FOUR DIALECT WORDS.
CLEM, LAKE, NESH, AND OSS,
THEIR MODERN DIALECTAL RANGE, MEANINGS,
PRONUNCIATION, ETYMOLOGY,
AND
EARLY OR LITERARY USE.

BY THOMAS HALLAM.

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1885
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CORRIGENDA.

Page 16, delete line 6 — “As we shall see, both are derived from the Anglo-Saxon”.
“20, line 29 — (Division) “I” should be “II”.
“31, line 6 from bottom — Senyn should be Seuyn.

SUMMARY OF DETAILS.

I. DIALECTAL RANGE: —
   i. From Printed Books: —
      No. of Glossaries 47 35 50 39
      “ Counties —
      In England 17 7 20 13
      “ Wales 1 1 1
      “ Ireland 2
      Also —
      N. of England 14 2 15 8
      N. of Scotland 46 7 45 21
   ii. From my own Researches:*
      No. of Counties 14 2 15 8
      “ Places 46 7 45 21

II. EARLY OR LITERARY USAGE: —
   Period 1362 to 12th cent. c. 1200 1325 to
   1649 to 1570 to 1649 c. 1400
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

No. of Books or Works 7 32 35 2

* I may here explain that in recording the “Phonology of English Dialects”, what is primarily required is the dialectal pronunciation of literary or received English words, in order that the varied forms of pronunciation may be compared for all English counties; this will be done in Mr. Ellis’s great work on the subject now in preparation, which will form Part V. of his Early English Pronunciation. Hence, pure dialectal words, as clem, nesh, oss, &c., are not available for this general comparison, their area of usage being only parts of the country respectively; consequently, these have not received the same degree of attention as representative received English words, such as father, mother, day, green, house, home, night, noon &c. Had special inquiries been made during my dialectal tours, the number of places at which these words are respectively current might have been much extended.

[vii]  
PREFACE.

§ 1. The title page indicates with almost sufficient completeness the purport and scope of this contribution to the English Dialect Society’s publications. Selecting four characteristic and expressive words which are still current in our Dialects, but have long been lost to the standard language, I have endeavoured to ascertain the range of each, so far as that is discoverable from published glossaries and my own personal researches for a number of years. I have given the meaning and shades of meaning of the words as they are employed in the several localities, together with the variations in the pronunciation; the last-named being the result of actual personal hearing of the every-day use of the words by natives, noted down during my somewhat extensive phonological travels in about twenty-five English counties, and Denbighshire and Flintshire (detached), in Wales.

§ 2. To complete the examination, I have added examples of the use of the four words by Early and Middle English writers, as well as illustrative colloquial sentences or specimens from the glossarists; and I have ventured, with the assistance of eminent philologists (see § 6), to give the etymology of each word.

§ 3. Apart from the pronunciations which I have been able to record, the differences in which are suggestive and valuable, it will be observed that I have brought into one view information which was previously scattered over a wide area. The labour involved in such a collation has necessarily been considerable, and the result, I trust, will be of some appreciable service to students of the history of our language.

[viii]
PREFACE.

§ 4. With respect to Early and Middle English quotations, it was thought advisable in the case of Clem, Lake, and Nesh to give a considerable number, in order fully to exemplify what we may term their “literary life”.

§ 5. The dialectal range, as indicated both from the printed glossaries, and the writer’s researches, shows the necessity that local glossaries should be inclusive.

§ 6. The etymological section on each word has been submitted to Professor Skeat, of Cambridge, who has most kindly and carefully checked the same, and corrected where necessary. I am also indebted to him for a special paragraph on the etymology of Oss; also, for three of the five Early English quotations for the same word.

I have also to acknowledge, with thanks, courteous communications from Dr. J. A. H. Murray and Professor Rhys, of Oxford, on the etymology of Oss.

The correspondence from the three scholars just named contained likewise several interesting and valuable suggestions. This help has been most courteously and readily granted in response to my inquiries.

My thanks are also hereby tendered to informants in various counties, for special communications on the meaning and use of the word or form Lark = a frolic, sport, &c., in the several localities. See pp. 35-37. These are all people with whom I had interviews previously, in the course of my dialectal travels, and who had willingly given me valuable information on their respective dialects.

