

Title:

Leith, Edinburgh

Shelfmark:

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Recording date:

16.03.2005

**Speakers:**

Cochrane, Michael (Noel), b. 1939 Leith, Edinburgh; male; retired teacher (father b. boilermaker; mother biscuit factory worker)

Fee, John, b. 1930 Grassmarket, Edinburgh; male; retired teacher (father Edinburgh Corporation Lighting & Cleansing Department; mother housewife)

Gray, Mildred (Millie), b. 1934 Leith, Edinburgh; female; writer and storyteller (father coal-store worker; mother b. barmaid)

Lothian, James (Jimmy), b. 1915 Loanhead, Midlothian; male; retired heating engineer (father knacker; mother housewife & mother)

McGovern, John, b. 1937 St Leonard's, Edinburgh; male; retired electrician/college lecturer (father sheep-skinner; mother shop worker)

The interviewees are all storytellers and creative writers.

PLEASE NOTE: this recording is still awaiting full linguistic description (i.e. phonological, grammatical and spontaneous lexical items).

A summary of the specific lexis elicited by the interviewer is given below.

ELICITED LEXIS

- see English Dialect Dictionary (1898-1905)
- † see Dictionary of the Scots Language (online edition)
- ‡ see Linguistic Atlas of Scotland (1975-1986)
- △ see New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English (2006)
- ◇ see Green's Dictionary of Slang (2010)
- ◆ see Urban Dictionary (online)
- △ no previous source (with this sense) identified

pleased *fair away wi yourself*¹; *chuffed*; *gled*[†]; *glad*

¹ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records 'wi' in sense of 'with'.

tired	<i>wabbit</i> (“ <i>oh God, I’m wabbit</i> ”); <i>knackered</i> (liked, thought to be “ <i>Norwegian/Norse</i> ”, considered “ <i>taboo</i> ” in past); <i>done in</i> ; <i>washed out</i> (“ <i>oh, I’m washed out</i> ”); <i>buggered</i> (commonly used with no “ <i>sexual connotation</i> ” in past)
unwell	<i>unwell</i> (not used in past); <i>peely-wally</i> (used in preference to “ <i>unwell</i> ” in past esp. of looking ill, “ <i>you’re looking awfy peely-wally the day</i> ” ² used frequently by grandmother); <i>seik</i> [†] (also used for ‘to vomit’); <i>under the weather</i> ; <i>below par</i> ; <i>not up to the mark</i> ; <i>not to scratch</i> ³ ; <i>no weel</i> [†] (“ <i>no keeping very weel</i> ” ⁴); <i>nae weel</i> [†] ; <i>out o sorts</i> ⁵ (used now)
hot	<i>ploting</i> [†] (of being hot and bothered)
cold	<i>cold</i> ; <i>nithered</i> ; <i>freezing cold</i> ; <i>freezing</i> ; <i>perishing</i>
annoyed	<i>blazing</i> ^o (pronounced “ <i>bleezing</i> ” locally); <i>crabbit</i> [†] ; <i>biling</i> [†] ; <i>boiling</i> ; <i>angry</i> ; <i>ballistic</i> (“ <i>contemporary one</i> ”); <i>beiling</i> [†] (“ <i>fair beiling</i> ”); <i>mad</i> ; <i>peeved</i> ; <i>gone off at the deep end</i>
throw	<i>chuck</i> ; <i>fling</i>
play truant	<i>skiving</i> ; <i>dodging</i> [‡] ; <i>skip the school</i> ; <i>skipping</i> ; <i>skip</i> (“ <i>skip school</i> ”); <i>dogging</i> [†] (not used in Edinburgh)
sleep	<i>charping</i> ⁶ (“ <i>charping in me pit</i> ” thought to derive from Indian “ <i>charpoy</i> ” for ‘bed’ ⁷ , learnt on national service, thought to be Sanskrit for ‘four legs’); “ <i>I’m away for a wee kip</i> ” (of e.g. afternoon sleep); <i>having a kip</i> ; <i>out for the count</i> ⁸ ; <i>in the land of Nod</i> ; <i>catching a few Z’s</i> ^o ; <i>having a nap</i>
play a game	<i>join in</i> (pronounced “ <i>jine in</i> ” locally in past)
hit hard	<i>pagger</i> ^Δ (thought to be Romani); <i>clout</i> ; <i>smack</i> ; <i>thump</i> ; <i>blooter</i>
clothes	<i>claes</i> ; <i>gear</i> ; <i>clobber</i> (“ <i>good clobber</i> ”)
trousers	<i>breeks</i> ; <i>troosers</i> [†] ; <i>pants</i> ; <i>strides</i> (“ <i>bring thae strides, boy, here</i> ” ⁹ used frequently by father in past)
child’s shoe	<i>rubbers</i> ^o ; <i>gutties</i> [†] ; <i>plimsolls</i> ; <i>trainers</i> (modern); <i>jimmies</i> ^Δ (suggested by interviewer as used in Aberdeen, not used)
mother	<i>mammy</i> ; <i>ma</i>
gmother	<i>granny</i> ; <i>gran</i> ; <i>GG</i> ¹⁰ (used by own grandchildren of maternal great-grandmother); <i>nana</i> ; <i>nanny</i> (suggested by interviewer, not used)
m partner	<i>my man</i> ; <i>fella</i> ^o ; <i>better half</i>
friend	<i>chum</i> ; <i>mate</i> ; <i>pal</i> ; <i>oppo</i> ; <i>buddy</i>
gfather	<i>grandfaither</i> [†] ; <i>grandad</i> ; <i>grandpa</i> ; <i>grandfather</i> ; <i>grandpop</i>
forgot name	<i>thingmejig</i> ^o ; <i>thingme</i> [•] ; <i>whatchamacallit</i>
kit of tools	<i>tool-kit</i> ; <i>work bag</i> ; <i>gear</i> (“ <i>you got the gear wi you?</i> ” ¹ used when working as painter & decorator); <i>tool-box</i> (used by plumbers)

