

Cornish Dialect Words & Phrases

Paul Phillips Federation Dialect Recorder

Like Brian Stevens, I am particularly interested in Cornish dialect, more so in fact than the Cornish language. I suppose being now in my mid-seventies I can relate more to dialect as it was spoken quite regularly in the days of my youth and that would have been probably the last era in which that was the case.

I have been going through the Federation's dialect phrases on the World Wide Web and found some that I had never heard of before and I am able to add a few to those already listed. I don't suppose we will ever get them all because dialect was so very local, but isn't it fun trying? If this should ever be published, I suggest for it to make best sense to you it would be better to have the published list alongside you or on the screen. Where I haven't referred to an entry e.g. the first one under A about 'gumshun' I have no worthwhile comment to make. Incidentally, the area of my youth was Leedstown and Fraddam; yes somebody had to live there!

I have not been able to go through all the alphabet and if I had it would probably be too long anyway. Here are the few comments I have made so far.

A

A BAG LIKE A BUCKET refers directly to the size of the cow's udder, thus making her a good milker.

A BACKSIDE LIKE A CAMEL 'A backside like a barn door' I have heard being the exact opposite to the camel reference.

I had not heard of a 'FIRM GAT FELLA' before, but a 'FINE GATE OR GURT FELLA' was quite common and perhaps not necessarily dialect. Also a 'BRAA GURT FELLA'.

'AIR OR HIDE OF UN I have never heard it that way 'round, but always, 'IDE OR 'AIR... '

'AS LONG AS THIS WEEK AND THE NEXT' reminded me of a short story. An elderly lady had lost her husband, and the young wife next door had not heard of it until a few days later in the local shop. Thinking that the elderly lady would not only be thinking unkindly of her but that she might need some help, she hastily called in. "Well, Mrs how long is it that your husband has been dead?" asked the concerned young lady. "Well me deer" she said, "if he'd lived 'til next Thursday he'd have been dead a fortnight!"

'AS WILD AS A FITCHER' I noticed there was no explanation to this, surely it refers to a polcat/ferret which nearly every countryman had in those days.

B

'BALD AS A EGG OR PLATE' were both new to me but 'BALD AS A COOT was common, referring to the patch of white feathers on a Coot's forehead.

'BIG AS BULLS' BEEF' reminds me of my mother, who was only quite short, my brother and I being much taller; but if we had stepped out of line or (over the traces) she would say, "I don't care if you're as big as the end of a 'ouse I'll cut ee down like a piece o' straw."

'BLACK AS A WITCH OR AS A TURF RICK TOAD' again, new to me but I've also heard; 'BLACK AS JET', referring to a kind of lignite. I wonder if the reference to the witch also alluded to

the fact that witches weren't buried in consecrated ground, as I believe it was at one time the same if you hadn't been christened. 'BURIED LIKE AS DOG!'

What was a 'turf rick?' Would it have been a stack of peat for fuel?

C'CAN'T TELL A FROM THE BACK OF A DUCK'. I have heard it as – can't tell 'A' FROM THE TRACK OF A DUCK. This would be from the shape of a duck's footprint in the muddy farm yard.

C no other comments

D

'DAID AS A' 'AMMER' reminded me of the chap who was saying to his mates that he still had the 'ammer his Faather gibm when ee gawt married. "Mind you." He said, "ee've had two new 'eads and three new hilts but I still got'n."

Isn't it strange the part hearing and listening plays in all this? I always thought it was 'DULL AS DISHWATER...' but 'DITCH WATER makes much more sense.

There are ?'s against the next two entries:- 'DRIBBLIN' AWAY LIKE A BARREL O'SNAW' the slow thawing of a barrel of snow could go on for days and with nothing at the end of it, just like some peoples tongue!

'DRUNK AS A 'AND CART – you don't see hand carts these days, but they were common in years gone by. Your local jobbing builder would turn up to repair your 'launder' or a 'riffle' in your roof with his hand cart on which he'd have his ladders, tools, paint pots etc. The cart comprised of a flat bed or with shallow sides (to stop things rolling off) set on a single axle with cart or trap sized wheels. It was pushed or manoeuvred by holding onto the last rung of the ladder, hence the meandering way it travelled and invariably the bearings or bushes in the hubs were well worn which didn't help and its course was literally like someone walking home drunk.

E

'EE'S LIKE A TOAD ON A HOT SHOVEL I don't think I've ever seen a hot shovel, but this reminded me of an Americanism; ee's like a grasshopper on a hot griddle!' I have heard of 'like a toad under a arra'(harrow) Meaning dancing about and can't keep still.

F

What a lovely word 'FENTONPYTH' is, I regret I have never heard it before, what is it? Surely someone can help me out.

'FULL AS A TICK' this of course refers to a feather mattress sometime called a feather tie.

G

'GIVE UN BULL TINK' – not heard that either but down our way it was 'BELL TINK which somehow seems more appropriate; tink being a high pitched bell-like sound.

'GRUFFED UP LIKE A 'EDGEYBOAR' was also slightly different where I lived, it was Scrumped up like ' The mention of a 'bragging competition reminds me of a story about a chap from my village who many years ago went out to America; apparently he was only there a few short months and on his return he was in the village square showing off his American drawl and every sentence was " I guess this or I guess that". This annoyed one chap in particular, who retorted, "Well Ernie boy, for theest

went away thees did ‘naw somethin now ther’t guessin at everythin!” I don’t think the drawl was ever noticed again!

H

‘HONEST AS THE SUN is a nice one and another I’ve heard ‘AS HONEST AS THE DAY IS LONG.’.

I

The reference to ‘nubbie’ for bun reminds me of the hard times years back when it wouldn’t be uncommon for a poor house wife or perhaps an inexperienced one to go next door and ask to be ‘spared’ nub or two of cawl.(COAL)’

J

‘JOHNNIE FORTNIGHT’ Oh how that brings back memories; we had one who came around our way. He was an old man for sure and probably a WWI veteran, and would come out into the country villages on the bus and then call house to house with his little well worn wooden box held by a leather strap ‘round his neck, from which he would proffer his wares of silk skeins, reels of cotton, a few pins and needles, elastic, buttons and other similar items. He was always dressed the same, summer and winter – homberger hat, long black overcoat and had pronounced round shoulders, doubtless from years of carrying his box and rheumatism from being in the trenches, but a lovely old gent nonetheless, always polite and never offended if you didn’t buy.

I think I’ll end there for now and if the author would wish, we could continue another time.