THOMAS HALLAM.

Manchester, August, 1887.


CLEM.

The modern use of this word, with its variant Clam, is dialectal, and has a wide range. It was in literary use in Early and Middle English. I propose to treat the word as follows: —

A. — First, and chiefly, modern dialectal range, localities, orthography, and senses or
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

I. From Glossaries.
   i. Table of Localities and Authors.
   ii. Quotations, or illustrative sentences.

II. From my own researches.
   i. Table of Localities.
   ii. Illustrative sentences.

III. Correspondence from the *Manchester City News*.

B. — Secondly, ETYMOLOGY and LITERARY USAGE IN EARLY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH.
   I. Etymology.
   II. Quotations from Early and Middle English.

APPENDIX: The word starve.

A. — MODERN DIALECTAL RANGE.
   I. from glossaries or printed books.
   i. a table or list of the glossaries
      in which the word is found. In the first column they are numbered consecutively; the
      second contains the localities; the third the authors’ names and dates; and the fourth the
      orthography and reference to the two meanings or acceptations, viz.:

      1 = To starve for want of food, or from having insufficient food; and,
      2 = To be parched with thirst.

      In giving the places or districts, I proceed in series from north to south.

[2]

CLEM:

A TABLE OR LIST OF GLOSSARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Author and date</th>
<th>Orthography and acceptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>North Country</td>
<td>John Ray, 1674</td>
<td>clem’d, clam’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>North of England</td>
<td>Rev. J. Hutton, 1781</td>
<td>clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>F. Grose, 1790</td>
<td>clamm’d, clemm’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Author and Date</td>
<td>Dialect Word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>North Country</td>
<td>J. T. Brockett, 1825</td>
<td>clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>Rev. J. C. Atkinson, 1868</td>
<td>clam, clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Whitby District</td>
<td>F. K. Robinson, 1875</td>
<td>clemm’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mid-Yorkshire</td>
<td>C. C. Robinson, 1876</td>
<td>clam: very occasionally 1; usually 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Holderness</td>
<td>Ross, Stead &amp; Holderness, 1877</td>
<td>clammed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>West Riding</td>
<td>Robert Willan, 1811</td>
<td>clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Craven</td>
<td>Rev. W. Carr, 1824</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A. Bradford</td>
<td>B. Preston, Poems, 1872</td>
<td>clammin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Leeds District</td>
<td>Thoresby to Ray, 1703</td>
<td>clem’d, clam’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Leeds</td>
<td>C. C. Robinson, 1862</td>
<td>clamm’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Wakefield</td>
<td>W. Scott Banks, 1865</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Almondbury and</td>
<td>Rev. A. Easther &amp; Rev. T. Leeds, 1883</td>
<td>clam, clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Hallamshire (Sheffield District)</td>
<td>Rev. Joseph Hunter 1829</td>
<td>clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>A. C. Gibson, 1869</td>
<td>clemm’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>R. Ferguson, 1873</td>
<td>clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Cumberland &amp; West-</td>
<td>Poems, Songs, and Bal- lads, 1839</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>moorland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lancashire: —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Lonsdale</td>
<td>R. B. Peacock, in Clam Phil. Soc. Trans., 1867</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Furness</td>
<td>J. P. Morris, 1869</td>
<td>clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>J. Collier, 6 ed., 1757</td>
<td>clemm’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>J. H. Nodal and G. Milner, Part I., 1875</td>
<td>clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E., Mid., &amp; N. Ditto</td>
<td></td>
<td>clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Cheshire</td>
<td>R. Wilbraham, 2 ed., 1826; orig. in Archaeo-</td>
<td>clem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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*logia*, Vol. XIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Orthography and Acceptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Col. Egerton Leigh, 1877</td>
<td>clam or clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Robt. Holland, 1884</td>
<td>clem, clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Derbyshire</td>
<td>J. Sleigh, in <em>Reliquary</em></td>
<td>clam or clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Bakewell District)</td>
<td>for January, 1865</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>Miss Jackson, 1879</td>
<td>clem; clam on the Hereford border</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>T. Wright, 1880</td>
<td>clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>R. Nares, 1822</td>
<td>clamm’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>C. H. Poole, 1880</td>
<td>clam or clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Leicestershire</td>
<td>A. B. Evans, D. D., and his son S. Evans, LL. D., 1881</td>
<td>clamm, clam, clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>J. E. Brogden, 1866</td>
<td>clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Ditto (Manley &amp; Corringham)</td>
<td>Edward Peacock, 1877</td>
<td>clammed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[3]

Dialectal Range.

