

*The Salamanca Corpus*

VNiVERSITAS  
STVDII  
SALAMANTiNI



*Isaac Ritson's A Copy of a Letter, written by a Young Shepherd to  
his Friend in Borrowdale (1850)*

DH 394/22

A  
COPY  
OF A  
LETTER,

WRITTEN BY  
A YOUNG SHEPHERD

TO HIS  
*Friend in Borrowdale.*

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WITH  
A GLOSSARY  
OF THE  
CUMBERLAND WORDS.

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PRINTED FOR THE BOOKSELLERS.

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COPY

ADVERTISEMENT.

*THE favourable reception this following production of an ingenious Cumbrian youth met with on its first appearance, and the repeated calls for it since out of print, will, it is hoped, be esteemed a sufficient apology for reprinting it.*

*A GLOSSARY is added for the assistance of those readers who may be unacquainted with the dialect of this part of our Island; and to whom without such assistance, many of the provincial words might be wholly unintelligible. The explanations are chiefly those of that much esteemed writer, the late Mr. Clarke, from whose judicious HISTORY of CUMBERLAND they have, with few exceptions, been taken.*

A  
COPY

OF A

LETTER,

&c.

FRIEND,

I SEND te thisan, to tell the amackily what dreedful fine things I saw ith' rwoad tuv an at yon Dublin, an thardships ive bidden. I set forrat o midsummer day, and gat to Whitehebben, a girt seaside town, where sea nags eat cwoals out o rack hurrys, like as barrels does yal drink. I think sea nags are not varry wild, for they winter them i girt foalds wi out yats, an as I was lukin about to gang to Ireland, I saw twea duzzen o fellows myaking a sea nag tedder styake ov iron. I ast yan o them if I cud get ridin to Dublin, an a man in a three nuikt hat, at knackt like rotten sticks telt me I mud gang wid him, for a thing they caw tide, like t'post oth land, was ganging, an waddent stay o nea body niver. Then four men in a lile sea nag, a fwoal, ( I think at they cawt a bwoat,) heltert our nag and let it out oth fwoald, than



our nag slipt t' helter an ran away; but they hang up a deal ov wind clayths, like blinder brydals, wi hundreds o ryapes for rines. Land ran away an left us, an our nag had eaten so many cwoals it was cowdy, an cantert up wi ty end an down wi tudder. I turnt as seek as a peet an spewt aw at iver was imma: I thout I sud ha deet: I spewt aw cullers. Neest day after we set forrat, an island met us, they cawt MAN. I wud fain a seent cum hard tull us: but it slipt away by an left us: but some mare land met us neest day efter. It was varra shy, but we follot it up, becose tha said Dublin was ont. I persuadet t' man wi t' three nuikt hat to owrgit if he brast his nag, an he telt a fellow to twin t' tail on't, as tha dyu swine or bulls, when they carry them to bate at Kessick, an tha wiln't gang on. Than we gat to Dublin prusently; But I hed likt tull a forgotten to tell the seek girt black fish we soe. Tha snowrt when tha com out o th' girt tub like thunner, an tha swallow land nags as hens does bigg, mappen eat sea nags when tha dee. It was a nice breet mwornin when we were i' Dublin ba, as tha cawt, whar t' sea gangs up towart t' land as a dog dus to th' heed of a bull. Twea men i' yan o thar bwoats cam to our nag side, tha cawt them paddies; yan cudnt tell thar toke be geese; tha drank hartly of our water, it stinkt tyu, but we had nout better to drink, for t' girt dub's as sote as brine; it

wud pussen the if thou tyasted it. We ga them twea fellows a helter, an tha led our nag into Dublin, as wild as it was. But, O man! what a fine country there was ov tudder side of us; hooses as white as drip an as rank as mice. Dublin town, it lyuk'd like a girt foald full o sheep, at yan cud nobbut just see the heeds on; chimlies lyukt like hworns, an kurk-steeple an spires, as tha caw them, like as meny gyat hworns amang tudder. Sea nags is as rank i' Dublin beck, as if thou was lyukin at ten thousan geese in a gutter. Tha hevnt foalds for them as we hev i' England; town keeps them warm i' winter; but tha feed wi' beck-sand, as tha dyu at Whitehebben wi' cwols; but not out o rack hurries, theyve a mouth at side, whore men feeds tem in at wi girt iran spuyns. But O man! it was lucky I leet of a man at went to th' scyul wi me when I was a lile lad; we war deevlish thick, an he sed he wud let me see aw things. If I had gyan into Dublin be mesell, yan may gang fifty miles a- day, and nout but hoos for hoos, an like our lwonnins for length. You cannat see yearth for pavement nea whore; nor I sud niver see auld Inglan agyan, if I had been be mesell, I dare say, for tha are the deevil for settin yan rang if yan ass them. Thares hooses tha caw public beeldins, at's sa fine, I cannat tell the what they ur like. The parlemen-hoose, whore gentlen gangs to bate yan anudder, there's a vast o girt styan



