A Word-List from South-West Clare

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The person who compiles a word-list sets himself up as a target. " Why did you leave out . . . ? " If I prompt somebody to fill the gaps in my local list or to prepare one of his own, I will have attained something.

About twenty-five years or so ago, under the aegis of the Irish Folklore Commission, teachers in many parts of the country had their pupils prepare lists of Irish words in daily use, local traditions, and so on. Such a list prepared today would be interesting, both in itself and for comparison with its predecessor.

The list below contains words of Irish origin which I recall hearing in the village in Clare in which I grew up, the village of Ballynacally in the barony of Clonderlaw. I didn't grow up on a farm but I worked casually, during holidays from school, at farm work ; I think it probable, therefore, that there is a number of terms of farm-life which the list does not contain. Since 1953 I have paid only brief visits to County Clare so that the list may be taken to be valid, as far as it goes, for the 1930s and 1940s.

In addition to the words listed there is an occasional combination of an English word with the Irish ending álaí to give a form such as grousawley, rootawley.

Word-order : The words are arranged alphabetically, being spelled, I hope, in a manner which will indicate the pronunciation according to the current English orthographic convention ; the Irish form follows in brackets. The spelling may seem idiosyncratic, but that seems to me to be a necessary risk if one is not using phonetic symbols.

Abbreviations :

adj.	=	adjective	*adv.*	=	adverb
excl.	=	exclamation	*imp.*	=	imperative
interj.	=	interjection	*pron.*	=	pronoun
lit.	=	literally	*vb.*	=	verb
s.	=	substantive			

aghraw (a ghrá) *excl.* My dear.
amadán, *see* omadhawn.
angashore (ainniseoir) *s.* Unfortunate person.
astore (a stóir) *excl.* My treasure ; term of endearment.
bahn (bán) *s.* Fallow land, being rested for cultivation.
banshee (bean sidhe) *s.* Fairy woman ; generally an omen of death.
barn brack (bairín breac) *s.* Barmbrack ; Hallowe'en cake with currants.
barrpeak (bárr píce) *s.* Top sod with grass taken off before cutting turf.
bart (beart) *s.* Bundle, as of hay.

bawneen (báinín) *s.*, *adj.* White flannel.
bawrnach (báirneach) *s.* Limpet.
blather (bladar) *vb.* To talk volubly.
blatherawley (bladarálaí) *s.* Loquacious talker.
bockady *adj.* Unsteady ; cf. gogaideach, unsteady ; bacach, lame.
bogawn (bogán) *s.* Egg laid without the shell.
bohawn (bothán) *s.* Roughly-constructed hut.
bonniv (banbh) *s.* Bonham.
boohalawn (buachalán) *s.* Ragwort.
boolthaun (buailteán) *s.* Heavy stick.
boorawn *s.* Unrefined person.
boreen (bóithrín) *s.* Narrow by-road.
bos (bas) *s.* Broad end of a hurley.
bosthoon (bastún) *s.* Rough, ignorant fellow.
bownlock (buinn-leac) *s.* Inflammation of the sole of the foot.
bowrawn (bodhrán) *s.* Drum, covered with goatskin.
brogue (barróg) *s.* Irish accent ; e.g., the Kerry brogue.
bundoon (bundún) *s.* Anus.
butthoon (butún) *s.* Mistake.
cawbeen (cáibín) *s.* An old hat.
cawbogue (cábóg) *s.* A boor.
caylee (céilí) *s.* Session of Irish dancing.
clob (clab) *s.* Mouth ; term of contempt as in " shut your clob ".
coashta bowar (cóiste bodhar) *s.* Phantom coach drawn by headless horses.
codawley *s.* Silly person ; cf. cadaráil, foolish prating.
cooramack (cúramach) *adj.* Careful, efficient.
coord (cuaird) *s.* Visit to a neighbour's house for a chat, at night.
core (cóir) *s.* Help given to a neighbour at work.
cownrawning (camhrán). Complaining, as verbal noun or present participle.
crackawlee *s.* Light-headed, giddy person ; cf. creachaille, a person of a cross disposition.
croobeen (crúibín) *s.* Pig's foot.
croosht *vb.* Give a beating to ; cf. crústáil, to throw missiles, to fight.
dalteen (dailtín) *s.* A troublesome, rowdyish young fellow.
deelin (Dia linn) *excl.* God bless us ; said after sneezing.
dhobwee *s.* Heavy, sticky clay.
dilisk (duillisc) *s.* An edible sea plant.
doodeen (dúidín) *s.* A small tobacco-pipe.
drass (dreas) *s.* A bout, a short period of time ; e.g., everyone takes a drass at the churn, sit down for a drass.
droleen (dreoilín) *s.* A wren.
durneen (doirnín) *s.* One of the two handles on a scythe.
dydee *s.* A child's toy.
eye-fiddle (aghaidh-fidil) *s.* A child's mask.
felestrum (feilistrom) *s.* A yellow iris, growing wild in soft land.
ferk (feirc) *s.* Sharp angle at which hat or cap is worn.
filibeen (filbín) *s.* A lapwing.
flahool (flaithiúil) *adj.* Generous.