A Table or List of Glossaries — *(continued)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Orthography and Acceptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Northamptonshire</td>
<td>Clare, Poems on Rural Life and Scenery, <em>cir.</em> 1818</td>
<td>clamm’d [birds]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>T. Sternberg, 1851</td>
<td>clam’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Miss Baker, 1854</td>
<td>clam’d: applied to cattle which do not thrive for want of better pasture; but it more frequently denotes parched with thirst.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Warwickshire</td>
<td>W. Holloway, 1839</td>
<td>clam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Herefordshire</td>
<td>G. Cornwall Lewis, 1839</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

39 Worcestershire, West  Mrs. Chamberlain, 1882  clem  1
40 Ditto Upton-on-Severn  Rev. Canon Lawson, 1884  clam  1
41 East Anglia (Norfolk and Suffolk)  Rev. E. Forby, 1830  clam  1
42 Suffolk  Edward Moor, 1823  clammad  1
43 East  T. Wright, 1880  clam  1
44 Ditto  J. O. Halliwell, ed. 1874  clam, clem  1
45 Cornwall, West  Miss M. A. Courtney, 1880  clem  2
46 Wales (Radnorshire)  Rev. W. E. T. Morgan, 1881  clemmed to death = perished with wet and cold
47 Ireland (Antrim and W. H. Patterson, 1880  clemmed to death = perished with wet and cold

**Note.** — Five works in the foregoing list are General Dictionaries of Archaic or of Provincial English, or both, viz.: —

3. F. Grose’s Provincial Glossary.
28. (43.) T. Wright’s Dict. of Obsolete and Provincial English.
29. Archdeacon Nares’s Glossary... illustrating the works of English Authors, particularly Shakspere and his contemporaries.
37. W. Holloway’s General Dict. of Provincialisms.
44. J. O. Halliwell’s Dict. of Archaic and Provincial Words.

I may here observe that the variant *clam* has several homonyms, which have various dialectal meanings, and most of them, no doubt, are of different origin. Halliwell has *clam* with thirteen acceptations besides No. 1 before given; and T. Wright has *clam* with fourteen acceptations in addition to the two given above.

[4]

**II. Quotations, or Illustrative Sentences**

from a few of the foregoing glossaries, referred to by their respective numbers.
2. **NORTH:**
   
   I am welly clemm’d, *ie.*, almost starved.

4. **YORKSHIRE, CLEVELAND:**
   
   Ah’s fairlings *clammed* (or *clemmed*) for want o’ meat.

10A. Ditto **BRADFORD:**
   
   Ah wur tost like a drucken man’s noddle all t’ neet
   Fur ah saw i’ my dreeams sích a pityful seet
   O haases as cowd an as empty as t’street,
   We little things *tlammin* o’ t’ floar.

   *T’ Lancashire Famine*, p. 32.

13. Ditto **WAKEFIELD:**
   
   *Clamm’d* to deceth.

22. **LANCASTHIRE, NORTH:** 1866, Gibson (Dialect of High Furness), *Folk-Speech of Cumberland*, p. 86:
   
   Wes’ niver, I’s insuer us,
   Be nećakt or *clemm’d* or ċăld.

**LANCASTHIRE, SOUTH:** 1790, Lees and Coupe, *Harland’s Lancashire Ballads*, “Jone o’ Grinflt”, p. 217:

   Booath *clemmin*, un starvin, un never a fardin,
   It ud welly drive ony man mad.

1867, Edwin Waugh, *Factory Folk during the Cotton Famine*, c. x., p. 92:

   There’s a brother o’ mine lives wi’ us; he’d a been *clemmed* into th’ grave but for th’ relief.