² *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘awfy’ in sense of ‘awfully’ and ‘the day’ in sense of ‘today’.

³ *Free Dictionary* (<https://www.thefreedictionary.com/>) records ‘up to scratch’ in sense of ‘in fit condition’.

⁴ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘no’ in sense of ‘not’.

⁵ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘o’ in sense of ‘of’.

⁶ Online query ‘Has anyone come across the noun “charp” meaning “sleep”?’ posted by Peter Duncanson (see NARKIVE at <http://alt.usage.english.narkive.com/T1t4N4hc/charp#post1>) includes ‘charp’ in this sense.

⁷ *OED* (online edition) includes ‘charpoy’ in this sense.

⁸ *Oxford Dictionaries Online* (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>) includes ‘out for the count’ in sense of ‘soundly asleep’.

⁹ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘thae’ in sense of ‘those’.

¹⁰ ‘750+ Nicknames for Grandfather’ (2017 – see *NICKNAMES*): at <https://www.nicknames.com/nicknames-for-grandfather/>) includes ‘GG’ in this sense.

trendy	<i>schemie</i> (most common, of someone from “housing scheme [...] with very poor taste”); <i>birkie</i> ¹¹ (used of “young dandy man that thinks he’s absolutely wonderful”, “see yon birkie, ca’d a lord” ¹² used by Robert Burns ¹³); <i>cashie</i> ¹⁴ ; <i>upstart</i> ; <i>wee herrie</i> [†] (used in West Scotland esp. of female, “rude”); “if they were chocolate they would eat theirsel” ¹⁵ ; <i>tart</i> (“some tart, that” used neutrally in past of “young lassie doing herself up”, now considered almost synonymous with “prostitute”); <i>common</i> (used by mother in past)
f partner	<i>the wife</i> ; <i>the missus</i> ; <i>wife</i> ; <i>bird</i>
baby	<i>bairn</i> ; <i>babby</i> [°] ; <i>wain</i> [†] ; <i>child</i> (“the child”)
rain heavily	<i>stotting</i> ¹⁶ (“stots off the grund”); <i>plump</i> (of “sudden downpour”, thought to derive from Dutch “plompen” for “to burst”); <i>bucketing</i> ¹⁷ ; <i>raining cats and dogs</i> ; <i>teeming</i> (“teeming down”)
toilet	<i>cludgie</i> ^Δ ; <i>lavvy</i> ; <i>the bog</i> ; <i>the loo</i> (polite); <i>closet</i> ; <i>water-closet</i>
walkway	<i>vennel</i> ; <i>close</i> (e.g. “Fishmarket Close/Fleshmarket Close” in Edinburgh); <i>pend</i> ; <i>wynd</i> (e.g. “Tolooth Wynd” in Leith); <i>path</i> ; <i>pathway</i>
long seat	<i>settee</i> ; <i>sattle-bed</i> [†] (used by sister of “bed-settee”); <i>settle</i> , <i>cooch</i> [†] (suggested by interviewer); <i>couch</i> ; <i>bed-settee</i> ; <i>sofa</i> ; <i>sofy</i> ¹⁸
run water	<i>burn</i>
main room	<i>living-room</i> ; <i>sitting-room</i> (“posh”, associated with Morningside); <i>lounge</i> ; <i>kitchen</i> (used in past); <i>the big room</i> ^Δ ; <i>ben the hoose</i> [†]
rain lightly	<i>drizzle</i> ; <i>spitting</i> ; <i>smurl</i> ¹⁹
rich	<i>well aff</i> ²⁰ ; <i>rich</i> ; <i>weel off</i> ²¹ ; <i>stinking rich</i> ; <i>loaded</i> ; <i>bags of money</i>
left-handed	<i>carrie pawed</i> [‡] ; <i>corrie jukit</i> [‡] ; <i>corrie fistid</i> [‡]
unattractive	<i>plug-ug</i> ²² ; <i>minging</i> ; <i>pig face</i> ^Δ ; <i>ugly</i> ; <i>nae oil painting</i> ²³ (liked); <i>no oil painting</i> ; <i>plain Jane</i>
lack money	<i>skint</i> ; <i>hard up</i> ; <i>brassic lint</i> (“rhyming slang”); <i>broke</i> (“stony-broke”)
drunk	“he’s fair stoating” ²⁴ ; <i>plastered</i> ; <i>sozzled</i> ; <i>pissed</i> ; <i>steaming</i> ^Δ ; <i>four sheets to the wind</i> ; <i>bevviid</i> ; <i>pissed as a newt</i> ; <i>blooterid</i>
pregnant	<i>in the family way</i> ; “she’s got a bun in the oven” (not understood as child); <i>in the pudding club</i> ; <i>up the duff</i> ; <i>up the stick</i> ; <i>in the club</i> ; <i>expecting</i>