foostar (fústaire) *s.* A person who acts hurriedly and confusedly.
foostaring. Blundering in haste ; present participle and verbal noun.
frawghán (fraochán) *s.* Bilberry.
fwaylawn (faoileán) *s.* A sea-gull.
fyokadawn (feochadán) *s.* A thistle.
gachee (geaitse) *s.* Excessive boldness in speech or manner ; e.g., that young fellow has too much gachee.
galoot *s.* A light-headed, reckless person.
galore (go leor) *pron.* Enough ; e.g., Have you enough bread ? I have galore.
geek (gíoc) *vb.* Peep ; e.g., the child was geeking round the door.
geek (gíocs) *s.* A sound ; e.g., there wasn't a geek out of him.
glinkeen (glincín) *s.* A silly, light-headed person.
glugger *s.* A bad egg ; cf. gliogar, empty noise.
gob (gob) *s.* Mouth ; e.g., shut your gob !
gom (gam) *s.* A foolish person.
gorsoon (garsún) *s.* A young boy.
gowall (gabháil) *s.* Armful ; e.g., a gowall of turf.
gowlogue (gabhlóg) *s.* A forked piece of stick.
graw (grá) *s.* Love.
greeshock (gríosach) *s.* Small, burning coals ; embers.
grogawn (grógán) *s.* Small number of sods of turf set leaning against one another in the bog to dry.
grug (grog) *s.* Haunches ; only with possessive adjective as in " he was sitting on his grug ".
gurra mah gut (go raibh maith agat) *excl.* Thank you !
hanam own deel (th 'anam ó'n diabhal) *excl.* lit. your soul from the devil ; e.g., hanam own deel, are you in earnest ?
ire (oighear) *s.* Redness and chapping of the skin due to cold or to friction, such as rubbing of clothes.
kanavawn (ceannabhán) *s.* Bog-cotton.
keerawn (caorán) *s.* A small piece of turf.
keerogue (ciaróg) *s.* A cockroach.
kippin (cipín) *s.* A small piece of stick.
kish (cis) *s.* A bridge of poles, branches and sods made across a bog drain.
kittogue (ciotóg) *s.* The left hand ; a left handed person.
kocka (cac) *s.* Excrement.
kybosh (caidhp báis) *s.* The crowning misfortune, lit. the cap of death ; e.g., things were bad before but you put the kybosh on them.
ladar (ladar) *s.* Interruption of conversation ; e.g., he's always putting in his ladar.
leprechaun (leipreachán) *s.* A fairy shoemaker.
liss (lios) *s.* A fairy fort.
loodeen (lúidín) *s.* The little finger.
lug *s.* The soft, outer part of the ear ; also the small handle for hooks on the side of a pot.
mass (meas) *s.* Respect ; e.g., some children have no mass on chocolate.
mauh galore (maith go leor) *adj.* Drunk in a merry, but not quarrelsome way.
meeaw (mí-ádh) *s.* Misfortune.
mehal (meitheal) *s.* A group helping a neighbour with such work as harvesting or turf-cutting.

