

**Title:**

Wick, Caithness

**Shelfmark:**

C1190/43/36

**Recording date:**

28.12.2004

**Speakers:**

Bain, Marjory, b. 1955 Wick; female; car hire manager (father Post Office engineer; mother civil servant)

MacDonald, Bunty, b. 1927 Fife; female (father master plumber; mother shorthand typist)

MacKenzie, Ann, b. 1971 Wick; female; secretary (father farmer; mother caravan site manager)

Richard, Margaret; b. John o' Groats; female (father chauffeur; mother housewife)

The interviewees are all colleagues at Richard's Garage in Wick.

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 Dictionary of Contemporary Slang (2014)
- ◊ no previous source (with this sense) identified

**pleased**

*chuffed* ("fair chuffed"); *delighted*; *pleased* (suggested by interviewer)

**tired**

*knackered* (censured by mother in past, thought to be related to "knackery" where old horses were slaughtered and "knackered" meaning 'castrated', "fair knackered" considered "Wick wordie"<sup>1</sup>); *whacked*; *tired*; *dead-beat*

**unwell**

*poorly* ("I'm a wee bit poorly the day"<sup>2</sup> commonly used to arouse sympathy); *no weel*<sup>†</sup>; *ill*

**hot**

*fair roasting*; *biling*<sup>†</sup>; *roasting*; *biling hot*<sup>3</sup>; *boiling*; *sweiting*<sup>†</sup> ("I'm sweiting like a pig"<sup>4</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of the Scots Language (online) records '-ie' in sense of productive 'diminutive suffix'.

<sup>2</sup> Dictionary of the Scots Language (online) records 'the day' in sense of 'today'.

<b>cold</b>	<i>perishing; freezing; cold</i> (“ice-cold”); “ <i>I feel like my fingers are dropping off and my feet are like ice blocks</i> ” <sup>5</sup> ; <i>freezing cauld</i> <sup>6</sup> ; “ <i>is there no heit in this house?</i> ” <sup>6</sup> ; “ <i>it’s enough to freeze the brass fingers off a monkey</i> ” <sup>7</sup> (of weather)
<b>annoyed</b>	<i>raging; wild; upset</i> (“fair upset”); <i>annoyed; pirred</i> <sup>8</sup> (“ <i>I was fair pirred</i> ” used frequently by father, “ <i>purr</i> ” also used for ‘splinter’ <sup>‡</sup> ); <i>purred up</i> <sup>8</sup>
<b>throw</b>	<i>hurl; fire, launch</i> (“fire it/launch it” of throwing object at somebody); <i>throw; fling</i>
<b>play truant</b>	<i>skip</i> (most common locally, “ <i>skipping school/skip the school/skipping the school</i> ”); <i>escape</i> (“ <i>escape school</i> ”); <i>skive</i> (“ <i>skiving school</i> ”); <i>skiving</i>
<b>sleep</b>	<i>a good kip; forty winks; doze</i> (“ <i>doze off for a wee while</i> ”, “ <i>I’ve been having a doze</i> ” used by grandfather in past); <i>sleep for a wee while</i>
<b>play a game</b>	<i>shottie</i> <sup>1</sup> (“ <i>heve a shottie</i> ” <sup>9</sup> ); <i>play a game</i>
<b>hit hard</b>	<i>crack; belt</i> (of hit with belt); <i>wallop</i> (“ <i>a fair bloody wallop</i> ” of hit with hand)
<b>clothes</b>	<i>glad rags; claes</i> (“ <i>where’s your claes?</i> ”, commonly pronounced “ <i>clize</i> ” locally); <i>clothes</i> (pronounced “ <i>cloze</i> ”); <i>stuff</i> (“ <i>run up the stairs and get your stuff</i> ”); <i>kit</i> (“ <i>get your kit on</i> ”); <i>garb</i> (of coat)
<b>trousers</b>	<i>trews</i> (used by grandfather); <i>breeks</i> (“ <i>where’s your breeks?</i> ”); <i>pants</i> (heard used by friend from Carlisle, “ <i>long pants</i> ” considered “ <i>American</i> ”, used locally for ‘men’s underpants’)
<b>child’s shoe</b>	<i>sand-shoes; jimmers</i> <sup>Δ</sup> ; <i>plimsolls</i> (“ <i>posh</i> ”); <i>jimmies</i> <sup>Δ</sup> ; <i>trainers</i> (worn by children now); <i>gym shoes</i> (used by teachers)
<b>mother</b>	<i>mum; ma; mam</i> (“ <i>my mam</i> ” used in John O’ Groats)
<b>gmother</b>	<i>nana, granny</i> (common in Wick); <i>grandma</i> (heard but not used); <i>gran</i> (used by own grandchildren of self, liked); <i>great-gran</i> (of self since becoming great-grandmother)
<b>m partner</b>	<i>my man</i> (“ <i>my man went off this morning without any breakfast</i> ” of own partner); <i>he</i> <sup>10</sup> ; <i>companion; freind</i> <sup>†</sup> ; <i>hubby; chiel</i> <sup>†</sup> (“ <i>my chiel/that chiel’s a waste of time</i> ”, also used locally for ‘man’ <sup>†</sup> ); <i>gadgy</i> <sup>Δ</sup> (“ <i>slang</i> ” for “ <i>bloke</i> ” <sup>Δ</sup> )
<b>friend</b>	<i>friend; pal</i> (“ <i>bosom pals</i> ” <sup>11</sup> ); <i>chum; buddy</i> (“ <i>bosom buddy</i> ” <sup>12</sup> ); <i>click; best friend</i>
<b>gfather</b>	<i>papa; grand-da</i> <sup>†</sup> ; <i>pa</i> (used by own children in preference to “ <i>grandad</i> ”); <i>grandpa</i> (“ <i>grandpa Gunn</i> ”); <i>grandad</i> (most common locally)
<b>forgot name</b>	<i>that bloke</i> (“ <i>oh, you know that bloke</i> ”); <i>yon bloke</i> (of person); <i>thingummy, thingmejig</i> <sup>Δ</sup> (of object); <i>thingummyjig</i>
<b>kit of tools</b>	<i>box of tools</i>