¹¹ *The Concise Scots Dictionary* (1996) records ‘birkie’ in sense of ‘smart/conceited fellow’.

¹² Robert Burns’ poem ‘A Man’s A Man For A’ That’ (1795).

¹³ *Wikipedia* (<https://en.wikipedia.org/>) Scottish poet and lyricist (1759-1796).

¹⁴ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘cashie’ in sense of ‘talkative/forward’.

¹⁵ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘theirsel’ in sense of ‘themselves’; *Urban Dictionary* (online) includes ‘if she was chocolate she’d eat herself’ in sense of ‘girl who is full of herself’.

¹⁶ *Dictionary of North East Dialect* (2011) records ‘stot’ in sense of ‘to bounce, move quickly’ and includes citation in sense of ‘stotting down with rain’.

¹⁷ *Macmillan Dictionary* (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/>) includes ‘bucket down’ in this sense.

¹⁸ Robert Hendrickson’s *Facts on File Dictionary of American Regionalisms* (2000) includes ‘sofy’ in this sense.

¹⁹ *OED* (online edition) records ‘smur’ in this sense.

²⁰ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘aff’ in sense of ‘off’; *OED* (online edition) includes ‘well off’ in this sense.

²¹ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘weel’ in sense of ‘well’; *OED* (online edition) includes ‘well off’ in this sense.

²² *Green’s Dictionary of Slang* (2010) records ‘ug’ in sense of ‘ugly woman’; *OED* (online edition) records ‘plug-ugly’ in this sense.

²³ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘nae’ in sense of ‘no/not’; *OED* (online edition) includes ‘no oil painting’ in this sense.

²⁴ *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>) records ‘stoated’ in this sense.

- attractive** “*she’s a stoater*”²⁵ (most common, used by husband in past of extremely beautiful “*lassie*”, “*it’s stoating stuff*” also used as term of approval); *bonny*; *a stunner*; *cracker*; *a peach*; *a doll*; *pretty*
- insane** *heidbanger*²⁵; “*they were nae the full shilling*”²⁶; *no the full shilling*²⁷ (of being “*no too bright*”²⁸); *insane* (not used); *doolally tappit*²⁹, *doolally* (thought to have been popularised by soldiers returning from service in India during WW2); *daft*; *mad*; *nutter*; *barmy*; *aff your heid*³⁰ *away wi the fairies*¹
- moody** *crabbit*[†]; *sour-faced*[•]; *temperamental*; *up and doon*³¹ (“*oh him, either he’s up or doon*”³²); *swinging*[△]

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²⁵ *Collins Scots Dictionary* (2018) includes ‘heidbanger’ in this sense.

²⁶ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘nae’ in sense of ‘not’; *Green’s Dictionary of Slang* (2010) records ‘not the full shilling’ in this sense.

²⁷ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘no’ in sense of ‘not’; *Green’s Dictionary of Slang* (2010) records ‘not the full shilling’ in this sense.

²⁸ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘no’ in sense of ‘not’.

²⁹ *OED* (online edition) records ‘doolally tap’ in this sense

³⁰ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘aff’ in sense of ‘off’ and ‘heid’ in sense of ‘head’; *OED* (online edition) includes ‘off one’s head’ in this sense.

³¹ *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘doon’ in sense of ‘down’; *OED* (online edition) includes ‘up and down’ in this sense.

³² *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘doon’ in sense of ‘down’.