

REVIEW ARTICLE

‘AN EVENT OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE’ [sic]: REVIEW OF GEORGE’S *GERLYVER KRES*

Michael Everson

Ken George, *Gerlyver Kernewek Kemmyn: an Gerlyver Kres. Kernewek-Sowsnek Sowsnek-Kernewek. Cornish-English English-Cornish dictionary*, 1998, 320 pp. [Bosprenn]: Kesva an Taves Kernewek. ISBN 0 907064 87 6, £14.99

INTRODUCTION

The publication of a new dictionary for a Celtic language is generally a cause for celebration. Ken George’s new dictionary, appearing five years after his *Gerlyver Meur*, is rather a disappointment, as it is defective in two essential features: its form and its content.

FORM

Producing a dictionary is a formidable task: unlike most other books, a dictionary contains a very large number of paragraphs (‘entries’), each of which must adhere closely to the chosen style, and be as stylistically perfect as possible. Given the emphasis George places on computer-aided linguistics, one would expect a high degree of precision in the presentation of entries in his dictionary.

Precise they are; readable and attractive they are not. I find the typography of the *Gerlyver Kres* to be ugly and irritating, reflecting rather slipshod design parameters. In Part One, Cornish headwords are presented in **12-point Helvetica Bold**, with grammatical notes in *10-point Times Italic*, and English definitions in 10-point Times Plain.

From *Cornish Studies Seven* (Second Series). Edited by Philip Payton. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999. ISBN 0-85989-644-7, ISSN 1352-271X. This PDF file was made for online distribution by the author and contains corrections of some spelling errors found in the printed version.

Within an entry, Cornish subentries are presented in **10-point Helvetica Bold**. References glossing ‘homographs’ (the usual word in lexicographical practice is *homophones*) are given in <angle brackets> (which are normally used in linguistics to represent orthographic entities, rather than semantic ones); these are, inexplicably, not separated from the headword by a space.

Turning to Part Two, the English-Cornish half of the dictionary, one would expect that the same conventions would be applied. They are not. In Part Two, English headwords are given in **12-point Times Bold** (not **12-point Helvetica Bold**), and Cornish definitions in **10-point Helvetica Bold** (not 10-point Times Plain). Grammatical notes are still given in *10-point Times Italic*, and sub-articles in 10-point Times Plain. In some entries, additional comments are given in 9-point Times Plain with **9-point Helvetica Bold**. A bug in the conversion from database to dictionary text resulted in headwords beginning with a hyphen being set in plain text instead of bold (-iv, -oleth, -vann, -ya, instead of the expected **-iv, -oleth, -vann, -ya**).

This typography gives a totally different colour to the text of the two halves of the dictionary. The inconsistency is quite unacceptable, being confusing to the user, and without precedent in bilingual dictionary design. It appears to be the result of some kind of automated text-dump without sufficient attention to stylistic harmonization. It makes the dictionary hard to use. It draws the attention of the user to the typography, which is a cardinal sin in typesetting: the best typography is *always*, in lexicography at least, invisible.

In the entries, the plus sign is used to indicate a plural suffix added to the root (*ger*, +*yow* for *geryow*); the hyphen is used with plurals when some letters of the root are replaced (*tryger*, -*oryon* for *trygoryon*). This convention was also used in George’s 1993 *Gerlyver Meur*. I cannot see that it has anything in particular to recommend it; at least in 12-point Helvetica Bold, the plus sign appears *very* large and black, leaping off the page at the reader. Nance did not find it necessary to make use of such a convention: he wrote *ger*, -*yow* for *geryow*, and *tryger*, -*goryon* for *trygoryon*. The practice is also unknown in Breton and Welsh dictionaries. It is possible that George may make some use of the +/- distinction in his database for purposes irrelevant to users of the *Gerlyver Kres*.