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘bile’ in sense of ‘to boil’; *OED* (online edition) records ‘boiling hot’ in this sense.

<sup>4</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘sweit’ in sense of ‘to sweat’; *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary* (2006) records ‘sweat like a pig’ in this sense.

<sup>5</sup> Keith’s tweet *Fingers are dropping off it’s that cold!!!!* (27.01.17 – see <https://twitter.com/KeithBennett05/status/824978400767012865>) includes ‘fingers are dropping off’ in this sense; spicers1976’s tweet *It’s so cold today, my feet are like ice blocks* (19.01.18 – see <https://twitter.com/spicers1976/status/954347263152750592>) includes ‘feet are like ice blocks’ in this sense.

<sup>6</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘heit’ in sense of ‘heat’.

<sup>7</sup> *OED* (online edition) records ‘cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey’ in this sense.

<sup>8</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘pirr’ in sense of ‘fit of temper/sudden rage’.

<sup>9</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘heve’ in sense of ‘to have’.

<sup>10</sup> *Green’s Dictionary of Slang* (2010) records ‘her’ in sense of ‘wife’.

<sup>11</sup> *Macmillan Dictionary* (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/>) includes ‘bosom pal’ in this sense.

<sup>12</sup> *Macmillan Dictionary* (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/>) includes ‘bosom buddy’ in this sense.