props o th' fwor side ont, there's a room wi  
reed furms int whore tha feight, I lyuk its  
blood, mappen; there was a lile woman let  
us see that hoos, about four fuit hee, she was  
as thick as three auld mears twin'd togedder;  
I wundert she didnt grow heer, leaving in  
a hoos twenty or thirty fynt hee, but she was  
bryad as a hayacock. Anenst it about a  
styan thro off the parlemen-hoos, was collership-  
hoos; its a bigger plyace ner tudder; if  
thou was plyacet whore girt crags hing owr  
ov aw sides o the, it wad be like t' square,  
as tha cawt, i' th' middle o th' collership-  
hooses. Fwok at I saw they were myast o  
them as black as deevils. It sartainly isnt  
hell, but tha say tha git deed fwok out o thur  
gryaves; I think its true, for I soe a varst o  
deed fwoks byans, an some lockt up in glass  
coffins wi flesh on, an tha had barns, an  
bits o flesh prisirv'd i' bottles, as fwoks dus  
berries. There was a fellow wid a bunch ov  
keys, at opent locks and duirs as fast as lyuk;  
it myad me think o th' Rebelations whore yan  
reads o the keys o death and hell, thou map-  
pen understands that plyace. We war in a  
plyace tha caw musium, whore there's aw  
things ats comical, a thousan things at tow  
niver soe nor I can caw; there war muse deer  
hworns, as bryad as our back-bword, an bits  
ov aw manners ov hworns, I cannot tell the  
what, but these's the nyam in the Rebela-  
tions, an weel heve a vast o talk when I shall

get yable to come an see the.

I was at a plyace they caw t' Exchange,  
whore fowks fra aw nuiks o the world meet  
togidder, to buy an sell aw things at iver  
thou can nyam. 'Tmidst ont's like a bee-  
hive, but stands 't top o lang freestan legs,  
wid a girt round winda i' the crown ont, an  
like a wide house round about legs, at covers  
as mickel grund as t' tarn at t' Gowd-Ark  
inn, thou kenst. I saw o plyace tha caw cas-  
sel, whore a man they caw Tennant leaves,  
he's stuart ov Ireland for our king, t' lword  
mear ov Dublin's his heed searvant; and fwok  
sed he went thro' hell to kurk ivry Sunday.  
I thout it had been some street lwonnin, map-  
pen, at tha cawt sa, but I fairly saw him  
stannin like a duir steed, raised about twea  
yards o the yearth, but I think he was chain-  
ed tu th' spot, becose he dudnt stur, mappen  
deed; but it was a dark black lwonnin, co-  
vered owre wi black hooses, an I persuadet  
my fuit to carry me a good way off sic curi-  
osity's, for I was amayst freetint to deeth,  
but it was varra weel I had strenth to run  
away. Now thou may be sure I gey my com-  
rad a deevlish lesson for trailin me throu hell,  
he's flait o nout, but carryt me to parish  
kurk; its as big as a town for girtness, an  
as menny fwok at it; there was hoaf a duz-  
zen o preasts at wark, but weed nobbut staid  
a bit when summet they caw roworgins be-  
gan a beelin like a hundred mad bulls, an as