Let us take some sample entries, presented in actual size: first from George’s dictionary. I chose this example only because it had showed all three of the features criticized above: varying sizes and faces of type, glosses in brackets attached to the headwords, and the use of the plus sign before the plural ending. I chose these examples before I looked at the equivalent entries in Nance’s *Cornish-English Dictionary*.

les<plant> *m.* **+yow** plant, wort; **les an gog** marigold; **les densek** dandelion
les<profit> *m.* profit, advantage, benefit; **dhe les** *adj.* useful, interesting, worthwhile
les<width> *m.* width, breadth

Notice that no plural ending is given for the second and third entries, though they are nouns (this makes those entries dependent upon the first one), and that the <glosses> are completely redundant, as the first word in the definitions gives *exactly* the same information. Compare Nance:

lēs, *m.*, breadth, width; landyard of 18 feet square, D. "lace": *trelles (trylles)*, three times the width O.M. 393; *l. tyr (lace teere)*, a "lace" of ground (Carew MS., 1599, Hearne's *Curious Discourses*).
lēs, *m.*, profit, advantage, behoof, interest, use, good, benefit, *hydth* Aelfric; to serve, be of use (of things): *nyns-yu dhe l.*, it is of no use; *myr dh'y l.*, watch over his interests; *oll rag agan l.* for the good of us all; **les-kemyn*, commonwealth; *ef adrel dhyso dhe l.*, it will turn out profitable for thee; C.W. 739.
†**les**, **-les**, *m.*, plant, -wort (in old compounds): see **losowen**, made from pl., **losow**.
†**les-an-gōk** (C. Voc. *lesengoc*), *m.*, marigold, *solsaewe* Aelfric, lit. "cuckoo-flower"; see **cōk**.

A great deal more information is given in Nance than in George. In fairness to George, however, note that the plural is not given clearly for Nance's entries at all. I am not sure what to think about the fact that Nance gives **lēs** for 'breadth' and 'profit' but **les** for 'plant' while George gives only **les**. Either George considers the latter to have the same vowel length as former, or he has forgotten to respell it **less** in his orthography. The point size is considerably smaller (8.5-point type on 8-point leading where George has 12- and 10-point type on 10.5 point leading); it is well to observe that George's dictionary would be far shorter than it is, were it set like Nance's.

les<plant> *m.* **+yow** plant, wort; **les an gog** marigold; **les densek** dandelion
les<profit> *m.* profit, advantage, benefit; **dhe les** *adj.* useful, interesting, worthwhile
les<width> *m.* width, breadth

And that means quantifiably shorter. Nance's English-Cornish letter L runs to 199.5 column centimetres and his Cornish-English letter N runs to 120.5 column centimetres. George's English-Cornish L runs to 216.5 column centimetres (8 per cent longer than Nance) and his Cornish-English letter N runs to 84.5 column centimetres (30 per cent shorter than Nance). But setting George at the same size as Nance would yield something like 149 column centimetres for L and 58 column centimetres for N, 25 per cent and 48 per cent shorter than Nance's L and N respectively. The *Gerlyver Kres* has about 200 pages of material in it page for page compared with Nance, though its typographical padding brings it to over 300 pages.

I was stunned by the headers and the footers of the dictionary. 'GERLYVER KRES ... Kernewek - Sawsnek' and 'GERLYVER KRES ... Sawsnek - Kernewek' appear, pointlessly, atop every page instead of the useful guide words one normally expects in a dictionary. The footers remind us that 'Dr Ken George' finalized the text of his dictionary in 'mis-Hedra 1998' on each page. People often use their wordprocessors to put this kind of information on draft documents, but one does not expect it to survive the publication process. Some uncorrected error resulted in the even-numbered page numbers in the Cornish-English half of the dictionary being inset 66 per cent into the footer, instead of being centred as are all the other page numbers in the dictionary.