<b>trendy</b>	<i>tart</i> (of male/female, used by Del Boy of Rodney <sup>13</sup> ); <i>slapper</i> , “look at that mutton dressed up as lamb” (of older female); <i>idiot</i> <sup>Δ</sup> , <i>stupid</i> <sup>Δ</sup> (of male); <i>tarted-up to the nines</i> <sup>14</sup> (of female “dripping in jewellery”)
<b>f partner</b>	<i>partner</i> (modern); <i>girlfriend</i> ; <i>her</i> ; <i>bidie in</i> <sup>†</sup> (used frequently locally of cohabiting unmarried partner); <i>chick</i> (“was you out wi your chickie last night?” <sup>15</sup> ); <i>hersel</i> <sup>16</sup> ; <i>her indoors</i> ; <i>the other half</i> (used by husband of self); <i>his better half</i> (of self)
<b>baby</b>	<i>bairn</i> ; <i>sprog</i> (“little sprog”); <i>youngster</i> ; <i>bairnie</i> <sup>†</sup> (“that’s a bonny bairnie”); <i>wains</i> <sup>†</sup> (used in Glasgow, disliked, “common”); <i>bairns</i> ; <i>creatur</i> <sup>17</sup> (“oh, what a lovely creatur” used in Wick)
<b>rain heavily</b>	<i>dinging</i> (“it’s fair dinging doon” <sup>18</sup> ); <i>dinging doon</i> <sup>18</sup> ; <i>pouring</i> ; <i>buckets</i> <sup>19</sup> (“buckets o rain” <sup>20</sup> ); <i>bucketing down</i> <sup>19</sup> ; <i>lashing</i> <sup>21</sup> (“lashing rain”); <i>pouring o rain</i> <sup>20</sup> ; <i>bucketing</i> <sup>19</sup> ; <i>raining cats and dogs</i> (not common locally); <i>stair-rods</i> (suggested by interviewer, not used)
<b>toilet</b>	<i>loo</i> ; <i>W.C.</i> ; <i>the bog</i> (“I’m just nipping to the bog” used at work); <i>bursting</i> <sup>22</sup> (of desperate need for toilet)
<b>walkway</b>	<i>entry</i> (“doon the entry between the houses” <sup>18</sup> ); <i>lane</i> ; <i>close</i> ; <i>passage</i> (“doon the passage” <sup>18</sup> considered “very posh”); <i>lanie</i> <sup>†</sup> ; <i>passageway</i>
<b>long seat</b>	<i>couch</i> ; <i>sofa</i> (“posh”, associated with TV adverts); <i>settee</i> (suggested by interviewer, used now)
<b>run water</b>	<i>burn</i> ; <i>burnie</i> <sup>23</sup> (of e.g. “burnie” at Newtonhill); <i>ditch</i> ; <i>stream</i> (not used)
<b>main room</b>	<i>sitting-room</i> ; <i>parlour</i> (of “best room” reserved for “high days and holidays”); <i>living-room</i> ; <i>lounge</i> (heard used, “posh”); <i>TV room</i> , <i>family room</i> (modern)
<b>rain lightly</b>	<i>spit</i> ; <i>smur rain</i> ; <i>drizzle</i> (“posh”, heard used on TV); <i>spitting</i> (“it’s fair spitting today”); <i>spitting rain</i>
<b>rich</b>	<i>weel off</i> <sup>24</sup> (“they’re gey weel off” <sup>25</sup> ); <i>loaded</i> ; <i>plenty money</i>
<b>left-handed</b>	<i>corrie fisted</i> <sup>‡</sup> (used by friend); <i>left-hander</i> ; <i>left-handed</i> ; <i>stupid</i> <sup>Δ</sup> (used by teacher to self in past)
<b>unattractive</b>	<i>ugly</i> ; <i>boggin</i> <sup>†</sup> ; “God almighty, are they ugly or what?”; <i>pug ug</i> <sup>26</sup> (used in Aberdeen); “they’re no the bonniest mannie in the whole world” <sup>27</sup> ; “they fell off the back of a bus” <sup>28</sup> ;

<sup>13</sup> Fictional brothers (Derek Edward Trotter and Rodney Charlton Trotter) in long-running sit-com ‘Only Fools and Horses’ first broadcast 1981 on BBC.

<sup>14</sup> *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (2006) includes ‘tarted-up’ in this sense; *OED* (online edition) records ‘dressed to the nines’ in this sense.

<sup>15</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘wi’ in sense of ‘with’; *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (2006) records ‘chickie’ in this sense.

<sup>16</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘-sel’ in sense of ‘-self’; *Green’s Dictionary of Slang* (2010) includes ‘hersel’ in this sense.

<sup>17</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘creatur’ in sense of ‘creature’; *OED* (online edition) records ‘creature’ in sense of ‘offspring’.

<sup>18</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘doon’ in sense of ‘down’.

<sup>19</sup> *Macmillan Dictionary* (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/>) includes ‘bucket down’ in this sense.

<sup>20</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘o’ in sense of ‘of’.

<sup>21</sup> *Macmillan Dictionary* (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/>) includes ‘lash’ in this sense.

<sup>22</sup> *Collins Dictionary* (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>) includes ‘bursting’ in this sense.

<sup>23</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘-ie’ in sense of ‘diminutive suffix’ incl. ‘burnie’.

<sup>24</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘weel’ in sense of ‘well’; *OED* (online edition) includes ‘well off’ in this sense.

