

NEW SUPPLEMENT BRINGS THE RECORD OF THE SCOTS LANGUAGE UP TO DATE



This, the fourth part of the *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, added in 2005, is a second Supplement to the *Scottish National Dictionary* (SND), following the first Supplement published with Vol. 10 in 1976. The main aim of the New Supplement is to bring the record of the Scots language into the 21st century.

This project was made possible in the early 2000s by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund of £90 000 over three years. This has greatly helped in the continuing collection of data for Scots and in its arrangement for the present purpose, and we are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund, to the Scottish Arts Council who provide core funding, as well as to many other sources. The New Supplement is a major achievement but it does not contain nearly as much material as the editors would have liked. It should be regarded as the beginning of a continuing process, now made possible by electronic methods of arrangement, storage and retrieval.

The New Supplement and its predecessor of the 1970s are structured in similar ways and are searchable either separately or with the main text. The eventual aim, when resources permit, is to integrate them into the SND; additions and changes thereafter will become part of the whole.

Entry words have been carefully labelled to facilitate linking of the new material to relevant sections in the SND text.

Written evidence

Sources are mainly written works of the past three decades, with some gaps filled from earlier years. They include a selection of the fiction and poetry of recent years, as well as some from earlier works; for a few words, further examples of usage have been added from works already read for SND, when these come to light, often accidentally.

Newspapers have proved a useful source, for two reasons: firstly, more Scots has been used in Scottish newspapers in recent times than in earlier parts of the 20th century; secondly, electronic media have made it possible to extract more quotations in the time available than would previously have been possible. There are also occasional examples of Scots taken from articles dealing with Scottish subjects in British newspapers, usually in Scottish editions.

Oral evidence

In view of our limited resources, our word collection contains oral information acquired on the whole by casual means: correspondents from various parts of Scotland have greatly helped and the amount of information has been increased by contributors to our website over the past few years. In order to increase the coverage of the spoken language in the New Supplement, we sent lists of queries to contributors in all the main dialect areas, and their replies form the basis of a great deal of our information on the Scots of the 21st century. These lists elicited information especially for words which we believe to be still current, but for which we had very little updating evidence.

We hope this aspect of the word collection will be greatly increased in the future by collaboration with a new Linguistic Survey of Scotland, currently being planned in conjunction with the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Queen Margaret University College.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations used are those in the SND main text (see list at end of SND introduction).

Geographical labelling

Regional labelling of dialects has proved a problem. In order to maintain continuity with data already in SND, we use the same labels, i.e. of the pre-1975 counties and the broader dialect areas; see map and list. [LINK](#) In SND individual contributors were labelled by their county and the broader areas indicated use of the word or usage in each of the counties in that area. In view of the greater mobility of population at the present time, we have sometimes used the broader areas, e.g. ne.Sc., s.Sc., and we have used m.Sc. (Central Scots) for individuals who have varied influences, e.g. brought up in the west but moved to the east (Stewart Conn) or vice versa (Bill Findlay). Many authors have been consulted about how they perceive their own use of language.

We have added *Dundee* to the list of geographical labels, in view of the distinctive character of the Scots of that city.

The label Sc. is used both for:

- Scottish Standard English, and therefore for many contributions from newspapers where writers simply use the odd Scots word, and for
- eclectic literary language, often known as Lallans, which selects appropriate words from any region.

Additional quotations

One area which has been increased in the New Supplement is the exemplification of words with Scots forms but with the same meaning(s) as in English. As in the main text, these are defined as ‘Sc. form of Eng. ...’. In some cases this section has been added at the beginning of an entry (or part-of-speech section), but without the usual number (which would have relegated it to the end of the entry or section). For example

STERVE, *v., n.* Sc. forms of Eng. *starve*.
(Quotations include ‘sterve’ and ‘stairve’ forms.)

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