Paul Phillips Federation Dialect Recorder

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To find a saying select “Find” and insert key word

A	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
AATEN ‘OUSE	Café
AIN’T GOT A BIT O’ GUMSHUN	He’s no idea’
A BAG LIKE A BUCKET	Describes a good dairy cow
A BACKSIDE LIKE A CAMEL	Describing a slimmer. “Like two hellings clapped together.” Hellings are roofing slates
A BELLY LIKE A WILKIE	Self-explanatory. (Wilkie = Frog)
A BIGGER LURRUPS THAN ‘E I’D NEVER SEED	Never saw a more untidy person.
A BRAA’ GURT FELLA	Same as above.
A CASE OF THE CROCK CALLIN’ THE BRANDIS SOOTY	Hinting that others are exactly what you are yourself.
A CHANG IS AS GOOD AS A TOUCH PIPE.	Having a change is as good as a rest or stopping for a smoke.
A CROWIN’ HEN AND A WHISTLIN’ WOMAN ARE NO GOOD TO ANYONE!	To hear a hen attempt to crow as I have is weird beyond belief.
ACT UP	Show off, usually said of children who go a bit OTT in front of visitors

A 'EAD LIK A BLADEER O' LARD	Bald
A FE WAY 'OUSE	A public house between two towns
A FIRM GURT FELLA	Big strong man. "He was some firm gurt fella, he'd fill that there doorway if 'e comed through un."
A HATFULL O' WIND	No real wind "We shan't do much sailin day boys, there's awnly a 'at full o' wind out there."
A'H ME DEER BUT 'IS MIND IS WANDERIN' SO	Losing his memory. Or getting confused / senile. "'Is mind is wandering so, he dunna if 'tis Christmas er Easter."
A HAUNCHEE BO HEAVE	Start of pulling a vessel ??
ALLEN APPLE	Large apple put under the pillow at Halloween
A L'IL BIT ON THE FROOTHY SIDE	A rather forward person.
A'LWAYS GOT TE POKE 'ER NAUSE IN	Must always interfere or be inquisitive. "Dun matter w'at you're taakin bout she always got poke her nausea in."
ALWAYS IN WANT	Always wanting something. "Ma can I 'ave this, ma can I 'ave that, you're always in want, think I'm made o' money do 'e?)"
SHE WAS SOME FORTHY	She was very forward, or cheeky, or had a lot to say for herself.
ALRIGHT FER THEY THAT LIKE THAT SORT OF THING, BUT IT TID'N FER ME	It has no appeal. "'Eard about this eer lap anc'ing' up te newquay 'ave ee? Tis alight fer they that like that sort of thing butt tid'n fer me."
ALL THE WORLD'S QUEER 'CEPT THEE AND ME . AND EVEN THEE ARE'T QUITE 'ZACTLY	Father's expression, "queer" meaning "odd" or "peculiar", and used before "queer" had the same connotation as "gay" today.
AND HE WENT DOWN A BRAA OL' SCAL-BRAL	He fell heavily (Also heard 'he went down a grunter.' "Poor ol' Mr Trevaskis, eighty now ye know, tripped over the kerb and went down a grunter, an' 'e bin an broke 'is focal glasses."
AN' 'IS 'ERD 'AT WAS SQUABBED AS FLAT AS A PANCAKE	His hard hat was crushed right down flat
AN' NO BEATIN 'BOUT THE BUSH NOTHER	Trying to refrain from giving a definite answer
AN'THERE 'E WAS GONE	There he wasn't. (I prefer, 'he was there on minute an' gone the next.') Ed.
AN' THEY ABM'T GOT CHICK NER CHIELD TO WORRY 'BOUT	No incumbencies Sometime said of someone who is unnecessarily tight or neary with their money, like in giving to charity
A PASSEL O' OL' LAP I DE CALL THEM	Useless rubbish
A PROPER VILL'AN 'E IS	A villain or rogue. "I wouldn't trust en as far as I could 'eave en
AIN'T GOT A BIT O' SPRALL LEFT IN ME	Got no energy left
AIN'T SEEN AIR OR 'IDE OV	S/he is lying low; gone to ground
ALL BE'IND LIKE A COW'S TAIL	Slow with their work. "'look! T'is 11 o'clock and there idn't a bed made ner a pot emptied yet."
ALL MOUTH AND TROUSERS	Ll talk an' no action. All yap and no do
ALL TE ONE SIDE LIKE A CRAB GOYNE TE SCILLY	Out of true
ALL FER HEAT AN' PILCHARDS	Warm misty weather
AND PLEASE TE STOP THAT THERE GLUMPIN"	Stop Sulking
AREN'T GOOWEN TO (I)	I will not
AS ANCIENT AS MUTTON	Old fashioned

AS BLACK AS THE HOBS OF HELL	Very dirty
AS BLUNT AS A DAG	As blunt as a miner's axe
AS FULL AS A DRUM/AS TIGHT AS A DRUM	As full with food as one could be. Bloated." Could eat the horse, and chase the driver " said by someone who is starving hungry, or " Eat the horse and chase the jockey "
AS GREY AS A BADGER	Grey Hair
AS GREEN AS A LICK	As green as a (lick = leek)
AS HEAVY AS A WITCH, FOUR SCORE AND ONE OUNCE	Heard it frequently as a child, but have no idea of its meaning. ???
AS KEEN AS MUSTARD	Very enthusiastic about something.
AS LIVELY AS A CRICKET	An extremely active person or child
AS LONG AS THIS WEEK AND NEXT	Taking for ages
AS PLUM AS A WONT	Overweight
AS POOR AS A COOT	Starved
AS BALD AS A COOT	Having no hair at all
AS READ AS A RAT	Mother used to say this but when I asked what was red about rats she couldn't explain L Leadbetter
AS ROUGH AS A NUTMEG GRATER	Course, Rough Grained
AS ROUGH AS RATS	In a pretty rough state, unkempt
AS SILLY AS A WAGON 'OSS	Stupid. Foolish. No sense at all. Why horses? I found them quite intelligent / As silly as a wagon load of monkeys, another quoted expression, but I've never seen one
AS SMOOTH AS A BULLHORN	Smarmy
AS SOFT AS A WOLLOP	Very easy going
AS TIGHT AS A CRAB'S ASS	And that's water tight!!
AS USELESS AS TITS ON A BOAR PIG	No good at all
AS WILD AS A FITCHER	Out of control
AW-MY-LOR	Bless my soul
'AVE A CRAAMMY MORSEL WILL 'E?	Would you like a slice of bread and butter/ cream?
'AVE EE GOTTEN/GODN	Have you got it.
A WHISTLIN' WOMAN AND A CROWIN' HEN IS NO GOOD TO GOS NOR MEN	Said by father as an expression of disapproval when I whistled. Crowing hens were bad luck and usually got put into a pie so that they couldn't be heard! L Leadbetter
AWW THE DEAR OB'M!	What a sweet child, also used when comforting someone
B	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
BACK-A-LONG	In the past
BALD AS A' EGG	Self Explanatory
BALD AS A COOT	As above
BALD AS A PLAATE	Self Explanatory
BELVIN LIKE A BULL	Bellow
BEE-NOR-BAW	Arrogant silence, "He never said bee no baw
BELONG TO"	'Belong' was used instead of should, or what we normally do.
BETTER FIT I STAID 'OME	It would have been better had I stayed at home
BETTER'N THAT OL' BOUGHTEN TRAADE	Homemade food is better than bought food
BIG AS BULLS' BEEF	self explanatory
BIT AFTER THE RATE	Smart, neat and tidy