The English in the two pages of front matter appears not to have been proofed: 'never-endingtask' on page 2 should have been 'never-ending task'. For 'asonderstondya' on page 3 read 'as onderstondya'. The terms 'English-Cornish' and 'Cornish-English' are written with 'space en-dash space' ('English – Cornish') where a simple hyphen would have sufficed. The dust jacket proudly announces that the publication of this dictionary 'is an event of great signigance [sic] in the development of the language'.

Typographically, this dictionary is a disaster. It looks as though it were prepared by people who neither cared for, nor understood the noble art of lexicography.

CONTENT

The title of the dictionary is difficult to ascertain, as the book has a number of titles. On the title page: '*Gerlyver Kernewek Kemmyn: An Gerlyver Kres. Kernewek-Sowsnek Sowsnek-Kernewek. Cornish-English English-Cornish dictionary*'; on the spine and dust jacket: '*The New Standard Cornish Dictionary. An Gerlyver Kres. Cornish-English English-Cornish*'. If George thinks we shall consider '*Gerlyver Kernewek Kemmyn*' to be an acceptable translation equivalent for

'The New Standard Cornish Dictionary', he should think again. 'New Standard Cornish Dictionary' in Kernewek Kemmyn is 'Gerlyver Savonek Nowydh a'n Tavas Kernewek'. 'An Gerlyver Kres' could also mean 'the Middle Dictionary', 'the Dictionary of Faith', or 'the Dictionary of Peace'. What does the author intend us to understand? Just that this dictionary is smaller than the *Gerlyver Meur* of 1993? The learner of Cornish will certainly be confused.

The front matter comprises just two pages, which is a bit scant. The list of abbreviations omits symbols such as <AV>, <CN>, <IJ>, etc., although these appear with some frequency. The information contained in these codes is redundantly entered in the dictionary, and it is often possible to decipher them. My objection is that the user of a dictionary should not be presented with such material nor required to perform decipherment. Consider:

as- *pref.* re-
-as<-ful> *suff.* **-asow** -ful
-as<VN> *v.* (VN ending)
-as<33> *v.* (3rd sg. pret. ending)
es<PV> *v.* thou wast
ha<IJ> *int.* ha
ow<-ing> *ptl.* -ing
ow<my> *adj.* my
-ow *suff.* (pl. ending)

One can guess VN to be 'verbal noun', and suppose PV to be 'personal verb' (or something), but I won't hazard a guess at decoding '33'. Is there a 30, 31, 32? Note that for *-as* VN is given not only in brackets, but also in the definition – though VN does not appear in the list of abbreviations. Neither does *sg.* or *pret.* or *ptl.* or *pl.* – though *plur.* does. The list also gives *int.* 'interjection', though *interj.* is more usual in dictionaries in opposition to *intr.* 'intransitive'. Redundant or not, it looks as though in generating the dictionary from the database, the information was exported from the same field as the glosses which also appear within brackets. A database structured so that grammatical information and glosses appear to be in the same field is certainly something to wonder about.

I suppose if one is going to go to the trouble to gloss *es* as 'thou wast' instead of 'you were', one should also give 'thou wert'.

Non-penultimate stress is not indicated in the *Gerlyver Kres*. Non-penultimate stress is unpredictable; it must be indicated in a Cornish

dictionary. Nance used the middle dot to indicate this. Does George not use it because his database and his comparison programs are unable to handle headwords so marked? That would be one explanation for not showing stress in the headwords. Otherwise, there is no excuse. Either way the dictionary is faulty. The dust jacket states that it is 'an essential volume for beginner and scholar alike', but this fault alone reduces the dictionary's usefulness for either.

Regarding the coverage of the dictionary, the blurb on the dust jacket claims: 'This New Standard Dictionary contains all known words of the traditional language, except the English borrowings for which there are perfectly good Cornish alternatives, plus the [sic] new words for the 21st. [sic] century.' The front matter, however, asserts that 'the master-files include practically all the words found in traditional Cornish, and many more words introduced into Cornish in the 20th century, especially by R. Morton Nance.' Why exactly do the 'master-files', the basis for all of George's work, not include *exhaustively* all the words found in the corpus of traditional Cornish? Exactly what percentage has not been included, and why?