<sup>25</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘gey’ in sense of ‘very/really’.

<sup>26</sup> Shaun’s tweet @AmyFoster18 @hhaylz @victoriabeckham Nowt wrong with pouting if you’re a handsome devil. When pug-ug’s pout, that’s embarrassing. (30.05.12 – see <https://twitter.com/actionjaxon666/status/207954497471922177>) includes ‘pug ug’ in this sense.

<sup>27</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘no’ in sense of ‘not’ and ‘mannie’ in sense of ‘little man’.

<sup>28</sup> *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (2006) records ‘look like the back of a bus’ in this sense.

	<i>gey rough</i> <sup>25</sup> ; “ <i>that bairn was dropped on his heid when he was young</i> ” <sup>29</sup> ; “ <i>they look as though a bus has run over them</i> ” <sup>30</sup> ; “ <i>they’ve been hit by the back of a bus</i> ” <sup>28</sup> ; “ <i>he’s got a face like a pail of worms</i> ” <sup>31</sup> ; “ <i>he’s got a face like a smacked backside</i> ” <sup>32</sup> ; <i>a face like an ers</i> <sup>33</sup>
<b>lack money</b>	<i>skint; broke; stony-broke</i>
<b>drunk</b>	<i>blazing</i> <sup>Δ</sup> (“ <i>I was blazing last night</i> ”); <i>fill</i> <sup>34</sup> ; <i>under the influence; heve a wild fill</i> <sup>35</sup> (“ <i>a wild fill o drink</i> ” <sup>20</sup> ); <i>stocious; drunk as a skunk</i> <sup>Δ</sup> ; <i>a big fill</i> <sup>34</sup> ; <i>had a big sesh</i> (“ <i>session</i> ” used for “ <i>drinking session</i> ”)
<b>pregnant</b>	<i>expecting; got a bun in the oven; in the family way; up the duff</i> (not used “ <i>in company</i> ”)
<b>attractive</b>	<i>good-looking</i> (of person/thing); <i>something going for him</i> <sup>36</sup> ; <i>bonny</i> (“ <i>a right bonny boy/bairn</i> ”); <i>a bit o all right</i> <sup>20</sup> (“ <i>he’s a bit o all right</i> ”); “ <i>I wudna mind getting him up</i> ” <sup>37</sup>
<b>insane</b>	<i>mad; nutter; not wise; no wise; crackers</i> (“ <i>Christmas crackers</i> ”); <i>clean wrong; no right in the heid</i> <sup>38</sup>
<b>moody</b>	<i>sulky; a grump; girniet</i> <sup>†</sup> ; <i>changeable</i> (“ <i>a bit like the weather</i> ”); <i>grumpy; a real grump; right moody</i>

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<sup>29</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘heid’ in sense of ‘head’; S Burton’s blog post ‘I Think You Were Dropped On Your Head As A Child’ (*Cobbers on the Brain* 2 November 2013) includes ‘dropped on one’s head as a child’ in sense of ‘saying used when person says/does something not very intelligent’ (see <https://cobbersonthebrain.areavoices.com/2013/11/02/i-think-you-were-dropped-on-your-head-as-a-child/>).

<sup>30</sup> Jan King’s *Red-Hot Mamas* (2003, p.18) includes ‘looks like she got run over by a Greyhound bus’ in this sense.

<sup>31</sup> Christie Schutt’s *Florida* (2004, p.26) includes ‘your face looks like a pail of worms’ in this sense.

<sup>32</sup> *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (2006) records ‘face like a slapped arse’ in this sense.

<sup>33</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘ers’ in sense of ‘arse’; *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (2006) records ‘face like a slapped arse’ in this sense.

<sup>34</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘fill drunk’ in sense of ‘to make drunk’.

<sup>35</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘heve’ in sense of ‘to have’ and ‘fill drunk’ in sense of ‘to make drunk’.

<sup>36</sup> *Collins Dictionary* (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>) records ‘have a lot going for you’ in sense of ‘have a lot of advantages’.

<sup>37</sup> *OED* (online edition) records ‘wudna’ in sense of ‘wouldn’t’.

<sup>38</sup> *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (online) records ‘no’ in sense of ‘not’ and ‘heid’ in sense of ‘head’; *Cambridge Dictionary* (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>) includes ‘be not (quite) right in the head’ in this sense.