

Skirl is not a Technical Term

It probably started out as an onomatopoeic word, like screech, and was intended to imitate the sound of the instrument. Regardless of the origin, the word has acquired a derogatory connotation - and may be used by a knowledgeable piping instructor to describe an undesirable sound that a beginner/student might make on the instrument. It may be used by those less knowledgeable to describe the sound of the bagpipe - along with the equally trite "mournful wail".

Not so Seriously:

The origin of "skirl" is seldom fully explained, but here it is...

While the academics have struggled to clearly trace the origin of the pipes in Britain, and marveled at the wood working skill of early makers, and while the sound of pipes heard at unexpected times in unexpected places has been off-handedly attributed to the "wee people", there have been a few who have discovered the truth.

As is not uncommon, the words of those who speak the truth are not always clearly heard. An increasing body of evidence reveals the shocking truth to all these unanswered, yet interwoven, questions...

The "Skirl" of the Pipes is really just a mispronunciation of.... the "Squirrel" of the Pipes!!!



This rare photo shows P/M Skippy MacBaggins playing "Lament for the Old Oak Tree" at the edge of the campus on the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio USA (Fall 2006).