In any case, neither claim is true. An assertion that a dictionary contains 'all known words' is extravagant and easily checked. But let us look just at the loanwords which George finds offensive. Taking a list of 513 borrowed verbs ending in *-a* and *-ya* found in *Pasconagan Arluth*, *Origo Mundi*, *Passio Christi*, *Resurrexio Domini*, *Beunans Meriasek*, John Tregear's *Homilies*, *Sacrament an Altar*, and *Creation of the World*, and we must first note that 191 of these (37 per cent) are *only* found in Tregear's texts and can't be expected to be found in Nance 1938. Of the 322 words remaining, 48 (15 per cent) are missing from Nance as headwords in the dictionary. I have not checked the provenance of these 48 words. Some may also have been unavailable to him; some may be erroneous omissions. One does not suspect Nance to have withheld Cornish words from publication.

In George's dictionary, of these 513 words borrowed into traditional Cornish, 270 (53 per cent) do not appear as headwords in the *Gerlyver Meur*. One could be tempted to believe the front matter's claim, which explains that '[s]ome of the words in the traditional corpus, such as *onderstandya*, [which] have not found favour with Cornish speakers' have therefore been omitted, but an investigation of the loanwords included and omitted makes one wonder what criteria George used in order to make his determination of which words Cornish speakers liked and which they did not. Of the 191 words from Tregear unavailable to Nance, but available to George, 143 (75 per cent) have been omitted by George. Why omit *glorifya* when *glori* and *gloryus* are included as headwords? Why omit *rebellya* but not

rebellyans? Why omit *kreatya* when *kreador* is included? Under the English headword **creator**, *furvyer*, *gwrier*, and *kreador* are given, while under **create**, only *gwruthyl* is cited. Why are *furvy* and *kreatya* omitted under the verb? English admits the synonyms ‘form’, ‘make’, and ‘create’. Surely Cornish may also be as rich. Why include *confessya*, *ordena*, and *marya*, but not *confyrmya*? Why is *comondya* (found in *Origo Mundi*, *Beunans Meriasek*, John Tregear’s *Homilies*, *Sacrament an Altar*, and *Creation of the World*) omitted, but *comendya* (found only in *Beunans Meriasek*) included? Why is *remembra* omitted in favour of *perthi kov* ‘bear in mind’ when it is found frequently in *Beunans Meriasek*, John Tregear’s *Homilies*, *Sacrament an Altar*, and *Creation of the World*? *Perthi kov* cannot be used in a phrase such as *remember vy dhe ’th whor* ‘remember me to your sister’.

Nance’s 1955 English-Cornish dictionary recognized the importance of Tregear, remarking that his homilies gave ‘by far the longest run of Cornish prose’. Tregear’s Cornish must be considered to be authentic, regardless of the proportion of loanwords it contains; and what loanwords it does contain must be considered to be authentic Cornish. Traditional Cornish of all periods contains loanwords from other languages.

The front matter states that some of the doubtful borrowings are ‘included in the English-Cornish section (printed in light print) because no suitable alternatives have yet been found for them’ and asks readers with ideas for such alternatives to inform the editor. Possibly this is an excuse for the questionable typography. In any case, paging through the English-Cornish section, I found 21 such doubtful words. I give them below, with traditional Cornish sources in parentheses.

