 'r' can even be lost, albeit rarely, after initial 'b', for example, 'brigade' is sometimes *b'igade,* and 'British' *B'itisch.*

x) Reversal of 'r' and adjacent vowel (metathesis)

In words such as 'children', 'brethren', 'apron', 'modern', 'pretty', 'grass' and 'western', the Ulster-Scots forms often involve a reversal of the position of the letter 'r' and the adjacent vowel:

apron   - *apern*
modern - *modren*
pretty   - *purtie*
grass   - *girse*
western - *wastren*

PART 5:

Representation of the [yih] sound in Ulster-Scots (palatisation)

The [yih] sound in Ulster-Scots was once represented by the letter 'yogh', firstly as   and then *z* in historical documents. As outlined in Part 1 above, it is represented only rarely now in modern writing, apart from its use in place names and surnames. The sound, however, remains in the spoken language, sometimes being represented as 'y' in a similar way to the way 'y' is used in the beginning of some English words such as 'year' and 'yellow'.

a) Palatisation after initial consonants

The English pronunciation of certain words like 'new', 'tune' and 'Duke' include a [yih] sound after the consonants 't', 'n' and 'd'. This, of course, also applies in Ulster-Scots, but it extends here to words like *neuk* ('nook'), *teuch* ('tough') and *deuck* ('duck'). While some writers have revived the Older Scots letter 'yogh' in modern Ulster-Scots (and this includes *ze* and *zeir* for 'you' and 'year", etc.), the existing spelling conventions of *'neu-'* or *'new-'*, *'deu-'* and *'teu-'* are adequate in most cases. Similarly, when the consonant 'f' is 'yoghed' in Ulster-Scots, a 'feu-' spelling is often sufficient, eg *feuggie* ('left-handed').

duck (noun) - *deuck*

tough   - *teuch*

enough   - *eneuch*

nook   - *neuk*

hook   - *heuk*

Note: The verb 'duck' is *jook*.

Some writers also prefer to represent the intrusive [yih] sound in words like *feuggie, teuch* or *eneuch* by using a 'j' or a 'y': *fjuggy, tjugh, enyuch*. This is consistent with the well-known Mid-Ulster English forms [gyarden] 'garden' and [cyar] 'car' for the same feature as it appears there. Indeed, a considerable number of Ulster-Scots words are best spelt with the consonant followed by a 'y' when the subsequent vowel is other than [oo] and another vowel is necessary. Examples include:

myowt - whisper, small sound

nyaff - perky wee nuisance

nyim - tiny piece

nyir - nuisance

nyirm - whinge

nyirps - annoyance

nyitter - complain

nyam - make the sound of a cat

A '*neu-*' type spelling is preferred rather than '*ny-*', except where the subsequent vowel sound is not [oo] (and is not followed by a vowel), or where confusion with another English word might result. For example, *neuk, speuch* and *feuggie;* but *nyirp* (not *neuirp*) and *nyuck* (not *neuock*).

b) 'Yoghing' vowels at the start of words

When certain words begin with a vowel letter they are spelt *y-* if they are pronounced with an initial [yih] sound in Ulster-Scots. For example, 'ewe' and 'one' are *yowe* and *yin.* Some of these words have a [yih] sound at the beginning in English too, of course, as with words such as 'you', 'your', 'year' (*ye, yer, yeir*).

Some words which do not begin with a [yih] sound at the start in English, are nevertheless modified in traditional Ulster-Scots. So 'ale' occurs as *yill* in some Ulster-Scots poems, and in earlier documents 'earl' is *yirl* or *yerl.* More familiarly, 'earth' becomes *yirth* or *yird.* Some Scots and Ulster-Scots words which are not shared with English are also modified in the same way. 'Eagle', which is *earn* in Scots, can also be *yirn* or *yearn; ae,* which is the adjectival form of 'one' or 'a single', is often *yae*; 'one', otherwise, has become *yin* in Ulster-Scots (although the 'standard' Scots form is *ane*), and 'once' is *yinst.*

The words *thon* ('that') and *thonder* or *thonner* ('over there') are used interchangeably with *yon* and *yonner.*

c) Palatisation after 'l'

The consonant 'l' is followed by a [yih] sound (and by the letter z) in certain Older Scots words such as *tulzie, culzie* ('welcome') as well as in place-names such as Culzean, and surnames such as McFarlzean and Bailze. The north Antrim form of '*kaylie'* is *kailye* ('ceildhe', 'visit'). The word *tulzie* ('dispute', 'quarrel'), pronounced [tul-yeh], is found in an early Donegal Ulster-Scots poem of 1720: *To redd the Royal tulzie sets thy muse',* while

over a century later (in 1846) Robert Huddleston of Moneyreagh in county Down penned the line: *'Or else the tulzie gangs mair t'ugh'*.

