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A couple of columns back, I said the influence of Irish (Gaelic) on Liverpool English was not as great as is often claimed, particularly in the traditional version of the history of Scouse. But that isn't to say the Irish language hasn't made its own contribution to the local vernacular.

Most of the direct imports from Irish are dated if not obsolete. Only the older generation would now know "bothered", meaning "deaf" (from Gaelic "bodhar" – "deaf"), or "caubeen", "hat" (from "cáibín", "old hat"), "crubeen", "pig's foot" ("crúibín", "hoof"), or "scuird", "drop, splash" – as in "a scuird of tea" ("scáird", "squirt, splash").

Other terms might be more familiar. "Kaylied", meaning "drunk", is probably from the Irish "céilidh", "party, social gathering" (this is also the origin of "hooley"). "Puck", "hit or blow" as in "puck in the gob", derives from "poc", a "butt" (by a goat), and later the "stroke of a stick" (as in hurling). And "shebeen", "dodgy bar or club", is from the Irish "séibín", meaning "little mug", and, by extension "ale, especially bad ale".

Interestingly, the Irish language bequeathed Liverpool English a few words for "idiot" or "fool". "Spalpeen", "rogue, fool" and "omadhaun", "idiot" were recorded in Liverpool in the early 20th century, and derived respectively from "spailpín" "agricultural labourer, scamp", and "amadán", "fool". While "gom", which dates from slightly later, is from "gamal", "idiot, dolt". Best of all is that lovely Liverpool insult "gobsh\*\*e", meaning everything from "general idiot" to a "fool who talks rubbish about anything and everything". The root may be the Irish "gob", "mouth", and "seile", "spit", hence "big spittle hanging from the mouth", though there is another possible explanation.