contentious kavillek (OM 2784), **controversy** kontroversita (TH 19, 37, 38), **domineer** lordya (CW 456), **hobby-horse** hobihors (BM 1061), **implore** konjorya (PC 1321), **inheritance** eritons (BM 2452, TH 41), **installation** installashyon (*recte* Kernewek Kemmyn *stallashyon* BM 3017), **interlude** ynterlud (Nance < Lhuyd *antarlick*), **justify** justifia (TH 9 x 2), **perfume** perfumya (possibly an error for *perfumyas* TH 21a ‘performed’ *perfumya* ‘to perform’ TH 51a, cf. *performya* TH 52 with the same sense), **persecute** persekutya (TH 22), **pertain** pertaynya (TH 10 x 2, 22, 26a, 43), **petition** petyshyon (BM 4300), **precept** presept (TH 10), **pronounce** prononsya (TH 54), **protest** protestya (SA 64a), **radish** redigenn (*redic* OCV), **second** (2nd) sekond (OM 17, BM 2198, CW 51, CW 80, TH x 16), **suppress** suppressya (TH 28a, 42, 42a), **swerve** swarvy (TH 18a, 38), **usurp** usurpya (TH 31a).

I do not know what objections George has to *kavillek* or *redigenn*. But the rest of these are perfectly authentic. All of these words come from traditional Cornish texts, so it is hard to see why they are so disfavoured. Nevertheless, hiding problematic words in ‘light type’ is not how one should elicit comment on them. One should publish an article discussing them, or, if such doubtful words must appear in the dictionary, one should place them all together in an annex for easy access and discussion.

It would appear that George’s dictionary is intended to solidify in some way the authority of George’s orthography by offering the Cornish market a replacement for Nance’s dictionaries. In terms of the lexicon presented, however, he has failed to do so. I took for comparison the letter L (chosen at random) in the English-Cornish half and the letter N (also chosen at random) in the English-Cornish half of both books. Allowing for certain editorial differences in arranging headwords and subheadwords, and for possible errors on my part made during the attempt to locate words in the two different orthographies, I found the following.

Out of a total number of 261 English headwords, Nance has 84 headwords which George omits:

labial, laboratory, laburnum, lad, laden, Lammas, languid, languish, languor, lapse, larch, lass, lassitude, latten, latter, launch, launder, lavatory, lavender, lavish, lea, league, leal, leaven, leavings, lechery, ledge, leer, lees, legate, legislate, leisure, lenient, lest, lethargic, leveret, Leviathan, Levite, lexicon, liar, libel, lilac, limber, limbo, limp, linden, linger, linseed, lint, lintel, lissom, litany, literal, lithe, loafer, loath, locomotive, locust, lodge, logan-berry, logan rock, loll, loneliness, loquacious, lounge, lovely, lozenge, lubber, lucid, lucrative, ludicrous, lug, lugworm, lullaby, lullay, lumber, lunacy, lurch, lurid, lustre, lusty, lute, lying-in, lymph.

Out of a total number of 342 English headwords, George has 70 English headwords which Nance does not; 11 of these begin with *long-*:

laceration, lacking, lamp-chill, lamp-post, lamp-wick, lancet, landing, land-surveyor, langoustine, lapse-rate, lardy, large-footed, laryngitis, lathe, latitudinal, Launceston, laurels, law clerk, lawn-mower, lay-by, leading, lead pencil, lectionary, ledger, left-overs, leniently, leper-hospital, letter-box, ley, ley-land, liaise, liaison, LibDem, life-style, light-bulb, liken,

lime-juice, limp, limpid, limpidity, line-drawing, linguistics, Liskeard, lisper, litigation, litter-bin, liver-fluke, locate, Lombardy, long-beaked, long-distance, long-eared, longitude, longitudinal, long-lasting, long-limbed, long-muzzled, long-nosed skate, long-sight, long-standing, long-stone, long-tongued, Looe, lorry, Lostwithiel, loudspeaker, lowering, Loyalist, luggage-rack, luminosity.

One cannot say anything against the publication of Cornish words for useful terms like *laryngitis, lawnmower, ledger, leftovers...* but one must ask why useful words like *laboratory, lavatory, languish, lavender, launch, launder, league, ledge, legislate, leisure, and lethargic* do not appear as headwords.