BIT CAKEY	(Bit soft or feeble)
BLACK AS A WITCH	Very dark
BLACK AS A TURF RICK TOAD	Dirty
BLACK STRAP	Gin and treacle. Bad wine for poor and lowly guests
BLACK WINE TODDY	Port wine negus i.e. sweetened and mixed with water.
BLACK WORM	Beetle of the kitchen
BLAMED 'N	“Well I’m blamed if I knaw and I’m blamed if I dawn’t”
BLIND AS A BAT	Person who can’t find something
BLIND-BUCCA-DAVY	The game, Blind Man’s Buff.
BLIND MAN’S HOLIDAY	Too dark to work
BLIND NETTLE	Stingless nettle (Galeopsis)
BLAWED UP LIKE A QUILKIN	Inflated. (quilkin = frog)
BLUE AS BASAM	Very blue, as balsam
BLUE AS A NIDDLE	Very cold person (niddle = Needle)
BLOOD EZZ THICKER THAN WATER	A natural infinity to one’s own flesh & blood
BLOOD SUCKER	Sea anemone
BLOODY SEA DOCK	The lapathum marinum sanguineum
BLOODY WARRIORS	Wallflowers (The red cranesbill)
BOLD AS BRASS	Self explanatory
BRAA CRY IN THE CAMP	Excessive reaction to misfortune.
BRA’ RAICH WETH EE	In a hurry
BRAVE BIT	A good deal. “How’s Mr After his fall? “He’s a brave bit better now thanks.”
BREAD & SCRAAPE	Bread meagrely scraped with butter or margarine, even dripping
BURRIED LIKE A WITCH	Without any religious content and/or in unconsecrated ground?
BUSY AS BETTY	Self explanatory
BUSY AS A HEN DIGGIN’ FER DAYLIGHT	I think, busy doing nothing, - hens do a lot of scratching but don’t get anywhere.
<h1>C</h1>	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
CALLEN OVER/CAULLEN OAVER	Re-tell
CALL’OME	Remember; usually used in the negative, i.e. “I knaw is face right ‘nough, but I an’t call en ‘ome.” Can’t call to mind.
CAANT/CAIN’TCALL EN ‘OME	Can’t call him/her to mind
CAAN’T SEE FER LOOKIN	Looking too hard
CAIN’T SEE YER NOASE BEFER YER FAACE	Thick fog. (Also said of someone sent to look for something and can’t find it – You cain’t see yer noase before yer face, if ‘e was a dog ‘ed bite ee.)
CAMBURN & REDRUTH MEN DON’T STABLE ‘OSSES	Can’t get on together, so wont stable their horses in the building. Wouldn’t even leave children inter-marry
CAN’T ABEAR ‘N	Dislike
CAN’T ABIDE’N	Dislike “I an’t abide en, I just as soon see Old Nick comin’ down the road as ‘e.”
CAN’T TAKE CATS	Not used to very much so a bit big-headed
CAN’T TELL ‘A’ FROM THE BACK/TRACK OF A DUCK	Unintelligent The inprint of a duck’s foot in a muddy yard or field resembles an ‘A’
CARRIN TOO MUCH SAIL	Living beyond one’s means
CHACKEN FER CUP TAA	I’m as dry as a wooden god, I’m so thirsty. Dying for a cup

	a tea
CHEAP IN THE DRAWER	Broken sweet s or biscuits, bottom of the drawer. Could be said as “Any thing can be cheap if you ab’n got none.”
CHRESTMAS STOCK	The Christmas block for the fire; which in strictness should last all the holidays and still have some left to light next year’s Christmas stock.
CLOSE HOME or CLOSE ‘OME	Shut the door One would ask someone to ‘close ‘ome’ the door if they were leaving and to ‘pull ‘ome’ the door if they were coming in to join you.
COCK-A-LORUM, STICK STACK STORUM	As in ‘My cock’
COLS AS A QUILKIN	Description of a cold hearted place or person
COME-BY-CHANCE	Illegitimate child (See gatepost)
COMFORTABLE AS A’ OLD SHOE or GLOVE	Applied to a nice, gentle and easy going person.
COMIN-TE-COME	Starting to work out; getting there when turning cream to butter
COOKEN DOWN UNDER	Cooking on a brandis over peat
COUPLE MORE BLACKBERRY SEASONS	Young girl not quite matured. (“Give ‘er a couple more blackberry seasons an’ she’ll be some maid I shudden wonder.”
CORK-AN-BABA	Boat for a child
CORK-AN-BARBER	Toy boats mad of cork
COULD’N KNOCK THE SKIN OFF A RICE PUDDIN’	Too feeble to do anything. (See next below)
COULDN FIGHT ME WAY OUT O’ A PAAPER BAG	Pretty wisht – weak, physically or mentally
COWLD AS A JANNARD	As cold as a starling
CRAFTY AS A FOX.	Was a commendation (often in wheelin & dealin)
CREASE EN WILL EE?	Put drop more tea in the cup please
CROOKED AS A DOG’S HIND LEG	Used to describe a person or article such as a bent piece of wood.
CRUM OF CROOM	A little bit or a crust of bread or a bit of a kingdom
CUMMIZ-ON	Come “cummiz-on do, er we shall miss the bus.)
D	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
DAWN KNAW NOBODY ELSE	Or in answer to “Do you know so and so?” i.e. “Of course I do . eq. To ‘I don’t know anybody better.
DEAD AS A’ ‘AMMER	Nothing to do with dying. Dead sound like a hammer makes when it has driven a nail home tight
DARKAS A COEW’S/DOGS GUT(S)	Became, dim as a bovine’s interior, in female company.
DARK AS A SHAFT	Very dark place.
DEAF AS A HADDOCK	Having hearing problems
DEAR AS SAFFRON	Expensive (Saffron is still probably the most expensive herb one can buy.)
DEEF AS A TOADLICK	Having hearing problems
DEEF AS A’ ADDER	Having hearing problems
DEEP AS DOLCOATH	A difficult person to fathom (get to know) Dolcoath being Cornwall’s deepest mine
DID EE KILN?	Did you kill it? Reminds me of a story about my uncle Eddie who was returning through the lanes after a good Saturday’s shooting. He was passing a farmer leaning over a field gate and he called out to uncle and said, ‘Ere Phillips (he was a miserable old sod) if you saw a partridge flyin’ ‘cross my field shut wood ‘ee? Quite spontaneously uncle Eddie replied, Dun knaw might miss en.”
DIDN’T KNAW ‘A’ FROM A DUCK’S TRACK	Particularly stupid
DILL AS DITCHWATER	Might apply to a sermon. I do believe this should be ‘dull’

	not 'dill'
D' KNAW EVERYTHIN' ABOUT EVERYTHIN' AN' A LOT MORE BESIDES	Don't know so very much (derisory term)
DOAN SPEND A PENNY WHEN A H'PENNY WILL DO	Don't spend unnecessarily
DOIN' THE GRAND	Living it up
DONE IN	Whacked, tired out. ("I've been out cutting cabbage all day, I'm done in sure 'nuff.")
DON'T BUY A PIG IN A POKE	Don't buy anything unseen (Poke = a large sack)
DON'T KNAW 'NUFF TO KNAW THEY DON'T KNAW NOTHIN	Ignorant
DOONG BUCKET	Dust bin
DOONG CART	Dust cart
DRESSED UP LIKE A BUCK RABBIT	Smartly dressed
DRRESSED UP LIKE A CHRISTMAS TREE	Looking like a fop
DRESSED TE DEATH AN' KILLED WITH FASHION	Over dressed
DRIBBLIN' AWAY LIKE A BARREL O' SNAW	Someone dribbling like a barrel of snow slowly melting.
DROP O' LAPPY	A drink often alcohol
DROVE UP IN A CAR LIKE A LINER	Drove a large car
DRUNK AS A ' AND CART	A hand-cart had large wheels and were used by village builders to convey their ladders, paint pots, putty etc from job to job and were a bit like a Supermarket Trolley in that they had a mind of their own.
DUMBLE – DORY	June Bug
DUMMING SKY	Clouded over sky
E	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
EAT LIKE A HOSS	Hungry
EDDN GOOWEN TO (I)	I will not do it "You can go if you mind to but I eddn goowen to."
EDDN LIKE EE B'LONG	Not like it used to be
ELDERS, also BLACK ELDERS	Infusions from Elder flowers or berries
EMPTY AS A KEG	Hungry
ENOUGH FOR TWO AND A DOG	Description of a good meal.
ENTED ED DOWN	Emptied down, poured with rain
ERE WE ARE 'FORE THE STORM	We are here and ready before rush – should be able to get a good seat
"E'S LIKE A TOAD UNDER A 'ARRA	Usually said about some poor little man who was hen-pecked by his wife. ("he's like a toad under a harrow")
ETT	Heat. When mist rolls in off the sea it is often said, "it's all fer ett."
E'T WAS SCAT TO TAMPLIN	Broken in to fragments
EZZA A BOY OR A CHEELD/CHIELD	
F	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
FACE LIKE A RUSTICOCK	Red-faced I wonder if this refers to a rusty weather vane
FACE LIKE A WET WEEK	Long and miserable (Wet weeks seem to go on forever don't they?)
FAIR DIMPSEY OUT THERE	Misty