1868, Ben Brierley, *Fratchingtons*, c. iii., p. 35:

   Theau fastened on me like a *clemmed* leech.

29. **STAFFORDSHIRE:**
   
   I shall be *clamm’d* (for starved).

41. **SUFFOLK:**
   
   I’m *clemmd* ta dead amost.

[N.B. — This form prevails at Lincoln. See examples from my own
43. EAST:

I would sooner *clam* than go to the workhouse.

---

II. DIALECTAL RANGE FROM MY OWN RESEARCHES,
1873 TO 1885.

I. TABLE OF LOCALITIES

containing: In column 1, the consecutive numbers; in column 2, the county; in column 3, the town, village, township, &c.; in column 4, the orthography, pronunciation in glossic (within square brackets), and references to acceptations, as in the first table. In giving the places I proceed as before, in series from north to south.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>TOWN, VILLAGE, ETC.</th>
<th>ORTHOGRAPHY AND ACCEPTATIONS.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lancashire</td>
<td>Garstang 1881</td>
<td>clammed [tlaamd]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Burnley</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>clam [tlaam’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Farrington</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>clam or clem [tlaam’, tlaem’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Leyland</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Clammed [tlaamd]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>West Houghton</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>clem [tlaem’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Stalybridge</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do. do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cheshire</td>
<td>Hollingworth 1873</td>
<td>do. do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Barrow</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>clemmed [klaemd]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Middlewich</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>clem [tlaem’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Farndon</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>clemmed [klaemd]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Derbyshire</td>
<td>Dore 1883</td>
<td>clam [tlaam’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Chesterfield</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do. and clammed [tlaam’, tlaam’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Wingerworth</td>
<td>(Stone Edge) 1883</td>
<td>do. [tlaam’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Monyash</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>clem [tlaem’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ashford</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>clam [tlaam’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Marston Montgomery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Town, Village, Etc.</th>
<th>Orthography and Acceptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>South Normanton</td>
<td>1883 clem [tlaem’]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Alfreton</td>
<td>do. do. do.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Heanor</td>
<td>do. do. do.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sandiacre</td>
<td>do. do. do.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>Edgmond 1885 clemmed [klaemd]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Corve Dale</td>
<td>1882 clem [klaem’]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>Oakamoor 1882 clem [tlaem’]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>clemmed [tlaemd]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Burton-on-Trent</td>
<td>1879 clem or clam [klaem’, klaam’]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Linchfield</td>
<td>1885 clem [?]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Willenhall</td>
<td>1879 clam [klaam’]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Nottinghamshire</td>
<td>Bingham do. do. clammed [tlaam’, tlaamd]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>Lincoln 1885 clammed [tlaamd]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Northamptonshire</td>
<td>Irchester do. do. do.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wales:

36 Flintshire (detached) Hanmer (Arowry) 1882, clemmed [tlaemd] twice

[i. TABLE OF LOCALITIES — (continued).]

[6]

[ii. ILLUSTRATIVE SENTENCES]

recorded at fifteen of the places named in the preceding table, with the pronunciation in
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

glossic (within square brackets).

1. **Lancashire: Garstang.**

   Welly (nearly) clammed to decüth mony a time = [wæl·i’ tlaamd tu’) d:ee·u’th mon·i’ u’) t:ah·im].

3. Ditto **Farrington.**

   Dusta (dost thou) think I’m going t’ *clem* ‘em ? = [Dûs·tu’ thingk au)m) goo..i’n t) tlaam’) u’m?].

4. Ditto **Leyland.**

   I’m varry near *clammed* to decüth = [Au)m) vaar·u’ neeu’r tlaamd tu’) decü’th].

6. Ditto **Stalybridge.**

   We shanna *clem* him = [Wi’) shaan·u’ tlaem‘) i’m].

9. **Cheshire:** **Middlewich.**

   Yo dunna (don’t) *clem* your bally for fine clooüs (clothes) = [Yu’) dûn·u’ tlaem’ yu’r) baal·i’ fu’r) f:ah·in t1:ou’z [tlûoo·u’z] ].