Out of a total number of 168 Cornish headwords, Nance has 27 headwords which George omits:

na fors, namma, nappa, nāsya, nasyon, na-vē, navyth, na-whāth ('nevertheless'; George glosses 'not yet'), *neb-iür, nedha, negesa, negeth, negh, neghy, nep-dēn, nep-part, nep-plas, nep-pow, nep-tra, nessa, nomber, nowedhyans, nowedhynsy, nowyjjans, nowys, noys, nŷthowa.*

Out of a total number of 165 Cornish headwords, George has 52 English headwords which Nance does not:

nadh, nadha, naturel, nawmen, naw-ugens, nebreydh, negysya, negysydh, nerthegeth, nerv, nervenn, nervus, neskar, nester, -neth, neusynn, neuvell, neuvella, neuvelladow, neuvwisk, neuvyer, neves, nevesek, nevra, -ni, nijys, nivel, niverenn, niverieth, niveronieth, niverus, niwlgorn, niwllaw, niwl-ster, niwlwias, Normanek, north-west, noskan, noswara, noswikor, noswikorek, noswikorieth, notenn, noter, notyans, nowedhys, nowydhadow, nowydhyses, Noy, nuk, nuklerek.

In all fairness to George, it has to be said that the additions in his Cornish headwords are good ones, and the omissions from Nance are not particularly alarming. All the *nep* words are more or less predictable compounds. They are still worth listing in a dictionary, however.

In general, though, I find the wordlist in the English-Cornish part to be quite weak. Its selection seems rather *ad-hoc*; I think that a learner, for instance, would find this dictionary rather frustrating to use due to its omissions. No mention is made of dictionaries or

works presumably consulted (such as English, Welsh, Breton, or other Cornish dictionaries) in selecting the headwords.

George has been recognized by many Cornish speakers as an authority on spelling. This recognition, merited or not, does not confer upon him authority in lexicography. The lexical content of the *Gerlyver Kres*, especially in terms of its exclusion of loanwords found in traditional Cornish, calls into question the scope of his ‘master-files’.

KERNEWEK KEMMYN

I do not like Common Cornish (Kernewek Kemmyn), but my criticisms on the form and content of the *Gerlyver Kres* stand on their own merits regardless of the spelling used. Nevertheless, the fact that the dictionary *is* a dictionary of Kernewek Kemmyn calls the whole enterprise into serious question.

The front matter states that the Kernewek Kemmyn ‘orthography was criticized by N. Williams in his book *Cornish Today*, but his criticisms are largely unfounded, as shown by Paul Dunbar and the present editor in their reply *Kernewek Kemmyn: Cornish for the 21st Century*.’

It is understandable that George might consider Dunbar and George¹ to be an adequate response to the criticisms made by Williams in *Cornish Today*², but few Cornish speakers and even fewer Cornish scholars would take that dialogue seriously.

In *Cornish Today*, Williams presented a cogent analysis of the Cornish language situation as he saw it: Unified Cornish (Kernewek Unyes) as an orthography with some failings, Modern Cornish (Curnoack Nowedga) as an orthography with too many ambiguities and too many differences from Medieval Cornish, Breton, and Welsh to be practical, and Common Cornish (Kernewek Kemmyn) as an orthography derived from unsuccessful respelling of traditional Cornish orthographic forms on the basis of a mistaken phonemic theory. Dunbar and George try to show that Williams is wrong, but one is so put off by the sniggering schoolboy tone of the discourse that in the end one prefers to reject the work *in toto*. It cannot be taken to be a serious reply to Williams’ criticisms.

In any case, it is important to note that many of the arguments in Dunbar and George’s book are based on George’s proprietary ‘master-files’ and graphemic analysis algorithms. Since these files are not in the public domain, one does not know either how complete they are or whether they are trustworthy.

George’s arguments for a phonemic orthography for Cornish are questionable for a number of reasons.