moryah (mar dhea) *adv.* Allegedly ; e.g., he was going to work moryah.
mounthaun (manntán) *s.* A person who has lost some front teeth.
nawbocklish (ná bac leis) *vb. imp.* Don't mind it, don't take any notice.
omadhawn (amadán) *s.* A foolish man.
ownshuck (óinseach) *s.* A foolish woman.
pata (peata) *s.* A pet, a child who is inclined to cry without cause.
paudir copull (paidir chapaill) *s.* A confused jumble, a mess ; e.g., he made a right paudir copull of the job.
peebawn (píobán) *s.* The windpipe.
pilibeen (pilibín) *s.* A lapwing.
pisharogue (pisreog) *s.* Superstitious practice or belief ; e.g., misfortune to follow broken mirror.
plawmawse (plámás) *s.* Flattery.
pluckamas (plucamas) *s.* Mumps.
plucks (pluc) *s.* Fat cheeks.
plykhe (plaidhce) *s.* A foolish person.
pookeen (púicín) *s.* A blindfold.
poss *vb.* To disarrange ; e.g., " who was possing the haycocks ?" cf. pasáil, to trample, press down with the feet.
powlthogue (palltóg) *s.* A heavy blow of the fist.
primpeen (proimpín) *s.* A bird's posterior.
prushock (praiseach) *s.* A weed with yellow flowers.
puss (pus) *s.* A face which shows vexation especially by a pouting of the lips.
pyuck (piuc) *s.* The gapes, a disease in poultry.
rack (raic) *s.* Fun, sport ; e.g., we had great rack.
raheen (ráithín) *s.* A swathe of new-mown hay.
rawmaysh (ráiméis) *s.* Nonsensical talk.
reenawlee (righneálaí) *s.* A person who is slow at doing anything.
reesk (riasc) *s.* Low-lying, marshy ground.
scollop (scolb) *s.* A light stick, especially that used to pin down thatch.
scope scóip) *s.* Impudence, forwardness ; especially used of a young person.
scraw (scraith) *s.* A sod of grass and earth.
scrawb (scráib) *s., vb.* A scratch to mark with scratches.
screed (scríd) *s.* Small bit of clothing ; e.g., the child was running around without a screed on him.
scribe (scríob) *s.* Furrow.
sharoose (searús) *s.* Feeling of annoyance ; e.g., he had a great sharoose on me for doing what I did.
shkelp (scealp) *s.* A blow.
shkillane (sciollán) *s.* A potato or part of a potato containing an eye, for planting.
shkirtawn (sceartán) *s.* A louse, generally attached to humans.
shkit (sciot) *vb.* To laugh with a certain amount of mockery.
shkit *s.* Object of mockery ; e.g., they were making a shkit of the beggar-man.
shlane (sleán) *s.* A spade for cutting turf, slane.
shleeveen (slíbhín) *s.* A sly and crafty person.
shlobber *vb., s.* Spill liquid ; the result of the spilling; e.g., the child has a shlobber on his jersey.
shlug (sloigim) *vb., s.* To drink quickly ; also used as noun.

shock (seach) *s.* Smoking of tobacco ; e.g., he has a shock of the pipe after dinner.
shoneen (seoinín) *s.* A person with too much affection for England or English ways.
shtook (stuaic) *s.* A number of sheaves of corn standing together.
shtookawn (stuacán) *s.* A person who is stubborn and headstrong.
shtorikle (stairr-fhiacal) *s.* A prominent, projecting tooth.
shtump (stompa) *s.* An animal that is hard to move ; e.g., a cow that refuses to stir for the milker.
smaather (smeadar) *vb.* Mess ; e.g., he had his face smaathered with blackberries.
smig (smeig) *s.* The chin.
smithereens (smidiríní) *s.* Little pieces ; e.g., the cup fell and broke in smithereens.
soogan (súgán) *s., adj.* Plaited hay or straw used, for example, to make a rope or to make a seat for a chair.
sookee (suicín) *s.* A pet calf, especially one being bottle-fed.
sop (sop) *s.* A wisp of hay.
spawg (spág) *s.* An awkward foot.
spawrt (spairt) *s.* Turf which is wet and heavy.
splinnk (splannc) *s.* A particle of sense , e.g., that boy hasn't a splinnk of sense.
sproonlahore (sprionlóir) *s.* A mean person.
spunk (sponnc) *s.* Spirit, courage.
strap *s.* A woman who is bold and impudent , cf. strapaire, striapach.
streel (straoil) *s.* An untidy person ; mainly used of women.
summahawn (somachán) *s.* Fat, lubberly boy ; a term of contempt.
sunoohar (so-nuachar) *s.* Spouse ; only in phrase " good sunoohar to you ".
sutock (sútach) *s.* A rude fellow.
tayscawn (taoscán) *s.* A rather indefinite measure of quantity ; e.g., of liquid or of hay.
thrawlock (tráileach) *s.* A pain in the wrist caused by manual labour.
thrawneen (tráithnín) *s.* A blade of grass.
tilly (tuille) *s.* A little extra ; e.g., " I bought a pint of milk and she put in a little tilly ".
wisha (maise) *interj.* Indeed ; e.g., wisha, I don't know what to say.
yerra (ara) *interj.* Truly ; e.g., yerra there's no good in talking to you. " Used at the beginning of a clause in an expostulatory or deprecating sense "—Dinneen.

ADDENDA

bawsachawn (básachán) *s.* A person who is pale and feeble.
brusna (brosna) *s.* Light branches for starting a fire.
deel (diabhal) *s.* A mischievous or troublesome person.
dreedar (dríodar) *s.* Dregs left in a vessel.
megal (meigeall) *s.* A goat's beard, a scraggy beard on a man.
mohall (mothall) *s.* An untidy mop of long hair.
mollafoosdar *vb.* To give a beating to somebody.
noneen (nóinín) *s.* A daisy.
shanachus (seanchas) *s.* Story-telling, conversation.
smoor (smúr) *s.* Smoking embers of a fire.
sprid (spiorad) *s.* A ghost.