11. **Derbyshire: Dore.**

   *Clam* it to decüth = [tlaam‘) i’t tu’) d:ee·u’th].

12. Ditto **Chesterfield.**

   *Clammed* to decüth = [tlaamd tu’) d:ee·u’th].

14. **Derbyshire: Monyash.**

   Tha’ll *clem* me t’ deeth = [Dhaa..)l tlaem‘) mi’ t) dec·th].

21. **Salop: Edgmond.**

   I amna (am not) *clammed* = [Au) aam·) nu’ klaemd].

24. **Staffs.: Stone.**

   *Clemmed* to death = [tlaemd tu’) daeth‘].

29. **Lincoln: Lincoln.**

   *Clammed* to deeüd = [tlaamd tu’) d:ee·u’d].

30. **North Hants: Irchester.**

   I’m nearly *clammed*— [au)m) n:ee·u’rli’ tlaamd].
32. HEREF.: NEAR LEOMINSTER.

Most (nearly) clemmed to death = [M:o·st klaemd tu’) daeth:].

33. WORCES.: BEWDLEY. — Referring to a lady who was not charitably inclined, my informant, Mrs. Mary Ashcroft, about ninety-five years of age, observed:

Afore her’d give it [say food] to them as bin a-clammin’ = [u’f:oa·u’r uur·d gyiv·]

I’t tu’) dhaem· u’z) bin· u’klaam’·i’n].

36. WALES—FLINT: HANMER.

Clemmed to jeth (death)= [tlaem tud’) jaeth:].

Being a native of the Peak of Derbyshire, I know that the form clem [tlaem] prevails there,signifying “to starve”. I also know from long personal experience that the same form, pronunciation, and meaning are current in East Cheshire and South Lancashire, including Manchester.

The phrases “clemmed [or clammed] to death”, and “nearly [or welly] clemmed [or clammed] to death”, in their varied dialectal pronunciations, are used figuratively in most of the localities named, as equivalent to “very hungry”; as, for instance, when persons may have been obliged to continue at work, from urgent causes, for a longer time than usual, before partaking of food.

[8]

III. CORRESPONDENCE IN THE MANCHESTER CITY NEWS.

In January, 1878, there was some correspondence in this paper on “The Dialectal Range of the Words Lake and Clem”. I now give the small portion relating to clem: —

.... The word clem is said to be indigenous to Lancashire, and such may be the case. However, it is a word well-known amongst the poor nailmakers of South Staffordshire, and Halesowen in Worcestershire. I first became acquainted with the word in the Midland counties, and when I came to reside in Lancashire I recognized it as an old acquaintance. Ask a Sedgeley or Halesowen nailmaker how he is getting on, and the reply will in all probability be, “We’m clemming,” that is, "we are starving”. And in truth these poor nailmakers are being gradually starved out through the bulk of the nails being now made by machinery. H. KERR.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)
Stacksteads, Rossendale [Lancashire].

.... The word clem about Preston and neighbourhood was always pronounced clam. I never heard clem except in South-east Lancashire. In the glossary [then] recently edited by Messrs. Nodal and Milner, several quotations from old writers are given in which the word is used, and consequently its range both was and is much wider than the county palatine. One of these, from Massinger, spells the word clam, and another from Ben Jonson clem. CHARLES HARDWICK.

Manchester.

The article written by myself on Clem, was inserted March 30th, 1878, occupying not more than one-fourth the space of the present article, which includes the original information very considerably extended, and in addition, the results of my own dialectal researches.

B. — ETYMOLOGY, AND EARLY OR LITERARY USAGE.

I. ETYMOLOGY.

The word clem is of Teutonic origin. The primary senses of words which are cognate in several Teutonic languages are, “to press, squeeze, pinch”, etc.; and from these has been developed the metaphorical meaning, “to be pinched with hunger”, or, “to starve”.

[9]

i. I give cognate words from dictionaries in the following languages:

1. GERMAN:

   Klemmen, v. a. and refl., to pinch, cramp, squeeze; to jam. Flügel, Lond. 1841.

   Klemmen, v. a. to pinch, squeeze hard and closely, to press.

   Beklemmen, v. a. to press, to pinch, to oppress.