- (1) George's phonemic analysis has always been suspect. Williams, as early as 1987, showed that George's introduction of the *dj/tj* distinction was erroneous, and George withdrew it in 1989. Williams has shown quite clearly that George's understanding of Cornish vocalic length is mistaken, though George says that he does not believe him.
- (2) The whole nature of the Kernewek Kemmyn reform is based on George's assertion that phonemic orthographies are better than historical ones based on quasi-phonemic and other traditional conventions (he gives the usual tiresome complaint about English orthography, which was dealt with far more comprehensively by Axel Wijk in 1959³). George maintains that it is difficult to implement phonemic reform where the size of the populations using competing orthographic practices is large. But this is not true to the facts. Reforms in many languages occur quite regularly, for very large populations. Languages with millions of speakers like Norwegian *bokmål* and *nynorsk* routinely implement reforms. Other languages have successfully implemented complete revisions of their orthographies: Azerbaijani changed officially from the Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin in 1992; when Irish Gaelic shifted from Gaelic script to Roman this was done in conjunction with spelling simplifications in the 1940s and 1950s.
- (3) George posits that because the population of Cornish speakers is small it did no harm to introduce a radically different system as opposed to making simple corrections of the existing system, regardless of the merits of the system. I disagree: the harm done has been considerable.
- (4) George maintains that real and proportionally significant grass-roots consensus had been achieved with regard to Kernewek Kemmyn when the Cornish Language Board adopted it in 1987; this is not the case, as the continuing language debate attests.

Kernewek Kemmyn was a sociolinguistic disaster. It split the Cornish Revival in two. It encouraged Richard Gendall into further splitting the community with his Modern Cornish. (Gendall, it must be remembered, is acknowledged by Nance for reversing the *Cornish-English Dictionary* of 1939 which became the basis for Nance's 1955 *English-Cornish Dictionary*.) Williams' approach, based on his genuine

concern for the future of the Revival, was to go back to first principles and suggest corrections to the errors in Unified Cornish. Unified Cornish Revised⁴, as Williams himself admits, will not be the last word in that process – but it is the best way forward. Unified Cornish Revised was made in the spirit of the Norwegian orthographic reforms – an incremental step towards perfecting the orthography, correcting known errors in Nance’s orthography. Future revisions will be taken on their merits with true consensus of academic and nonacademic experts alike.

CONCLUSION

The *Gerlyver Kres* is certainly no substitute for Nance’s 1938 and 1955 dictionaries, as it omits much which can only be found in them. Its claims to comprehensiveness are unfounded. Its appearance at this time does little to advance the Cornish language revival, not least because it is presented in the experimental orthography known as Common Cornish (Kernewek Kemmyn), a form that has experienced sustained criticism from Celtic scholars and must be regarded as flawed.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Paul Dunbar and Ken George, *Kernewek Kemmyn: Cornish for the Twenty-First Century*, 1997. ISBN 0-907064-71-X
2. Nicholas J. A. Williams, 1995, *Cornish Today: An Examination of the Revived Language*. Sutton Coldfield: Kernewek dre Lyther.
3. Axel Wijk, *Regularized English: An Investigation into the English Spelling Reform Problem with a New, Detailed Plan for a Possible Solution*. (Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis: Stockholm Studies in English; 7) Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1959.
4. Nicholas J. A. Williams, *Clappya Kernowek: an introduction to Unified Cornish Revised*. Redruth, 1997.

Michael Everson is director of Everson Gunn Teoranta (EGT), a Dublin-based company which specializes in minority-language software localization, fonts, and publishing. He is a linguist by training, an expert in writing systems, and works as Irish national representative in a number of International and European Standardization committees whose emphasis is on linguistic and cultural adaptability in information technology. In 1995 EGT published his *Breton Grammar*, an English translation and adaptation of Roparz Hemon's *Grammaire bretonne*.