Wh-extraction in Irish

Irish has three complementizers: aL, aN, go
(L = triggers 'lenition' on following word; N = triggers 'nasalization' on following word)

(1) Deir siad [CP gur [TP ghoid na siogai i]].
say they go-PAST stole the fairies her
‘They say that the fairies stole her away.’

(2) an ghirseach [CP a [TP ghoid na siogai __]].
the girl al stole the fairies
‘the girl that the fairies stole away’

(3) an ghirseach [CP ar [TP ghoid na siogai i]].
the girl an stole the fairies her
‘the girl that the fairies stole away’

(4) an lâ a bhi muid i nDoire
the day aL be[PAST] we in Derry
‘the day that we were in Derry’

(5) an lâ a raibh muid i nDoire
the day an be[PAST] we in Derry
‘the day that we were in Derry’

Basic properties of aL:
1. It appears at the left edge of the clause.
2. It appears only in finite clauses.
3. It forms a prosodic unit with the verb.
4. It occurs in all structures in which wh-movement has occurred.

Relative clauses: [see (2) and (4) above] 
Questions:
(6) Cá fhad a bhi siad fá Bhaile Átha Cliath t?
WH length aL be[PAST] they around Dublin
‘How long were they in Dublin?’

In clefts:
(7) Ba i nDoire a dúradh a fuarhas é t.
COP[PAST] in Derry aL was-said aL was-found it
‘It was in Derry that it was said it was found.’

In 'reduced clefts':
(8) Sean-aimseartha a deir muintir an bhaile a tá sí.
old-fashioned aL say people the townland aL is she
'It's old-fashioned that the people of the townland say she is.'

In certain manner adverbial clauses:
(9) mar a chloisimid a dh’imthigh ar Niobé t.
as aL we-hear aL went on Niobe
‘as we hear happened to Niobe’
In certain temporal adverbial clauses:

(10) nuair a tháinig siad 'na bhaile  

\textit{nuair} \textless \textit{n uair 'at/in time' uair} \textless \textit{Lat. ora} 

\textit{when aL came they home} 

\textit{‘when they came home’}

In emphatic negative constructions

(Also in other cleft-like constructions)

5. Triggers the so-called ‘relative’ forms of the verb: In the present and future, the finite verb may optionally add a final –s

(11) Cá h-\textit{uair} a thiocfas tú 'na bhaile? 

\textit{what time aL come[FUT-WH] you home} 

\textit{‘when will you come home?’}

6. It is incompatible with the independent expression of negation

7. It does not co-occur with any other complementizer

8. In general, it occurs all along the path of extraction:

(12) Cé a m\textit{heas} tú a chonaic tú?

\textit{who aL thought you aL saw you} 

\textit{‘Who did you think that you saw?’}

(13) Cén t-\textit{úrscéal a m\textit{heas} mé a dúirt sé a thuig sé.} 

\textit{which novel aL thought I aL said he aL understood he} 

\textit{‘Which novel did I think he said he understood?’}

(14) Ba \textit{i nDoire a dúradh a fuarthas é t.} 

\textit{COP[PAST] in Derry aL was-said aL was-found it} 

\textit{‘It was in Derry that it was said it was found.’}

(15) Sean-\textit{aimseartha a \textit{deir} muintir an \textit{bhaile} a \textit{tá sí}.} 

\textit{old-fashioned aL say people the townland aL is she} 

\textit{‘It's old-fashioned that the people of the townland say she is.’}

(16) an \textit{rud a shíl mé a dúirt tú a dhéanfá} \hfill \textsc{[M90:207]}

\textit{the thing aL thought I aL said you aL do[COND.2sg]} 

\textit{‘the thing that I thought you said you would do'}

All examples from:
