

Author: William Humphrey Marshall (1745-1818)

Text type: Glossary

Date of composition: 1796

Editions: 1787, 1796, 1873, 1982, 2005

Source text:

Marshall, William Humphrey 1873. "Provincialisms of West Devonshire (1796)." Walter W. Skeat. ed. *Reprinted Glossaries I*. London: Published for the English Dialect Society by N. Trübner: 69-75.

e-text

Access and transcription: March 2015

Number of words: 3,358

Dialect represented: West Devonshire

Produced by María F. García-Bermejo Giner

Copyright © 2015– DING, The Salamanca Corpus, Universidad de Salamanca



SERIES B.

REPRINTED GLOSSARIES

- I.- NORTH OF ENGLAND WORDS; FROM 'A TOUR TO THE CAVES,' BY J. H.; 1781.
- II. PROVINCIALISMS OF EAST YORKSHIRE; BY MR. MARSHALL; 1788.
- III. PROVINCIALISMS OF EAST NORFOLK; BY MR. MARSHALL; 1787
- IV. PROVINCIALISMS OF THE VALE OF GLOCESTER; BY MR. MARSHALL; 1789.
- V. PROVINCIALISMS OF THE MIDLAND COUNTIES; BY MR. MARSHALL; 1790.
- VI. PROVINCIALISMS OF WEST DEVONSHIRE; BY MR. MARSHALL; 1796.**
- VII. A GLOSSARY OF WORDS USED IN THE WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE;
BY MR. WILLAN; 1811.

EDITED BY THE

REV. WALTER W. SKEAT, M. A.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE ENGLISH DIALECT SOCIETY,
BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

MDCCCLXXIII

[iii]

INTRODUCTION TO PART I.

The study of English Dialects has hitherto lain under several disadvantages, one of which is the difficulty of consulting the various works that have appeared on the subject. Many glossaries have been issued in the form of mere appendices to works upon very different subjects, whence two hindrances at once arise. First, it is not always easy to find them, or to ascertain the titles of the works containing them; and secondly, the student has then, to purchase the work, probably a large or scarce one, and perhaps both, for the mere sake of some five or six pages in it. This necessarily involves trouble and expense, whilst the glossary is in a very unhandy form after all. These impediments are all removed by the issue of such reprints as those contained in this volume. The first seven glossaries save the space, and a large part of the expense, of no less than *eleven octavo volumes*, and *one in quarto*, whilst at the same time it is easy to turn from one to the other by merely turning over the leaves.

It is not necessary to say much about the books containing the glossaries, because a short account of each work is in each case prefixed. It is, however, as well to state here that all comment has been carefully refrained from, except in a very few cases where a remark seemed absolutely requisite. It will readily be understood that the authors make their statements for what they are worth, and that they occasionally utter opinions which probably no member of the English Dialect Society would endorse; as when, for example, Mr Marshall talks about the Vale of Pickering being so secluded that probably no Roman, Dane, or *Saxon*, ever set foot in it (p. 17). A few prefatory remarks may still, however, find place here. In Glossary I, the author gives us small clue as to the locality of his words, as he simply labels them 'North of England.' Since, however, his place of residence was Burton-in-Kendal, and his work treats of the Caves in the West-Riding of Yorkshire, we may perhaps refer the majority of them to Westmoreland, the West of Yorkshire, and the Northern part of Lancashire. His Introductory Remarks are very sensible, though we may perhaps demur to the opinion that many of the words are of Greek extraction; still we may well be grateful to him for 'not having attempted to

derive any of them.' It is perhaps proper to add that the parts of speech (as *v.* for verb, *sb.* for substantive, &c.) are duly noted by J. H. and Dr

[iv]

Willan only, but they have been supplied in Mr Marshall's glossaries also, for the sake of greater distinctness. In the next set of Glossaries, Nos. II—VI, all by the same author, Mr W. H. Marshall, we may lay most stress upon the first of them, which deals with the Provincialisms of East Yorkshire. Here the author was at home, and dealing with words current in his native district: for which reason we are the more grateful to him for breaking through his first design, that of recording *only* such words as related to rural affairs; a design which, in his other glossaries, he carries out rather strictly.

His prefatory remarks cannot wholly be relied upon; even in dealing with the pronunciation of his own neighbourhood, he seems often to be at fault, partly, no doubt, from the common inability to express the sounds which he intended. Mr Ellis took considerable pains to ascertain his *real* meaning, but without much success. What is intended by 'the diphthong *ea*' on p. 18 is indeed a puzzle; whilst in the 'Explanations' at p. 21, he talks of the *aw* in *word*, on which Mr Ellis remarks that '*aw* ought to mean [aew],¹ but the example is utterly confusing, since *word* in S. Cleveland and the East Coast line is [wod].' It is an additional difficulty that the author's remarks refer to the last century instead of to the present.

So also, at p. 56, with respect to the remark that 'in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Somersetshire, &c., the asperate consonants are pronounced with vocal positions,' Mr Ellis remarks as follows: —

'This is altogether misleading; [th, f, s] generally become, when initial only, [dh, v, z], and [thr] becomes [dr]. The changes of [t, p] into [d, b] I have not heard of. It is as wrong as the following account of Welsh, which is a grammatical, not a purely phonetic mutation. The *a* slender much more usually becomes [ee] than [aay]; in fact, *name* is the only word I am certain of in which such a change takes place, though even here, at any rate at Tetbury, [neem] is commoner. It is *ai* or *ay* which becomes (or rather remains) [aay] throughout the West. In Somerset, *fire*, *fair* are [vuuy'h', vaay'h']. The long *i* is not

The Salamanca Corpus: Provincialisms of West Devonshire (1796)

[ey], but varies as [uy, uuy, uay, ua'y], and [uuy] is the best to take. The [wom] or [wuum] for *home*, on p. 57, is right.'

It ought to be remarked, further, in explanation of some of Mr Marshall's *dicta*, that a careful examination of his language will reveal the fact that he was so unfortunate as to hold a theory, than which nothing can be more prejudicial to all scientific treatment of the subject. Moreover, as is usual in such cases, his theory was wrong, and that to such an extent that we can but wonder how he came by it. His notion clearly was that the true original form of English was Welsh; and if this be borne in mind, the whole tenour of his remarks is at once apparent. Thus, at p. 17, the reason why the men of the vale of Pickering spoke such idiomatic English is because

Mr. C. C. Robinson suggests [ao] as the sound intended.

[v]

they were purely *British*; 'no Roman, Dane, not Saxon ever setfoot' in the Moreland Dales. Hence their language abounds 'in *native words*.' This again is the reason why, at p. 56, he speaks of a certain habit as 'common to the West of England and to Wales, a circumstantial evidence that the inhabitants of the western side of the island [meaning the West of England and Wales] are descended *from one common origin*.' A moment later, he is somewhat troubled by the variation between the men of Gloucester and of Wales in their 'pronunciation¹ of the consonants,' which to him is so 'striking' that 'one might *almost* declare them descendants of two distinct colonies.' The introduction of this saving 'almost' is very remarkable. Again, at p. 30, he says of *heeal*, our modern *hale*, that it is 'probably the *old British* word.'

Strange as this notion of our being all Welshmen may appear now, it was probably by no means peculiar to our Glossarist. This receives some illustration from the fact that, in the last century, we did not always call ourselves Englishmen, but often *Britons*, just as the Americans are commonly made to talk about 'Britishers' and 'the British lion.' It is not worth while to multiply instances; all can remember how Thomson declared that 'Britons never will be slaves,' and how Campbell, in his stanzas on the threatened invasion in 1803, burst out with—'In a Briton's sweet home shall a spoiler abide?.' On

the other hand, it is not improbable that the labours of the English Dialect Society may hereafter make it plain, that the amount of Welsh amongst our more homely words has been somewhat underrated.

Mr Marshall greatly improved his glossaries by frequently giving references in them to other parts of his books in which the words glossed are more fully illustrated. Thus, at p. 46, Glossary B. 3, s. v. *Anbury*, he refers to vol. ii. p. 33, of his work. In order that these additional illustrations might not be lost, the quotations have all been copied out and inserted in their proper places. Thus, in this instance, the passage meant is the one beginning—'the *anbury* is a large excrescence,' and ending with 'offensively,' inserted immediately after the reference. Indeed, a few explanations have been inserted even where *no* reference is indicated by the author ; as, e. g., s. v. *Croom*, on p. 47.

With respect to Dr Willan's Glossary, No. VII, Mr C. C. Robinson remarks as follows:—

'There is a certain want of character about this Glossary. Orthographical peculiarities are not made apparent, and one knows no more about the dialect-*speech* after looking through the Glossary than before. In those dales are such customs as (1) the dropping of final *ll* in such words as *call*, *ball*; (2) the change of *d* for *t*, in

¹ It will be readily understood that is is no misprint for 'pronunciation.'

The spelling of the originals has been preserved.

[vi]

words like *angered*, *flayed* (afraid); (3) the substitution of *e* for other vowels in several common words like *sit*, *was*, *not*, *but*; (4) the dental *t*, *d* [t', d']; (5) the slight use, remarkable for Yorkshire, of *th'* for the usual *t'* as an abbreviation of *the*; (6) the insertion of *w* before *o* long, as in *morn* [mwuoh'n], *notion* [nwuoh'shun], *stone* [stwuo'h'n], and other peculiarities one would never dream of through reading the doctor's list. The notes on folk-lore shew a want of familiarity with the home-life of the peasantry, and one is inclined to smile at some of the pompous inferences indulged in. However it is a good old-fashioned word-list, and requires little weeding.'

The Salamanca Corpus: Provincialisms of West Devonshire (1796)

It is unnecessary to do more than indicate the interest that attaches to many of the words in these Glossaries. With respect, for example, to the phrase 'keel the pot,' in Shakespeare, Mr Halliwell decides that it simply means to *cool* the pot, and not to scum or skim it, and we may allow that the A.S. *célan* merely means *to cool*; yet we may as well note Mr Hutton's definition at p. 8, that in the North of England it means 'to keep the pot from boiling over.' It is a pity that he did not describe exactly how this is done. Another Shakesperian word is *Rack*, at p. 10. *Renable*, also at p. 10, occurs in Piers the Plowman; so also does *Dubbler*, p. 26. *Stevvon* (p. 39). occurs in Chaucer; whilst *Uvver* (p. 41) well illustrates the 'overlippe' in his Prologue to the Canterbury Tales. A large number of similar illustrations may be discovered.

The excellent alliterative proverb at p. 26 (s. v. *Dow*)—'He neither dees nor dows'—is worth notice, for its pith; one can imagine it as well expressing a hungry heir's dissatisfaction with some rich old relative who keeps him in a state of constant suspense, and will neither do one thing nor the other.

We are indebted to Mr W. Aldis Wright, of Trinity College, for the loan of the volume containing Glossary B. 2, to Mr F. K. Robinson, of Whitby, for his kind present of a copy of Glossary B. 7,¹ to Mr Shelly for some notes upon Glossary B. 6, and to Mr A. J. Ellis for some remarks upon pronunciation, made at a time when he was even more than usually busy with the preparation of work for the press.

Cambridge, Dec. 16, 1873.

Mr Robinson's copy contained Dr Willan's Glossary only, and his present was accordingly all the more acceptable. It would have been hard to purchase a single volume of a long set like that of the Archæologia.

[69]

VI. PROVINCIALISMS OF WEST DEVONSHIRE.

[THE following Glossary, chiefly of agricultural terms, is taken from Marshall's Rural Economy of the West of England, 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1796; vol. i, pp. 323-332. The quotations introduced are from the same work. Thus, under Barton, p. 101 means p.

101 of vol. i, where the extract given may be found. Mr Shelly has kindly added a few notes, which are marked J. S. The pronunciations marked (in Glossic) are also inserted on Mr Shelly's authority.]

Apple-drone, *sb.* [a] wasp; the ordinary name. [Rather *apple-drain*; *drone* I never heard.— J. S.]

Arrishes, *sb. pl.* stubbles.

Arrish-mows, *sb. pl.* field stacklets. See vol. i. p. 171. '*Arrish- mows* or field Stacklets.

In a late harvest and in a moist climature, like that of West Devonshire and Cornwall, especially after a wet summer, which seldom fails of filling the butts of corn-sheaves with green succulent herbage, —securing the ears from injury, and at the same time exposing the butts to the influence of the atmosphere, is, self-evidently, an admirable expedient. The size of *Arrishmows* varies. Those which I have observed, generally contained about a waggon-load of sheaves. But they may be made of any size from a shock of ten sheaves to a load. The method of making them is this: a sort of cone, or rather square pyramid, being formed with sheaves set upon their butts, and leaning towards the center, the workman gets upon them, on his knees; an assistant putting sheaves, in their proper places, before him, while he crawls round the "*mow*," *treading* them, in this manner, with his knees, applied about the banding-place; and continuing thus to lay course after course, until the *mow* be deemed high enough: observing to contract the dimensions as it rises in height, and to set the sheaves more and more upright, until they form, at the top, a sharp point, similar to that of nine sheaves set up as a shock; and like this it is capped with an inverted sheaf, either of corn or of "reed:" the principle and the form, when finished, being the same in both; namely, a square pyramid.' [*Pronounced* er ish moe,wz.]

Ballard, *sb.* a castrate ram.

Barker, *sb.* a rubber, or whetstone.

Barton, *sb.* a large farm. See p. 101. '*Barton*, a name which perhaps was originally given to demesne lands, or manor farms,

but "which now seems to be applied to any large farm in contradistinction to the more common description of farms.'

Beat, *sb.* the roots and soil subjected to the operation of 'burning beat.' See vol. i. p. 141. '*Burning beat*, answering to the paring and burning, or more technically, sodburning—of other districts. This operation in agriculture has been practised in this Western part of the island from time beyond which memory nor tradition reaches.... In an old tract which I saw some years ago in the British Museum, this operation is termed *Devonshiring*, and it is to this day called *Denshiring* in different districts.' [Burning beat is *pronounced* bu'h'nen bait. To *Devonshire* ground is a proverb mentioned in Puller's Worthies, under Devonshire. —J. S.]

Beating-axe, [*now generally called* bid'iks] *sb.* See as above. 'There are, at present, three distinct methods of separating the sward or sod—provincially the *spine*—from the soil. The one is performed with a *Beating-axe* namely, a large adze—some five or six inches wide, and ten or twelve inches long; crooked, and somewhat hollow or dishing. With this, which was probably the original instrument employed in the operation, large chips, shavings, or sods are struck off.... In using it, the workman appears, to the eye of a stranger at some distance, to be *beating* the surface, as with a beetle, rather than to be chipping off the sward with an edgetool. This operation is termed *hand-beating*.'

Been, *sb.* a with, withey, or band; a twisted twig.

Beesom, **Bizzom**, *sb.* *spartium scoparium*, the broom plant: hence a name of the sweeping-broom of the housewife.

Beverage, [biv'eri] *sb.* water cider, or small cider.

Blind-nettle, *sb.* *galeopsis tetrahit*, wild hemp.

Burrow, *sb.* a hillock or heap; as 'stone-burrows,' 'beat-burrows:' hence, probably, *Barrow*, tumulus. [*Barrow* is used near Plymouth for a heap of stone. —J.S.]

Buss, *sb.* a grass calf. See p. 249. 'Perhaps originally *bosses*, or wood-calves (in contradistinction to house-calves); namely, calves suffered to run with their dams, in the woods or forest-lands.'

Butt, *sb.* a close-bodied cart; as dung-*butt*, or wheel-cart : gurry- *butt* or sledge-cart:

ox.- *butt*, horse- *butt*, [slide- *butt*.]

Butt-load, *sb.* about six seams.

Caddel, *sb.* *heracleum sphondilium*, cow-parsnip.

Cess, Zess, *sb.* a mow, in a barn.

Cheese, *sb.* the pile of pomage, in making cider.

Claw-ill, *sb.* the foul, in cattle.

Clouted cream, *sb.* cream raised by heat. See *Raw* and *Scald cream*.

Cob, Cobwall, *sb.* mudwall.

Conventional rents, *sb. pl.* the reserved rents of life leases.

Coomb, *sb.* a narrow meadowy bottom; generally, or always, between hanging woods.

Courtlage, [kautlej] *sb.* [a] farmyard. [Or, the yard, whetherpaved or unpaved, of a house in town or country. J. S.]

Cousin Betty, *sb.* a female changeling, real or counterfeit, who goes about the country to excite charity, as she does in Yorkshire, under the same name!

[71]

Crooks, *sb. pl.* a furniture of packhorses. See page 121. 'The furniture of pack-horses varies with the load to be carried. Hay, corn, straw, faggots, and other comparatively light articles of burden, are loaded between *crooks*; formed of willow-poles, about the thickness of sithe-handles, and seven or eight feet long, bent as ox-bows, but with one end much longer than the other. These are joined in pairs, with slight cross bars, eighteen inches to two feet long ; and each horse is furnished with two pair of these *crooks*, slung together, so as that the shorter and stronger ends shall lie easy and firmly against the pack saddle; the longer and lighter ends rising, perhaps, fifteen or more inches above the horses back, and standing four or five feet from each other. Within and between these *crooks* the load is piled and bound fast together.' See *Pots*.

Crow-bar, Bar-ire, *sb.* an iron crow.

Culvers, *sb. pl.* pigeons.

Culver-house, *sb.* pigeon-house or dove-cot.

Dashels, *sb. pl. cardui*, thistles (the ordinary name).

[**Denshiring**. See *Beat*.]

Drags, *sb. pl.* large harrows.

Draw, *v.* to carry or convey hay or corn on a waggon or sledge: most proper. See *Dray*.

[The verb is also *dray*, not *draw*; it is pronounced drai'y. J. S.]

Dray, *sb.* a sledge, for light produce, as hay or straw; query a corruption of *draw*?

Drudge, *sb.* a large team-rake. See page 125. 'The *drudge* is an implement peculiar, I believe, to this part of the island. It is a long, heavy, wooden-toothed woodentoothed rake; with the teeth broad, and set with the flat side foremost; drawn by oxen or horses, and used to collect the fragments of sward loosened by the plow and harrow, for the purpose of burning it.'

Earth-ridges, *sb. pl.* See p. 158. 'Earth-ridges are formed in the field, either with mold hacked from the borders of it, or with the soil of the area raised with the plow. The earth thus raised is broken into small fragments, and formed into long narrow beds. Upon these earth-ridges the stone lime is laid, and covered up with the out-skirts of the beds.'

Eaver, *sb. lolium perenne*, raygrass.

-Eth is in common use, as the termination of the third person singular: *hath*, *doth*, are also in ordinary use. [More often *-th*, e. g. [kumth] for *cometh*, [goath] for *goeth*, [runth] for *runneth*. J. S.]

Fairies, *sb. pl.* (pronounced *vairies*) [vaih'iz] squirrels! [Not the squirrel, but the polecat. —J. S.]

Fern-web, *sb. scarabæus horticola*, a small chaffer, injurious to the fruit of the apple-tree while very small.

Fetter-lock, *sb.* fetlock of a horse; by corruption, perhaps, [of] footlock.

Flapdock, [flap'i-dok] *sb. digitalis purpurea*, fox-glove.

French nuts, *sb. pl.* walnuts.

Frith, [vreeeth] *sb.* brush-wood.

Gale, *sb.* a castrate bull.

Greenside, *sb.* grass, turf, greensward.

Grey-bird, *sb.* the thrush, no doubt in contradistinction to

[72]

the black-bird, both being birds of song, and nearly of the same size; a simple, apt distinction.

Gurry-butt, *sb.* dung-sledge. See p. 121. 'The *gurry-butt*, or *dung-sledge*, of Devonshire, is a sort of sliding cart or barrow, usually of a size proper to be drawn by one horse : sometimes it is made larger ; . . . the sides and ends are about eighteen inches high, and are fixed, the load being discharged by overturning the carriage.' See *Butt* and *Slide-butt*.

Hack, *sb.* a one-ended mattock.

Ham-trees, *sb. pl.* hames.

Ham-wards, *sb. pl.* straw or rush collars for horses.

Hand-beating, *sb.* See p. 142. [See extract under *Beating-axe*.]

Hand-reaping, *sb.* ordinary reaping, contradistinct from *hewing*.

Haul-to, *sb.* a three-tined dung-drag.

Heal, [hel] *v.* to cover, as with slates.

Healing, Helling, *sb.* the slate covering of a roof; also the operation of slating ; hence,

Hellier, *sb.* a slater.

Herbery, *sb.* a cottage-garden, or herb-garden. [Lat. *herbarium*.]

Hewing, *sb.* a method of cutting wheat. See p. 168. 'This is a kind of mowing with one hand. The *yowing-hook* is formed much like the common sharp-edged hand reaping-hook of this and other places, but somewhat larger every way—longer, broader, and stouter; with a hooked knob at the end of the handle to prevent its slipping out of the hand. With this instrument, the corn is struck at, horizontally, and almost close to the ground, with the one hand; while the other hand and arm *strike* it at the same instant, about the middle of the straw, thus driving it, upright, against the standing corn: the workman taking a sweep round as much as will form a sheaf, and collecting the whole together in the centre into a sort of leaning cone; finally striking the hook

under its base to disengage it entirely from the soil, but still supporting it with the left or loose arm and the leg, until the hook be put beneath it to lift it, horizontally, to the band. . . . This practice is not peculiar to the West of England; it has long been in use in Kent and Surrey.'

Hine, [huyn] *sb.* bailiff, or farmsteward. [The word is generally written *hind*, though pronounced as marked. J. S.J

Hog-colts, *sb. pl.* yearling colts.

Hogs, *sb. pl.* yearling sheep.

Holm, [hoam or hoamen-tree] *sb. ilex aquifolium*, holly.

Juncate, Junket, *sb.* coagulated milk, eaten in the undisturbed state of coagulation, with sugar, spices, and clouted cream.

Keezer, *sb.* a sort of sieve.

Lead, *v.* to carry trusses on horseback. See p. 167. 'Formerly, it seems, loose corn which had been cut with the sithe, was led in "trusses" or large bundles, each a horse-load, bound together with two ropes, and laid across a "panel" or pad-saddle, and steadied or led by a woman or youth from the field. This was called *truss-leading* or *leading*—a term which is common at this time, in the North of England and in Scotland for carrying, hauling, or drawing hay, corn, or other article on a carriage.' See *Draw*.

[73]

Lear, Leary, *adj.* empty, as an unloaded cart or waggon.

Leat, *sb.* an artificial rill, rivulet, or brook. See vol. ii. p. 269. 'Plymouth *Leat*. This artificial brook is taken out of the river Mew, towards its source, at the foot of Sheepstor Tor, in a wild mountain dell. *Leat*, *Late*, or *Lake*, as it is sometimes pronounced, is perhaps a corruption of *lead* or conductor, being applied, I believe, to any artificial channel for conducting water.'

Lent-rose, *sb.* (*pl. lent-rosen*) the narcissus or daffodil.

Linhay, [lin'i] *sb.* an open shed.

Masts, Mess (?), *sb. pl.* acorns.

Mazed, *adj.* silly, idiotic.

Mell, *v.* to mix, as lime and earth.

Mock, *sb.* pomage, or ground fruit.

Mores, [mau'z] *sb. pl.* roots, whether of grass or trees (the ordinary name).

Mow, [moe] *sb.* a rick or stack.

Mow-hay, [moe'i or mue'i] *sb.* stackyard. [The surname *Bowhay*, common near Plymouth, is pronounced by the people bue'i.]

Necessity, *sb.* a base kind of spirit. See p. 236. 'A vile spirit which is drawn, by the housewives of Devon, from the grounds and lees of the fermenting- room. These dregs are distilled (of course illegally) by means of a porridge-pot, with a tin head fixed over it, and communicating with a straight pipe, passing through a hogshead of water; the liquor being passed twice through this imperfect apparatus. It, of course, comes over extremely empyreumatic; and is drank in a recent state, under the appropriate name of *necessity*.'

Not, Knot, *pp.* polled, as sheep. [*Knot* is bad spelling.]

Oak-webb, *sb.* *scarabæus melolontha*, the chaffer or may-bug.

Ordain, *v.* to order.

Ordained, *pp.* intended (common).

Overland farm, *sb.* a parcel of land, without a house to it.

Passage, *sb.* ferry; the ordinary name.

Pike, Peek, Pick, *sb.* a prong or hay-fork. Query—analogous with war-*pike*? [Yes.]

Pitch, *v.* to fling sheaves upon a stack or mow. See p. 177. 'The sheaves being left upon the ground... are *flung*, provincially *pitched*, from the point of a prong formed very narrow in the tines, over the head of the *pitcher*, a boy placing the sheaves fairly before him. I have seen a man thus *pitching* sheaves up to the roof of a stack above

The Salamanca Corpus: Provincialisms of West Devonshire (1796)

the ordinary height, throwing them several feet above the reach of his fork. The spring is got by the arms and the knee jointly; or is done at arms length. When the height is very great, or the sheaves heavy, two men's exertions, it seems, are joined: one man placing the tines of his pick under the "stem" or handle of the other! Much probably depends on the forming of the tines of the prong; they contract upwards to an acute angle; the sheaves, of course, part from them with a degree of spring, given by the straw compressed between them.'

Plansher, *sb.* a chamber-floor. [The word is *planshen*; *plansher* I have never heard. — J. S.]

Plow, *sb.* a team of oxen. See *Sewl*.

Plum, *adj.* light and puffy, as some soils. [Also *plim*, for any

[74]

thing light and puffy. —J. S.]

Pook, *sb.* a cock of hay.

Pots, *sb. pl.* furniture of packhorses. See p. 122. 'Dung, sand, materials of buildings, roads, &c., are carried in *potts*, or strong coarse panniers, slung together, like the *crooks*, and as panniers are usually slung; the dung, especially if long and light, being ridged up, over the saddle. The bottom of each *pot* is a falling door, on a strong and simple construction.' See *Crook*.

Potwater, *sb.* water for household purposes.

Pound-house, *sb.* cider manufactory. See p. 228. 'The apples being thrown into a large trough or tub, five or six persons, standing round the vessel, pounded them with large clubshaped wooden pestils, whose ends are guarded and made rough . . . with the heads of nails. Hence, no doubt, the epithet *pound* is applied to the house, &c., in which the whole business of cider-making is performed.'

Raw cream, *sb.* cream raised in the natural way, not scalded or clouted. See *Clouted cream*. [Always called *ream* [reem], or *raw ream*. *Cream* is applied only to scalded cream. —J. S.]

Red hay, *sb.* mow-burnt hay; in distinction to 'green hay,' or hay which has taken a

moderate heat, and to 'vinny hay,' or that which is mouldy.

Reed, *sb.* unbruised straw, of wheat or rye.

Roo, [ruw] *adj.* rough. [Roughcast (see under *Slap-dash*) is always called ruw'-kaast.]

Scald cream, *sb.* cream raised by heat, 'clouted cream.'

Seam, *sb.* a horse-load, or three hundred-weights.

Sewl, Sule, pronounced *zule* [zeol or zuel], *sb.* a plow (the only name). See *Plow*.

Sheedwood, *sb.* rough poles of topwood.

Shippen, *sb.* an ox-house.

Skirting, *sb.* See p. 144. 'For *skirting*, the common share is used, but made perhaps somewhat wider than when it is used in the ordinary operation of plowing. In this mode of using the plow, little more than half the sward is pared off; turning the part raised upon a line of unmoved turf. . . . The paring of turf in this case is from one to two inches thick on the coulter margin, decreasing in thickness to a thin feather-edge by which it adheres to the unmoved sward.' [This is part of the operation of sod-burning.]

Skoyes, *sb. pl.* reaps, shoves, grips, or bundles, of corn; unbound sheaves.

Slap-dash, *sb.* rough-cast, or liquid coating of buildings.

Slat-axe, *sb.* a mattock, with a short axe-end.

Slide-butt, *sb.* dung-sledge. See *Gurry-butt*.

Small, *adj.* low, as the water of a river, &c.

Souant, [zue'ent] *adj.* fair, even, regular (a hackneyed word).

Spade, *v.* to pare or breast-plow.

Spars, *sb. pl.* thatching-rods.

Spine, *sb.* turf, sod, sward. See *Beating-axe*.

Spire, *sb.* *arundo*, a reed.

Staff, *sb.* a measure of nine feet, half a customary rod.

Stem, *sb.* the handle of a fork.

Stickle, *adj.* steep, as a road; or rapid, as a stream.

Stroll, *sb.* a narrow slip of land.

Stroyl, *sb.* couch, or other weeds,

[75]

or roots of weeds, especially what harrow up, or rake out of the soil; whether in the field or the garden.

Survey, *sb.* a sort of auction. See p. 71. 'The disposal of farms for three lives is generally by what are provincially termed *surveys*, a species of auction, at which candidates bid for the priority of refusal, rather than for the thing itself; a species of sale common to every species of property. If the highest bidder does not reach the seller's price, the bidding is inconclusive; the seller names his price, and the highest bidder has the first option of choice or refusal. If he refuse, the next highest bidder takes his choice, and so of the rest.'

Till, *v.* to sow and harrow in the seed, to seminate.

Tong-tree, *sb.* the pole of an oxcart, or waggon.

Tor, [taah'] *sb.* a ragged pointed hill; as Brent-*Tor*, Boo-*Tor*, High-*Tor*.

Tormenting, *sb.* sub-hoing, or sub-plowing. See p. 296. '*Tormenting* is performed with a subplow of many shares, which are fixed in a triangular frame, supported by wheels; these shares or sub-hoes, working a few inches beneath the surface . . . the *tormenting* being done previously to the plowing, for which it is an admirable preparation, as not only separating the roots of weeds, but breaking the soil, and rendering it the more obedient to the harrow.'

Trone, *sb.* [a] trench, or drain.

Trusses, *sb. pl.* bundles of corn or straw, to be led on horseback. See p. 167. [See extract under *Lead*.]

Tucker, *sb.* [a] fuller.

Tucking-mill, *sb.* fulling-mill.

Turf, *sb.* peat.

Vags, *sb. pl.* turves, for fuel. Qu. —a corruption of *flags*? See *Prov. of Norfolk* [p. 48, above.]

Vat, *sb.* the bed of the cider-press.

Vell, *v.* See p. 143. 'For *velling*, the share is made wide, with the angle or outer point of

the wing or fin turned upward, to separate the turf entirely from the soil. [Part of the operation of sod-burning.]

Vetty, [vit'i] *adj.* apposite, suitable; opposed to *Wish*, q. v. [Better spelt *vitty*.]

Vinny, *adj.* mouldy.

Vorrage, *sb.* earth collected for melling with lime. See *Mell*.

Wants, *sb. pl.* moles.

Whitaker, *sb.* a species of quartz. 'Intermixed with the soil, and often united with fragments of slate-rock, is found, in blocks and fragments of various sizes, a species of crystal or quartz—provincially *whittaker* which in colour is mostly white, sometimes tinged with red or rust colour,' p. 16.

White witch, *sb.* a good creature, which has the power of counteracting the evil designs of *Black* witches. Such kind spirits formerly were found in Yorkshire, and are still spoken of there by the same name. [The *white witch* is not a spirit, but a human being, man or woman, who affords help to those who are 'illwished.'—J. S.]

Wish, *adj.* inapt, bad, unfit, as '*wish* weather,' or any '*wish* thing,' as a stone, or a piece of timber ill-suited to the purpose for which it is applied or required (another hackneyed epithet). See *Vetty*.

Yoke of oxen, *sb.* a pair of oxen.

Yowing. See *Hewing*.