FAN TADDLEM TARTS	Cakes, after the baker
FEEDIN YER FAACE	Eating “Thee art always feedin yer face.”
FENTONPYTH	A surface well
FIGHT LIKE CATS	Self explanatory
FIRST COME TE ‘AND	Refers to an item grabbed even if unsuitable for purpose
FIT THE MAATE	Prepare the food, not necessarily meat
FOR THE TIME BEING	Meanwhile “The the time being tha’s how things are goyne te be.”
FRESHLY CATCHED	Caught out
FULL AS A TICK	Eaten too much. I can imagine this being said by a fish jouter to imply that his fish had just been caught. Ed
FULLAS AN EGG	Replete
FULL AS A TEEK (Tick)	Feather bed or tick
FULL O’ (TEMPER, PRIDE ETCAS EGGS ARE FULL O’ MEAT	?? ?? Is this a positive or negative statement? The word meat was used to mean all food, in which case an egg is a ‘full o’ meat’ as a tin o’ soup. Or is it the opposite?
FULL OF SAUCE AND IMPERTINENCE	Very cheeky
FULL WEIGHT WITHOUT THE WRAPPER	Said of a pompous and over dignified person
FUSSIN’ LIKE A BLUE ASS FLY	Extremely busy doing nothing
G	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
GAPIN’ LIKE A YOUNG ROOK	Yawning All young birds seem to have mouth bigger than their heads and hold them wide open when calling for food
GATE-POST CHIELD	Illegitimate (as in come-by-chance)
GEEKIN’ LIKE A LING	Staring like a fish
GIBM BELL TINK AND SPALL GO TO ’EN	Go at it and give it all you got
GIBMERE A MINUTE	Give it to me a minute
GIB’M TONGUE PIE	To give a good telling off
GIVE ‘ER CLOTH AND STRIKE SOUND	Let it rip and pitch the note
GIVE ‘ER REACH	Go faster
GIVE UN BELL TINK	Give him a good hiding; and powerful singing or instrument playing
GIVE US A GARM	Call in and see us. Pay us a visit
GIZ DAUNCE	Guise dance as applied to Christmas plays
GLASSING LIKE A STAT OR CHAD	Staring
GOIN LIKE A LONG DOG	Going fast – as of a whippet, greyhound or lurcher
GOIN’ LIKE THE CLAPPERS (O’ A MILL)	Rushing
GOIN LIKE THE MAIL	At express speed
GOIN’ NINETEEN TO THE DOZEN	Rushing
GONE ABROAD IN THE PAN	Disintegrated whilst being cooked
GONE POOR	Gone bad (of fruit and veg)
GONE (TA)SAY	Fishing boats have put to sea
GONE ROUND LAND	Clothing won out are said to be ‘gone round land.’
GOOGLING FER GRAPES	Looking foolishly amazd
GOOWEN AWAY TE LIVE	Dying He’s wastin away te nawthen, goowen away te live sure nuff.”
GOSPEL TRUTH	Really true. (“You might not believe it, but tha’s the gospel truth my friend.”
GOT TO BE ‘EAD AN’ I	Must be top dog/bossy
GOYNE ON GRAND	Making good progress – goin’ along fine; often said on recovering from illness
GREAT INS WILL HAVE GREAT OUTS	Change from friendly to opposite. ?? I’d have read it, ‘the

	more you put into a project the more you'll get out of it. Ed
GREY AS A BADGER	Hair colour
GREEN AS RISHES OR A LICK	Rushes Leek
CRIZZLIN LIKE A BADGER.	Very annoyed, in a temper.
GROWIN' LIKE A WEARN (fern)	said of a child
GRUFFIN 'AND GRUNTIN' LIKE A BOAR PIG	said of a pompous old autocrat.
GRUFFED UP LIKE A 'EDGEYBOAR	Compared to a Hedgehog
GUSS ON WITH 'EE! – YOUR ASS AND BUTTER WID'N	Don't talk rubbish
GWENDERS, to have the	Frozen fingers ec
<h1>H</h1>	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
HANG FAN (FIRE)	Wait a minute, - hang on a minute, - hold back
HARD AS IRE OR HELLS DOOR	Ire + iron
HARDENED AS PHAROH or as a HOUND	Stubborn, will not do as one is told
HEAD 'N OFF	'Make it go that way.' Usually when herding or driving animals
'EAD LIKE A TURMUT	Head like a turnip (hard an' full o' water!!)
HE'S AM ANGLEDITCH	(A person who cannot keep still.)
HE WAS AS SHORT AS A SHILLING WITH ME	Quite curt
HE WHO WOULD THRIVE MUST RISE AT FIVE	He who wants to get on in this world must be up and doing.
HIS CLOTHES ARE 'ANGIN' IN LURRUPS	(Torn clothes) (Big and baggy)
HIGH UP LIKE WEBB	Exalted (Sometimes tongue in cheek)
HOITY TOITY. I SEEN A WHITE BLACKBIRD	Almost certainly Cornish and said by an old man who was trying to hold his own in a bragging competition. The white Blackbird was a magpie. (Interesting)
HONEST AS THE DAY	As below
HONEST AS THE SUN	A great compliment
HOT, HEAVY TOUCHED UP LIGHT	Heavy Cake
<h1>I</h1>	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
IWOULD RATHER BE UP THE CRAFT (CROFT) PICKIN' UP STICKS	If Edna's mother was asked if she would like to go to town she would say this.
I WOULD RATHER BE TIED TO A BULL'S ASS AN' SHIT LAAKEN	As above, but am sure Edna's mother didn't say this!
IF SHE/HE CAAN'T DRIVE THEY WAINT RIDE	Must be top dog/bossy
I'LL FERRICK 'ROUND FER EN	(Look for something) (surely refers to ferreting)
I'LL 'AVE A NUBBIE	(A Bun)
I'M BRAVE	(Feeling good)
IN'D HURTIN'	Is not damaged (Not causing and trouble where it is)
ISS FAY	Yes indeed
"I'VE GOTTEN A GLAD EYE"	Meaning I've been flirted with or had received admiring glances. (I would think this came home from America.)