In modern Ulster-Scots, when a vowel is preceded by palatisation after medial 'l' in certain words, this feature is represented by the insertion of y:

pollute - *polyute*

column - *colyeum*

flu   - *flyue*

flute   - *flyute*

glue   - *glyue*

blue   - *blyue, bue*

Note that the form *bue* for 'blue' retains the yogh sound even when the 'l' is lost.

d) Non-palatisation in words ending in '-ture'

In certain words like 'picture' and 'nature' which in English have a palatisation after the 't' [tyure], the Ulster-Scots equivalents do not, but instead have an interdental [tthur] pronunciation.

picture   - *pictèr*

nature   - *naitèr*

manufacture - *mannyfectèr*

furniture   - *furnitèr*

mixture   - *mixtèr*

PART 6:

The spelling system of *The Hamely Tongue*

James Fenton's The *Hamely Tongue: a personal record of Ulster-Scots in County Antrim* requires a special mention here. Not only is it an authoritative record of contemporary Ulster-Scots as a living tongue in the archetypal core area of County Antrim, but the book itself carries the *imprimatur* of the Ulster-Scots Academy and the Ulster-Scots Language Society. This section is included here as it provides a meticulous and accurate guide to the pronunciation of the living language in county Antrim.

James Fenton's objective was to present the vocabulary and illustrative examples of speech he collected over a lifetime (and authenticated by a representative group of native speakers distributed throughout the county). This he accomplished by using his own spelling system which was "... designed to give, as far as practically possible, a direct guide to pronunciation, avoiding the use of the phonetic alphabet and the technical language of the phonologist."

The Fenton spelling system is 'user friendly', and not markedly different from the spellings adopted by some early 20th century Ulster-Scots writers. It avoids awkward orthographic structures, making pronunciation self-evident to the reader who may not be familiar with spoken Ulster-Scots. Because the work is a dictionary, with an alphabetical list of head-words, aids to pronunciation can be inserted after the main word entry in a way that is not possible in creative writing. For example, the interdental 'd' and 't' forms (giving *dh* and *tth* pronunciations) are explained in the introduction, but in the text of the dictionary itself, only occasional 'reminders' are given, such as *efter* (-tth-).

Inevitably, some pronunciation spellings tend to differ from traditional Scots spelling conventions, or, more properly, they can contrast with etymologically 'correct' alternatives that survive as historical spelling forms. This problem, of course, has always been present with Scots writers who have frequently had to invent spellings to represent what (to them) was known only as an oral language. *The Hamely Tongue,* to give one example, employs the letter 'z' in words such as *wuz* ('was') and *iz* ('us'). This particular spelling form has also been adopted by some modern Scots writers in South-West Scotland, but has been criticised by modern Lallans 'purists' as a move away from standardisation for Scots spellings because it has no historical precedent in Scots literature. This is not the case for Ulster-Scots, however, since our late 19th century writers such as W G Lyttle, and others following him, regularly employed this particular device. This book employs some such spellings. Indeed, as far as the word *sez* ('says') is concerned, this form is almost universal

in modern Ulster-Scots (and Ulster-English dialect) prose, James Fenton does, however, extend the use of 'z' in his spelling system to words such as *hoozes* ('houses') and *jalooze* ('suspect, imagine'; Std Scots *jalouse*).

Given the universal popularity of *The Hamely Tongue* even those spellings which are unique to this dictionary do require compelling reasons not to endure as the accepted new standard spellings.

It is important, therefore, that a description of the spelling system and pronunciation guide used in *The Hamely Tongue* be included in this chapter. Undoubtedly *The Hamely Tongue* will prove to have had enormous influence on future creative writing in Ulster-Scots, and readers of this description of the Ulster-Scots language should refer to Fenton's work for accurate contemporary pronunciation of particular words. A unique characteristic of this dictionary is a supplementary list of words which differ from Standard English in form and pronunciation only, but not in meaning. Standard spellings for modern Ulster-Scots are inevitably based on the dominant Antrim dialect he describes.

Contained in the introductory chapter of *The Hamely Tongue* is an important spelling and pronunciation section (pp. ix-xi) which explains not only the word forms and pronunciation common to the whole study area, but also some of the variations and exceptions found in County Antrim. This is reproduced below:

a) The representation of consonants in *The Hamely Tongue*

⬚ *d* and *t* have the widespread 'interdental' pronunciation when followed by *r* (*dhrive* for *drive, destthroy* for *destroy*). Since this is always so, no special indication is given in the text when they occur. However, they are often, but not always, similarly pronounced when followed by a vowel and an *r,* in these cases this is indicated as in **batter** (-tth-). Pronunciation is often conventional for comparatives, such as *whiter* and *broader,* and always so for words denoting agency, such as *reader* and *writer.*

⬚ *ch,* when preceded by a vowel (or vowel-sound, as in *yowch*), is, unless otherwise indicated, pronounced as in loch; following *u* only, and only where indicated, *gh* is used instead to represent this guttural sound.