   Published by Cassell. London.

2. DUTCH:

   • Klemmen. to pinch, clinch.

   S. H. Wilcocke,
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)
Lond. 1798.

• Klemmen, v. a. and n., to pinch, clinch, oppress.

Klemmen, v. n. to be benumbed with cold.

Published by Otto Holtz, Leipsic, 1878.

3. Anglo-Saxon:

Dr. Bosworth has no corresponding verb. He has the two following nouns, which have the kindred senses of binding, holding, or restraint.

• Clam. 3. A bandage; what holds or retains, as a net, fold, prison.

2. Clom [Frisian, Klem]. A band, bond, clasp, bandage, chain, prison.

4. Icelandic:

Klembra [Germ[an], Klemmen], to jam or pinch in a smith’s vice.

Klömr [sb] [akin to a well-known root-word common to all Teutonic languages; cp.

Germ. Klam, Klemmen], a smith’s vice.

Cleasby and Vigfusson, Oxford, 1874.

[N.B. — The root-word referred to is probably “Kramp.” See Prof.
Skeat’s Etymol. Eng. Dict., s.v. clamp.]

5. Danish:

Klemme, v.t. to pinch, squeeze, jam.

Ferrall and Repps,
Kjobenhavn, 1861.

6. Swedish:

Klāmma [sb], f. press. sitta i klāmma = to be in great straits.

Klāmma, v. a. to squeeze, to oppress, to pinch, to wring.

Tauchnitz edit., Leipsic, 1883.

[10]

ii. From Dr. Stratmann’s Dict. of Old English, and three Glossaries:

1. Dr. Stratmann:


Poems, 3, 395.
2. R. B. Peacock’s Lonsdale (N. Lanc.) Glossary, 1867:

*Clam, v.i.* to starve for want of food, to be very thirsty: Dan. *klemme*, to pinch; O.N. *Klemma*, to contract; Goth. *Klammen*, to pinch.

3. Rev. J. C. Atkinson’s Cleveland Gloss., 1868:

*Clam, v.a.* (1) To pinch, compress, force together. (2) To castrate by aid of compression. (3) *v.n.* and *p.* To suffer from the pinching effects of hunger, to starve. O.N [orse]. *Klemma*, co-arctare; S[uio]-G[othic], *Klaemma*, primere, stringere; Sw. Dial. *Klämma*; Dan. *Klemme*; Mid. Germ. *Klimmen*. Rietz observes that “in all probability there must have once been extant in O. English a strong vb. *climan, clam, clemmen*, or *clummen”*. Possibly our existing vb., generally current in one or more of its senses throughout the North, is the only vb. ever in use, no instance of its occurrence being quoted as a South English word; although the A.S. sb. *clam, clom*, bondage or bonds, constraint, exists.

*Clem, v.n.* and *p.* To suffer from the effects of hunger. Another form of *clam* (which see).

4. Nodal and Milner’s Lancashire Glossary, Pt. I., 1875:

*Clem* (S. Lane.); *clam* (E., Mid., and N. Lane.): *v.* to starve from want of food. Du. *Klemmen*, to pinch; O. L. Ger. (bi-)*Klemman*; O.H. Ger. (bi-)*chlemmen*, to clam; Du. *Kleumen*, to be benumbed with cold.

N.B. — It is necessary particularly to note the etymological difference between *clam* the synonym of *clem*, “to be pinched with hunger”, and *clam*, “to stick or adhere to”; latter is derived from the Anglo-Sax. *clam*, “a bandage, chain”. — Bosworth.* Atkinson, in his Cleveland Glossary, clearly distinguishes the two words. See also Skeat’s Etymol. *Dict*, vv. Clam, Clamp, Clump, Cram, and Cramp.

* Bosworth contuses *clam* or *clamm*, a bandage, chain, with *clám*. mud, clay. They are quite distinct. — W. W. S.

II. QUOTATIONS FROM THE 14TH TO THE 17TH CENTURY.

1362. *Piers Ploughman*, p. 276:

Et this whan the hungreth

Or whan thou clomsest for-cold

Or clyngest for-drye.
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

So quoted by T. Wright, edit. 1856.