J

Phrase / Saying	Meaning
JIGGERY POKERY	(Up to no good)
JOHNNY FORTNIGHT	A travelling draper Oh how that brings back memories; we had one who came around our way. He was an old man for sure and probably a WWI veteran, and would come out into the country villages on the bus and then call house to house with his little well worn wooden box held by a leather strap 'round his neck, from which he would proffer his wares of silk skeins, reels of cotton, a few pins and needles, elastic, buttons and other similar items. He was always dressed the same, summer and winter – homberger hat, long black overcoat and had pronounced round shoulders, doubtless from years of carrying his box and rheumatism from being in the trenches, but a lovely old gent nonetheless, always polite and never offended if you didn't buy.
JUMPED LIKE A MACKEREL	Startled

K

Phrase / Saying	Meaning
KEEP COMPANY	When people are courting, they are said to be keeping company
KEEP COMPANY	A neighbour might be advising a parent about the associates of a son or daughter, viz; "Keep an eye out fer who your (son) is keepin company with; I went say no more."
KEEPIN' OUT THE ROAAD	Shamefaced or getting' out of the way. – Not necessarily the highway, but if you was in someone's way you were 'in the road.' "Git out the road man, I was 'ere 'for you."
KEEP'N IN THE FAMILY	Keeping council
KENDLE TEENING	Candle lighting time
KICK LIKE A 'OSS	Old hand started tractors would kick back causing many a broken wrist
KILL'N DID EE?	Did you kill it? Reminds me of one evening when my uncle Eddie was making his way home through the lanes after a long day's shooting; when he was about to pass a miserable old farmer leaning over a field gate. The farmer called to Ed and asked, "Ere Phillips, if these saw a partridge flyin cross my field shut would 'ee?" Quite spontaneously uncle replied, "Dun awe I might miss un."
KIKKIN FRIENDLY	Over friendly "You know the sort of person dawn't ee? In yer pocket all the time."

L

Phrase / Saying	Meaning
LAIKEN LIKE A BASKET	Leaking – pouring out “We ‘ad a riffle in that there storm and now ee’s laiken like a basket.”
LAME AS A DUCK or DOG	Ducks waddle and so appear to be lame and dogs even without reason often carry one hind leg.
LASHES OF RAIN/LASHING WITH RAIN	Beating rain
LAUGHING LIKE A PISKEY	Always smiling like Pixies do.
LEND EE THE SCISSORS	Cut a yarn short
LICK AND A PROMISE	Finish off quickly “Haven’t got much time day, so I’ll just shaw’n the duster!
LIGHT AS VANITY	I am sure we all know there is no substance in vanity.
LIKE A ARGAN	Anyone singing or playing beautifully
LIKE A GAATE ‘OSS MARINE	Usually said of a woman
LIKE BROWN’S COWS	Stragglng in dis-array. “The Home guard went through the village like Brown’s cows.”
LIKE A MACKEREL ON SPRAT	Eager
LIKE A BUNDLE OF STRAW TIED IN THE MIDDLE	Overweight also a comment on a lady’s attire if of unsuitable style for the body shape
LIKE A CAT IN A BONFIRE – DUNT KNAW WHICH WAY TO TURN	A person in a dilemma.
LIKE A COW ‘ANDLIN’ A MUSKET	Awkward; clumsy
LIKE A CRAB GOYNE JAIL	Slow-coach
LIKE A DISHWASHER’S BEHIND	Said of a woman’s tongue in mobility! Or someone or something that is forever up and down, like a lineman’s flag
LIKE A DOG IN A FAIR	Scared
LIKE A DUCK GEEKIN’ AGAINST THUNDER	Looking very annoyed. Could be said of one or oneself who is uneasy in a large crowd.
LIKE A FART IN A COLLANDER	Don’t knaw which way te turn
LIKE A HEN AFORE DAY	One who is half witted through being flustered
LIKE A HEN WITH ONE CHICK	A monomaniac Someone who has only one thing to concern themselves with. One track mind
LIKE JAN TRESIZE’S GEESE, NEVER ‘APPY	Someone who is always miserable; nawthen is ever right far them
LIKE A LAZARUS	Thin & poorly looking
LIKE LAZY LAWRENCE’S DOG	Leaned its head agin the wall te bark! ??
LIKE A LONG DOG	Referring to a greyhound’s or whippet’s ability to run. “He went out like a long dog, or he disappeared like a long dog.
LIKE ONE DRAGGED THROUGH A ‘EDGE BACKWARDS	Of one with unkempt hair and/or attire
LIKE A ‘OWL PEEPIN’ OUT OF A IVY BUSH	Of one with dishevelled hair
LIKE A PIG IN A POOK	All confused
LIKE A PIG WITH WAN EAR	One sided. Lop sided
LIKE A TOAD UNDER A BARROW (Barra)	Of a henpecked man.
LIKE A TOAD UNDER A ‘ARRA	Don’t know which way to turn to get out of trouble.
LIKE A TOAD ‘PON A RED HOT SHOWL	Unable to stand still. (Showl = Shovel).
LIKE TROY TOWN	An untidy place Like Lansson jail
LIKE A THING	As it were; as you might say

LIKE A WINNICK	Similar to wannard I suspect
LIKE A YARD O' PUMP WATER	Straight hair (person)
LIKE GREAT AUNT JANE, DON'T WANT NOBODY WITH 'ER AND DON'T WANT TE BE LEFT ALONE Like Great	Nothing is ever right for some people
LIKE JAN TRESIZE'S GEESE NEVER 'APPY UNLESS THEY'RE WHERE THEY BAIN'T	A backwards way of saying that someone is never satisfied.
LIKE LADY FAN TOSS, DRESSED TE DEATH AN' KILLED WITH FASHION	OTT
LIKE LANSON (Launceston) GAOL	If your home was badly cared for or anywhere else that was in a constant messy state
LIKE LAVINIA..... SHE'S DRYING BY FAITH DRYING BY FAITH I 'SPOSE....ELSE SHE 'AVE A LINE O' CLOTHES OUT IN A STREAM O' RAIN	Self explanatory. Ed. I feel a little explanation might help here. Lavinia is hoping and praying that all is going to be well but in reality she knows the odds are agin it.
LIKE RAW MILK	Very pleasant
LIKE THE END OF A 'OUSE	An over sized person
LIKE TWO 'ELLENS	Slapped together (very thin) Hellens are roofing slates. One might say, "her backside is like two 'ellins slapped together." And she might be flattered at that!!
LOOKIN' LIKE A BOUTSHEGO	Gipsy like
LOOKIN' LIKE A MALKIN	If you went out looking untidy and unkempt.
LOOKIN LIKE A WINNARD	Someone looking very cold or a woebegone person .
LOUSY AS A COOT	Dirty as a Moorhen ?? (I suppose the natural colour of a Moorhen is drab; but what that's to do with a nice shiny black & white Coot I am not sure) Ed
<h1>M</h1>	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
MAAID O'THE MEDDA	Herb used like Elders (usually steeped or infused)Ed
MAD AS A CURLY (Curlew)	Implied scattiness
MAD AS A SCOT	Implied in a rage
MAKE OUT	Pretend
MAKE 'N OUT	"Maake 'n out can 'e?" Trying to sort out what kind of person someone is.
MAIZE AS A BRISH	(Stupid) or Brish is a Brush.
MAN-O-WAR ROCK	The stone on high ??
MARY ANN MARK'S BOILIN	Making tea when steam appears
MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE & JOHN HAD A PASTY FIVE FOOT LONG, BIT IT ONCE, BIT IT TWICE, LO AND BEHOLD IT WAS FULLOF MICE!	Thought you might enjoy that little nonsense ditty from my childhood days
MAZED AS A URLY	Stunned
MAZED AS A CURLY	Dancing around in a temper.
MAZED AS A SHEEP	A stupid kind of madness
MAZE JERRY PATTICK	Mad simpleton
MEND A RAG ON YER BACK, YOU'LL NEVER BE A PENNY BETTER THAN YER PACK	Wesaring clothing not properly finished off is said said to be 'a ha'penny head an' a farthin' tail.'
MILK LIKE A FOUNTAIN	Applied to a good cow. "Mornin' an' evenin' alike, she de milk like a fountain."
MORE MOUTH THAN TEETH	Too much to say
MOUTH ABROAD	(Mouth open)
MOUTH LIKE A JAIL DOOR	Wide
MOUTH OPEN LIKE A SCAD	Scad is a horse mackerel
MOUTH OUT - HE/SHE	All talk but not much else
MOUTH SCREWED UP LIKE A DUCK'S FERT	A twisted and unnatural position or shape