menny lile lads i thar sarks began a screemin murder, I think, for ivry beel was like thunner. my feet then carryt me without persuadin, in a calleevir owr fwok an aw at was imme way, till I gat into a a girt feeld a mile aboot, tha cawd it Steben's green, I think efter a man on a girt gray nag, at was stanin a-top on a lile hoose i' t' midst ont; heed his sword drawn, but he durstnt git off for want o room. I think tha sed he'd been fretint as I was, but I was sa fretint I hardly knew what I dud or sed; but I saw anuder man o t' top of a lile hoose, i' th' midst of a girt street lwonnin; I think they were bruders, for their cwdats were like a slated hoos side, an tha war as pale as deeth i' th' face, like mesell; round t' swoar cawd feeld was t' finest gravel gate thou iver stept on, an there was hundreds an thousands o fwoks stavelin aboot ont. I began to be as mad as I was at cwolly, when it brak t' neck o t' bell wether, at tha waddent help t' man on his own nag when it was amyst dark; I was mad ane swet for feer, and durst not say a word becose there was sa menny three nuikt hat men theer an lyadies as tha caw them, (I'd better been in Borrodale.) I hev oft thout sen if we hed yan o them lyadies amang our bigg, she wad sarra to keep t' crows oft bravely. I ast a man at I kent what was t' matter wi sum o th' wummon fwok at tha war sa bryad tea way, an he telt me it was a fashion to weer huips;

nut a badden nowther if it keeps their legs togidder, for there was sum o them varra bonny; but I waddent hev yan o them for a wife if she had aw Borrodale, without they'd doff their huips when they gang to bed, for they are as bryad as enny bed in Borrodale, an thou knows there wad be nea room but a-top o them an what sleep cud yan get a-top of a whick bed? Hang them thyar aw white-headed, like our weet miller lasses, an tha talk an yilp like mice. I wonder what tha see, at fancy sic, but tha hev nice lile fuits, maks me think they wad prove nimmel shepherts ov our brant fells; an we wad learn them to sov an clip, an the huip pockets wad be varra sarviceable to put a lam in ov aider side in a coold mornin i' spring, when thair starvt amyast, and get lile milk; but to be shwort, as our preast says in his sarment, I hednt time to think ov aw this when I sawt, for my fuit ran wimme thro amang fwok an owr fwok so fast, I fretint them. They thout that th' donnet was imme, they mud ha thout reet, if they'd thout t' donnet hed setten me forrat, for if tha keep sek farlies o purpos to fretin fwoks, there's nea matter how menny o them be trodden to deeth: but I'll promise thee I niver stopt till I gatt to a sea nag at cum tuv Ingran, an I was seek agyan afwore I gat hame, I cud nowther eat nor drink aw the time, an if thou soe me now, thou cuddent telt me be a frosk, at had been hung up bith



heels in a sunshine, an dryt to deeth, for Ise as thin as lintern leets.

I think thou munnet expect to see me this month, this is three days at hame, an I've a stomach fit to eat t' hórse ehint t' stable. I git five myals a-day, an a snack when I gang to bed. I hwop Ise git strang agyan or it be lang, an than I shall come an see thee. This is nobbut like the clock when its giving warnin to strike, to what I shall tell thee when I cum.

My kind lyuiv to thee, and may gyud luck keep thee fra aw ats bad, an dunnet be keen o gaugin abroad for fear the donnet git thee.

## GLOSSARY

OF THE

## PROVINCIAL WORDS.



- AMACKILY**, in some fashion  
*Ast*, asked  
*Brant*, steep  
*Bryad*, broad  
*Brudders*, brothers  
*Cwols*, coals  
*Cawt*, called  
*Cwoats*, coats, garments of any kind  
*Cuddent*, could not  
*Donnet*, a Cumberland term for devil  
*Ehint*, behind  
*Forrat*, forward  
*Frosk*, a frog  
*Girt*, great  
*Gangin*, going  
*Helter*, a horse collar made of hemp which is frequently used as a bridle



- Hworns*, horns  
*Huips*, hoops  
*Imme*, in, or within me  
*Kurk*, church  
*Lwonnins*, lanes, here used for streets  
*Lile*, little  
*Luive*, love  
*Myakin*, making or doing  
*Mappen*, perhaps  
*Mickle*, much  
*Nobbut*, only  
*Nuikt*, with corners  
*Oppent*, opened  
*Ryaps*, ropes  
*Sarra*, serve  
*Thisan*, this  
*Towert*, towards  
*Tudder*, the other  
*Varra*, very  
*Waddent*, would not  
*Wimma*, with me  
*Yal*, ale,  
*Yats*, gates  
*Yilp*, a term here used to express the chir-  
 ping of birds, mice, &c.

FINIS.



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