⬚ *th* in *ther* is always pronounced as in *the.*

(b) The representation of vowels and vowel sounds in *The Hamely Tongue*

⬚ Short, stressed *i* (as in *bit*) is equivalent, or very close, to Standard English short, stressed

a (as in *bat);* thus **niver** *(never)* is pronounced as (or close to) *navver.* Again, since this is always so, no special modification is made to spelling in dialect words or in Standard English words where this is retained. (This short i sometimes replaces and is replaced by other vowel-sounds — eg **shilter** for shelter, **twust** for twist — but these substitutions are made directly in the spelling used.)

⸮ *i* and *y* in certain words are pronounced as broad *aai* (most commonly cited example being *maaine* for the pronoun *mine,* as distinct from *mine* for the noun or verb). This variation is not confined to Ulster-Scots, but the *aai* form is so strong there as to be treated in the text as a distinct vowel-sound. (The vowel-sound in the second *mine* also differs from Standard English in being somewhat 'narrower', but the variation is much less marked and is ignored in the text.)

⸮ *a* when stressed (whether conventionally short as in *cat* or long as in *harm*) is always long; where necessary, it is shown as *ah,* whether in the headword itself, as in **cahse** for cause, or as in **wrang** (-ah) for wrong. (Note: always *ah* in *wa-, wha-,* etc.)

⸮ *ow* in dialect words is, unless otherwise indicated, pronounced as in *how;* In words which retain their standard form but which have additional dialectal meanings, pronunciation is, again unless otherwise indicated, conventional. Where there is any possibility of confusion, further guidance is given.

⸮ Other vowel-sounds — notably *eh* as in *net, au* as in *pot* and *ae* as in *case* — are usually long (and often markedly so in mid Antrim and locally elsewhere), but this has no special indication in the text.

⸮ The pronoun *I* presents particular difficulties. Unstressed, its pronunciation ranges from a short *a* to a muted or quite neutral sound; stressed, it is a broad *ah* in some districts (especially in the central and southern parts of the area) and an equally broad *aai* elsewhere (especially in the east and north). Here, **A** is used for the unstressed form and **I** for the stressed.

⸮ o' is used for *of* throughout, again to avoid confusion, even though the unstressed form is usually completely neutral.

⸮ r (= 'rhymes with') is sometimes used as the simplest guide to the pronunciation of vowel-sounds, as in: **pull** (r.hull).

c) Variations of pronunciation within County Antrim

⸮ The substitution of vowel-sound *eh* for *a* (whether short or long) in certain groups of

words — in particular, those having *ack, ag, ang, ank, ap, ar* — is common throughout the county (**tex** for tax, **fairm** for farm). With many such words however, there is a divergence of practice from district to district, and especially from urban/suburban to rural districts. In the eastern, central and northern rural areas especially, the change often takes the form of a marked lengthening and 'broadening' of the *ah* sound — as in **blak** (-*ah*) for *black* but **seck** for *sack;* **bag** (-*ah*) for *bag* but **fleg** for *flag;* **wart** (-*ah*) for *wart* but **smairt** for *smart.* (The urban/rural divergence is noted by Gregg in the paper cited. However, while it is most marked with words having *ang* or *ank* — urban **benk**/rural **bank** (-*ah*), urban **tengle**/rural **tangle** (*tahng'l*) — his long list of 'urban' forms contains many common in Ballinaloob and other rural districts: eg **kep** for *cap,* **dreg** for *drag,* **ect** for *act.*)

Where two forms of such words occur in the area, both are given, one usually being a minority form and labelled 'local' (*loc.*).

? The substitution of vowel-sound *eh* for *ae* in certain words (eg **becon** for *bacon,* **plen** got *plain*) is found in many districts in the northern part of the county, from (roughly) Ballyweaney through Ballyknock to Armoy, and over a widening area that includes Topp, The Ganaby, Drumdo, etc. These are given as local variants in the text.

? Four minor variations are noted here but ignored in the text, (a) The substitution of short *i* for short *u* in some words (eg **pliver** for *plover,* **rin** for *run*) is widespread, but is more common in the extreme north of the county (**ip** for *up,* **kim** for *come,* **stiff** for *stuff,* etc), (b) Here, and in some eastern districts, short *i* is also sometimes substituted for vowel-sounds *u* and *oo* (**bill** for *bull,* **schill** for *school,* **giss** for *goose*). (c) The glottal stop (as in *wa'er* for *water*) is particularly noticeable in mid-Antrim but detectable to some degree over a much wider area, (d) The occasional addition of an extra ('glide') vowel (as in *pawit* for *pot*) is found very locally, sometimes confined to individual families.