MUST AL'AYS BE AFORE PILCHER	Always to the front.
MUSTARD, CUSTARD AN' YOU YA BIG SHIT	Here's lookin at you kid
MUST HAVE BIB MENDED WITH A RED HOT NEEDLE AN' BURNIN THREAD	A mending job badly done. (Reminds me of, "They don't make shirts like they used to, I've sawed this button on five times now.!")
MY GAR, DARNY HECK!	As in my 'ansome
MY GIR RICH	As in my 'ansome a term of great endearment
<h1>N</h1>	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
NAWTHEN GOYNE NOWHERE AN' LESS COMIN' BACK	Not much good to anybody.
NAWTHEN TE WRITE 'OME 'BOUT	Disparaging or disappointing remark about anybody or anything. Also said of something of little importance. i.e. "Ow are yer onions cumin on fer shaw day?" Reply, Nawthen tearin.' Of "Nawthen te write 'ome about." Aren't up to scratch.
NEVER 'EARD UBM	I have never heard of him/her
NEVER SPEND A APPARD WHEN A PENNY WILL DO	Don't spend more than is necessary
NEVER TRY TE TEACH A PIG TE SING.	Don't attempt the impossible, its sure to back fire on you
NEW BUYER (FISH)	New in town
NICE GIRT FELLA BUT LA! NO BOTTOM	A superficial person. 'Seems a nice 'nuff chap but there's no top er bottom in um.'
NICOBLESHYOU	Good night and god bless
NO BIGGER THAN A HAYLE BAR LAANCY	Very small
NOBODY IDN'T GOIN TO STOP THEIR 'OSS FROM GALLOPIN' TO SEE THAT	Whatever it was, it was of such little consequence to bother with.
NOOZLED THE NEPLET	To mizzle or nestle, as a child to its mother's bosom
NOSS, NO NOTHINGS	Terms for playing marbles
NO SUCH THING	It'snot that at all. – that's not right (idn't 'tall comes to mind also) Ed
NOTHIN TEARIN'	My mother used to say that, meaning "nothing special" as in "How are you feeling?" / "How was the concert?" / "What did you think of the tea treat this year?" ----- "Aw, othing' tearin'!"
NOT LIKE D'BLONG	Not like it used to be
NOT NUFF T'PITCH A REP	Box of baited fishing lines, 5 men
NOT VERY ONIONS	Unfriendly
NUFF TE MAKE EE TEE-TA-TAW	Enough e make ee cross, (teasy)
<h1>O</h1>	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
OLD AS DIGORY	Infers something is very old but who/what was Digory?
OLD AS THE 'ILLS	Bra'bb'm old
OLLEN AND BLAATEN	Hollering and bleating (Shouting in anger rather than calling someone some distance away
ON THE RAN-TAN	Out on the tiles
OOOH! YOUR TWO EYES!	Strong rush of affection
OUT OF CORE	Job on the side – moonlighting
OUT OF THE ROAD	Out of the way

P

Phrase / Saying	Meaning
PASSEL O'OWLD TRAADE	Load o' old rubbish
PASTY AS LONG AS JOHN BEDELLA'S FIDDLE	Gert licker
PEERT (Pert) AS A WHEELBARROW	Used derisively
PIECE	A bit of poetry or prose that a child would be required to learn for the Sunday School Anniversary.
PIG IN A POKE – (Don't buy a)	Never buy anything unseen. Poke = Large bag or sack.
PIGGY WIDDEN	Runt of the litter. (Often given to a child of the family to rear on for his/her self
PINCHER PAW	Large claw of a crab or lobster
PLAY LIKE KITTENS	The ambition of every wagoner for his over fed horses.
PLEASE MY AWN MIND	Please myself "I'll please my awn mind whether I shall or whether I shan't."
PLUM AS BUN DAW (dough)	Unintelligent
PLUMMER 'N MUD	Very stupid (Note not plumb but plum as in a cake mix rising before going in the oven
POLICEMAN GULL	Black backed gull
POOR AS A COOT	Referred to physical condition
PRINKED OUT	Well dressed
POP AN' TOWSE	Fuss & uproar
PORTLEVEN BUILT	Said of a female with a large rear end
PRINKED UP	Wearing best clothes
PROPER BOWJACK (Bawjack)	Rough, uncouth
PROPER FER PITCHIN' A TUNE	Said of someone who could pitch or strike up a tune of a hymn or song without the aid of an instrument.
PROUD AS LUCIFER	The devil is always portrayed as proud and pompous.
PUFFED UP LIKE A BLADDER O' LARD	Pompous
PULLED UP TE THE MOON BY YER TWO THUMBS	Punishment (Ouche!)
PUT AWAY TE BODMIN	Sent to the asylum
PUT AWAY TO SAFETY	No idea where it is
PUT GOIN'	Put down "Time for'n be put goin, I can't stand see'n suffer no longer."
PUT UPON	Bullied, ridiculed, kept down

Q

Phrase / Saying	Meaning
QUICKER THAN GULL SHIT	Pretty fast
QUIET AS A' OLD SHEEP	Meant docile

R

Phrase / Saying	Meaning
READ (Pron red)OUT	Left out of a will
RED AS A RAT, LILY OR ROOSTCOCK	Said of someone who was angry
RIN(run) LIKE A STAG or LONGDOG	Fleet of foot
ROAST BEEF CLOTHES	Bes clothes. "I see you got yer roast beef clothes up 'day juss cawse the preacher's comin 'ome dinner!"

ROLLED LIKE A TATTE AFTER ONE FELL	Rolled on and on?
ROTTEN AS A PEAR	Gone really mushy
ROUGH AS RATS (Ruff as ..)	(A person who does not look well)
ROUGH AS A BADGER	(As above)
ROUGH AS ROUGHTOR or EGYPT	As above
ROUND LAND	To and from St Ives/Newlyn by sea
RUFF AS RATS or RUFFER THAN RATS	In a pretty terrible state
RUNNIN' THEM UP WITH A RED 'OT NEEDLE AND A BURNIN' THREAD	Ladies who mend clothes hastily and inadequately are accused of this.
S	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
SAAVE WATER IN	Make harbour in time for tide
SCAT ABROAD	Gone to pieces, like a pastry split open in the oven
SCAT TE SCUDDEN!	Smashed to bits “\Father knocked over mawther’s best vase and he was scat te scudden.”
SCAT THE CLOAM	Break (broke) the crockery
SCAVEL AN GOW	Confused speech/chattering
SCREECHEN & BLEVEN	Crying and shouting
SCREETCHIN' LIKE A WHITNICK	A shrill cry compared to that of a stoat or waesel
SCREETCHIN' LIKE A WHIT-NICK	A shrill cry compared to that of a stoat.
SCRITCHIN' LIKE A PIG	(A baby crying or a singer)
SCRITCHEN LIKE A WHITNICK or WHIT-NICK	Screaming like a weasel
SCUFF OF THE NECK	The Hinder part of the neck. Also scruff of the neck
SED 'IS PEACE	Had his say
SET YER ASS TE ANCHOR	Sit sown “Now you’ve come all this way ‘ow dawn’t ee set yer ass to anchor yo?”
SHE DAWN'T THINK NO SMALL TATEA OF 'ERSELF, YOU'D THINK 'ER ASS WAS DIPPED IN DIMENTS	“She de think herself some important I can tell ‘ee.”
SHINEN LIKE A DAGWELL	A fine sight
SHUT YER BAL	(Keep your mouth shut)
SICK AS A SHAG OR A HOUND	Someone vomiting in the way a Shag or Cormorant regurgitates fish bones etc. Also extreme disappointment
SILLY AS A WAGON 'OSS	I suppose a wagon horse has to be constantly told what to do
SKEW WHIFF	Not straight, a bit thirt like – a picture may be said to be hanging skew wiff
SKID THE WHEEL	To stop or put a drag under or on the wheel when descending a hill, to assist the horse by keeping the weight back
SLEEP LIKE A RINGER	Like a bell ringer during the sermon.
SLIPPERIER THAN A 'ANDFUL OF ***HOLES	Self explanatory
SLIPPRIER THAN A SNAIL	Self explanatory
SLIPPERY AS A' EEL	A slippery customer, or double dealing con man
SLIPPER' AS A GLASS BOTTLE	Ice on the roads
SLOGGY MOOGY	Dragging the feet
SMART'S A CARROT or A NEW PIN	Well dressed or a nice clean & tidy room
SMOKE LIKE A DRAGON	Said of a heavy smoker

SMOKE LIKE A CHIMLEY POT	As above (You never see'n without a fag in 'is mouth – smoke like a chimney pot 'e do.)
SOME CHASE	A proper muddle; events/behaviour all jumbled up
SOME MEN ARE BORN TO FEAST & NOT TO FIGHT	Is this describing the various classes of people?
SOME MUSSY TOAD	Grubby person and ways
SOSS AND IMPERANCE	Sauce and impudence. "I an't say nawthin te that there bouy but what you git a mouthful of soss an' imperance back in return, wait 'til 'is faather de come 'ome, he'll straighten 'in up."
SOUNDS LIKE A GROUND ZAY	The bass in the local band. (zay = sea)
SOUR AS A CRAB	Referring I take it to a Crab Apple which are as bitter as gall.
SOUR AS A RIG	Rigs are large cattle warts
SO YOU'RE ALL SE'DAY THEN?	So you are all set to go then?
SPALL TO 'EN	Hit it hard
SQUARED UP LIKE A YARD OF PUMP WATER	(Like a bottle o' piss) pomous
SQUEAK LIKE A WHEELBARRA	Forever squeaking as the wheelbarrow was always the last thing to see the oil can.
STRAIGHT & GREY LIKE THE OLD WOMAN'S DISHCLOTH	Tidy but not very clean
STRAIGHT AS A GUN	Straightforward – honest- trustworthy
STAM BANG/SLAM BANG	To plump down or to bang down in anger, or to leave the door go slam bang
SLAM BANG	Exactly " His shot landed slam bang in the middle of the target."
STAND BY YER STANDIN	Stand by your ground – stick to your principles. " No matter 'ow much they strive ee down, you stand by yer standin and you went go wrong."
STANDIN IN 'IS AWN LIGHT	Failing to grasp the situation. "He cudden fathom what I was sayin' to 'en, standin in 'is awn light spose."
STANKIN ON THE PLANCHEN'	Walking on a wooden floor
STARIN' LIKE A STAT	Stoat
STAREN LIKE A STUCK PIG	To glare, to look surprised. (If you've ever seen a pig killed by slitting its throat you'll understand this saying, if not I'm afraid you must use yer imagination!)
STARY GAZY PIE	Pie made with pilchards & leeks with fish head sticking out of the top of the pastry pie crust
STIFF AS A GATE or a CRUTCH	Stiff with arthritics or similar (Caan't bend one's joints – old an' arthritic.)
STINK LIKE A FITCHY	Fitchy = ferret (A ferret's uine is most pungent, rather like a dog fox and a number of other sprinkling type animals.)
STINK LIKE A BUCK	Sometimes said of a dog fox. (Strong smell of urine where such animals mark their territory.)
STINK LIKE A FITCHER	Polecat or ferret (See two above)
STRAIGHT AS A GUN or DIE	Usually said of someone with high moral standards
STREAMED OUR WASHIN' NOT RINSED	Taking a short cut by inferring that some people just pull their washin' through clean water instead of properly rinsing them
STOP HOLLERIN' AND 'OLLERIN' AN' KICKIN' UP A CAROUSAL (pronounced <i>karowsal</i>)	Granfer keeping order in Sunday school accompanied by loud ringing of fish bell
SUN CRACKIN' THE 'EDGES	A very hot day "Everywhere is so parched the sun is even crackin' the 'edges.)
SWEAR LIKE A TOOSTOR	possibly a tooth drawer (dentist)
SWEAR LIKE A TROOPER	Foul mouthed
SWEAT LIKE A BULL	I presume this refers to a bull after he has performed his male duties!
SWEAT LIKE A WHEELBARRA'	Backalong ground was prepared for arable by skimming the clat and drawing it into rows, which were burnt, producing much moist heat. These rows were beet burrows. The process was called Demshuring.
SWEATEN' LIKE A POULTICE	Self explanatory

T

Phrase / Saying	Meaning
TAISY AS THE PIGS or a VUZZ EMMET	Self explanatory (emmet – ant and if you disturb an ants’ nest they get very agitated and angry)
TALK LIKE A LAWYER or a CHEAPJACK	Self explanatory “Talk the ‘ind leg off a donkey.”
TALK THE ‘IND LEG OFF A DONKEY	A very talkative person – see above
TALK LIKE A LAWYER	Pretty good with the vocals – as above
TARRED WITH THE SAME BRUSH	Regarded in the same light (of a person) Usually when Referring to someone in an impolite way. “Tha’s the trouble see, if you go ‘round in a group and wan de do somethin’ wrong yer all tarred with the same brush.”
TEARIN’ LONG LIKE MARY KEMP IN THE BRAMBLES	In great haste. “She was coosin’ up the lane after somethin’ didn’t even speek, she was tearin’ long like Mary Kemp in the brambles.”
TEARIN’ LONG LIKE A MAN GOYNE WRECK	Walking very quickly. (Everybody wanted to be the first to a wreck!!)
TEASY AS A SNAKE or ADDER	As bad-tempered and irritable as a snake. “I dun naw was matter wid’n but ’e was as teasey as a snake with me this morinin’.
TEMPER LIKE A FIEND	Self explanatory Ed.
TENDER AS MY EYE	Said of food “That was a ‘ansome bit a beef mawther, as tender as my eye.”
THAT’S(UP) TO THEY	That’s for them (they) to decide
TH’S LIKE A MARVAH DOWNS	Rough, bad workmanship. One presumes this is referring to the country down to Morvah way; no disrespect
THE BLACK MAN DEVIL THE UNION	??
THICK AN’ A CLEAR	Mist coming and going “The mist is comin an’ goyne this morning, thick an a clear sure nuff.”
THICK IN THE CLEAR	Chesty cough –phlegm in the throat causing congestion “Sounds as though you’re a bit thick in the clear me dear.”
THE DEAR OB’N	Oh! isn’t he sweet - A dear child. Also used to comfort someone
THE STONES ARE GEAIVING OR HEAVING	Before wet weather stones look wet. The old earth floors in country cottages used to do this too; they would even swell up with the damp.
THE TIDE’S OUT I SEE	Sarcastic remark when there isn’t enough tea in the cup, or poured full
THE WEATHER IS CLOSE	It’s humid/sticky
THE GRIPE WON’T HARDLY MEET THE HEDGE	Where there is a case of financial difficulty or embarrassment a way of approaching the subject would be to quote these words. (A hedge gripe is a water ditch close to the field hedge, perhaps the last vore ploughed.
THEN THE WHEEL CAME OFF	The things went wrong “The new pony was trotten on grand across the downs ‘til that pheasant flied over the ‘edge, then the wheel came off sure nuff, she went wan way and me an’ the jingle went thither.”
THERE ‘E WAS GONE	There he wasn’t. I prefer He was there one minute and gone the next Ed.
THERE’S A BLIND MAN UP BREAGE WHO’D LOVE TE SEE THE DIFFERENCE	Said to someone who is complaining about the slightest inaccuracy. “I tell ee waat, there’s a blind man up te Breage who’d love to see the difference.”
THEY ALL TURNED UP, MAN AN’ ‘OSS	Rather like ‘the world and his army.’
THEY THAT CAIN’T MUSTER MUST LOUSTER	Re rouse or languish. ??

THEY THAT CAAN'T SCHEMEY MUST LOWSTER	Those unable to do the scheming must do the labouring
THEY THINK THEY GOT THE WORLD BY THE ASS	Said of ambitious, pushing people who 'glory' in their own pursuit of success.
THEY'RE 'EAVEN	Anyone dirty or smelly
THICK AS A 'EDGE	Refers to visibility
THIN AS A GRIDDLE	A griddle folded very flat and took up little or no space
THINKYOUR'E BODY EVERYSELF	To think you're somebody important
THIRSTY AS A GULL	Always drinkin' – very thirsty
TIMDERN 'ILL	Stairs
TIED AS A TRAMP or FOX	Self explanatory Ed.
TIDE'S OUT I SEE	Cheeky remark when there was not enough tea in the cup
TID'N GOIN' ZACKLEY	Things are not going as they should be or according o plan.
TINNEN BOAT	Childs boat beatenhammered from sheet tin
TIS A NEW FANG or FANGLED IDEA	(Something new) Nothing has different, they didn't like change then and we don't now
TIS 'UMMIN	Its stinking
TIZZ LIKE A ADDER	Hiss in anger
TOM TOOSALLEM	A stupid person
TONGUE PIE	Telling off
TONGUE TABBIS	Talkative person. Cor. Tavas tongue
TOO SLOW TE CARRY COLD DINNER	One who fooches about all the time
TRAIN OIL	Pilchard oil
TRAYCKLE MAW	Treacle sandwich
TRUMPETER DEAD?	Sarcastically/putting someone down
TWO SCATS (skats)BEHIND	All behind with one's work. 'All behind like a cow's tail.' 'Like Corporal Jones in Dad's Army!!'
U	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
UNDER A BUSHELL	Covering something up, - not telling all the truth
UP BEFORE DRESSED	Up early & quickly
UP SHIT CREEK WITHOUT A PADDLE	Well and truly stuck, or in the mire or in the s..t
UP THE LINE	Up country (line would be referring to the then new railway)
V	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
VERY BROKEN BOTTLE	Very posh
VEXED AS FIRE	Very angry (When 'e found out 'is best mate 'ad took 'is bike he was as vexed as fire)
W	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
WAD'N BUT A CRAWEAN	Wasn't enough to fill a limpet shell
WAS PROPER FER PITCIN' A TUNE	Ol' Jan Todden was proper fer pitchin a tune. (Something chapel people did when there was no organist.)
WASH YER FEET	Paddle in the sea
WASSA COLLED?	What is he called, what's his name?
WAT 'EE DOIN? Or WAT 'EE DOIN OF?	What are you doing?

WHAT EE DOIN	What on earth are you going?
“WHATEVER”	Anything like “whatever”. ‘It rained like whatever’. ‘He was rich like whatever.’
WALKIN’ SIDEWAYS LIKE A CRAB GOYNE JAIL	Leaning sideways [see also A]
WEAK AS A RANNY (Wren)	Someone feeling ill
WEAKER’N TADDY WAATER	Often said of second rate entertainment or a wish’t cup a tay.
WET AS A DISHWASHER	Dishwasher = Pied Wagtail who is always seen around water
WET AS A SCRUBBER	Very wet like a scrubbing brush
WET ASS AN’ NO FISH	Lot of hard work, probably in appalling conditions with no result
WET LEAKEN	Very wet
WHAT EE GOYNE DO DAY BOY? GOIN DOWN HAY FIELD BIT. RECKON POOK ‘EN DO ‘EE?	What you going to do today boy? I’m going down the hayfield.. Do you hope to get the pooks done? Or the hay into pooks
WHAT THE ‘EAD DE LACK THE HEELS MUST TRACK	Similar to ‘my ‘ead went saave me ‘eels
WHO ANA WHO	Vying for first place
WILD AS A HAWK	Ferial
WILD AS A ‘URN	Urn is a dialect word for an heron
WIND IS DRAWED	Moving from SW, clearing rain
WINNED UP HIS LINES	Death of a Fisherman (Similar to trades and pastimes e.g. footballer hanging up his boots) Winding up his lines.
WISE AS AN OLD OWL	self explanatory Ed. (I don’t know that this is dialect)
WISHT LOOKIN’	Looking poorly
WORK LIKE A FOOL	Do more than your share for no extra reward
WOT A LIFE SAYS ALFICK, GU US A CHAW (of tobacco)	Fed up but resigned
WOT WAS A LIKE? LIKE RAW MILK ME ‘ANSOME, LIKE RAW MILK	Referring to a first encounter after a row
WOULDN’ CALL KING GEORGE ME UNCLE	I’m so thrilled and happy, I’m in top of the world. ‘Nothin. Could be better even if king George was me uncle.’
X	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
XACKLEY THE WAY WE USED TE DO IT	Just like old times
Y	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
YELLA AS A GUINEA	Self explanatory Ed.
YELLA AS A KEET	?? No explanation given for this phrase; I always understood it as Yella as a Geek’s foot, which doesn’t help much either but I felt it had something to do with goose or gander whose feet are indeed yellow.
YOU AN’ YOUR GRANNIES OLD DUCKS	You’re talking nonsense
YOU CAAN’T EAT YER CAAKE AND HAVE IT TOO	You can’t spend your money and still have it in the bank!
YOU LOOK AS CUFFED AS A MAGGOT	(looking miserable)
YOU DON’T NEED THAT MORE’N A CAT NEEDS A SIDE POCKET	You don’t need it.
YOU GIT RUBADULLYA	An all purpose word for nonsense
YOU PAERTY	Persons present or you lot over there

YOU'LL WISH YOUR CAKE DOUGH	You'll live to regret it. A second bit is sometimes added, 'and the pigs eatin' of it.'
YOU'RE CLOTHS ARE A BIT RORY-TORY	(Bright clothes)
Z	
Phrase / Saying	Meaning
ZAC AND ZAC LIKE TOM ROWE'S MOUTH	Always correct.