Gloss. No. 4, Rev. J. Atkinson has the variants, *thou*; for *cold*; and for drie.

[11]

1360. *Early English Allit. Poems*, c. i., 392:

Ne best bite on no brom, ne no bent nauper,
Passe to pasture, ne pike non erbes,
Ne non ox to no hay, ne no horse to water;
Al schal crye for-*clemmed*.

Quoted by Gloss. No. 22, Nodal and Milner.

Dr. Stratmann gives *forclemmed* (part.), from the same, 3, 395.

1598. *Ben Jonson*, *Every Man out of his Humour*, iii. 6:

Hard is the choise when the valiant must eate their armes, or *clem*. Edit.

Lond. 1640.

The quotations in the following Glossaries must have been made from other editions, as there are various readings in each.

(1) *Nares*, 1822:

Hard is the choice, when the valient must eat their armes or *clem*.

(2) *Toone*, 1832 — as Nares — except the insertion of *either* after *must*.

(3) *Nodal* and *Milner*, 1875:

Hard is the chpice

When valient men must eat their armes or *clem*.

1602. *Ben Jonson*, *Poetaster*, i. 2:

I cannot eat stones and turfs, say. What,
will he *clem* me, and my followers? Aske
him, an’ he will *clem* me: doe, goe. Edit. Lond. 1640.

I cannot eat stones and turfs, say. What,
will he *clem* me and my followers? Ask him
an he will *clem* me; do, go. Quoted by Nares.

What! will he *clem* me and my followers? Quoted by Toone.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

1602. JOHN MARSTON, Antonio and Mellida, Part II., iii. 3:

Now barkes the wolfe against the fulle cheekt moon;
Now lyons half-clamd entrals roare for food.
Now croakes the toad, and night crowes screech aloud,
Fluttering ‘bout casements of departed soules;
Now gapes the graves, and through their yawnes let loose
Imprison’d spirits to revisit earth.

Ed, J. O. Halliwell, 1856.

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CLEM: APPENDIX —

1620. PHILIP MASSENGER, Roman Actor, ii. 2:

(1) — And yet I
Sollicitous to increase it, when my intrails
Were clam’d with keeping a perpetual fast, &c.
Quoted by Nares, 1822.

(2) BROCKETT, 1825, quotes from the word “when”; but has “entrails” instead of “intrails”.

(3) NODAL and MILNER, 1875, quote from the word “my”.

(4) In the edition of MASSINGER by Gifford, 1845, the passage stands:

And yet I
Sollicitous to increase it, when my entrails
Were clem’d with keeping a perpetual fast.

(Ante) 1649. BP. PERCY’S Folio MS., i. p. 225 (Scottish Feilde):
there company was clemmed: & much cold did suffer; water was a worthy drinke: win it who might.

Quoted by Atkinson, Gloss. No. 4.

APPENDIX.

THE WORD STARVE.

This word is used in both literary and dialectal senses.
I. 1. The following LITERARY SENSES are given by most modern English dictionaries:
   a. Intransitive. —
      To die or perish (1) of or with hunger; and
      (2) of or with cold.
   b. Transitive. —
      To kill (1) by or with hunger; and
      (2) by or with cold.

   Webster states that in the United States both the intrans. and trans. verbs are applied to
death consequent on hunger only, and not in consequence of cold.

[13]

2. a. The DIALECTAL SENSE in which the word is generally used is —
   To suffer more or less from cold, but only temporarily, not fatally.
   b. This dialectal sense of “to starve” is the correl. to that of the verb “to clem,” viz.
   (1) To starve, as resulting from cold; and
   (2) To clem, as resulting from hunger.
   c. It should be particularly noted that this usage of starve most probably prevails at
all places where clem or clam signifies “to be pinched with hunger”. This is the case
in the Peak of Derbyshire, and in several counties, as ascertained during my dialectal
researches. At various places where my informants gave me the word clem or clam
as belonging to the respective dialects, they then immediately and voluntarily added
that starve had the correl. sense above given.
   d. In the case of death resulting from cold, as in a snowstorm or keen frost, the
phrase “starved to death” would be used. Indeed, this phrase is often used
metaphorically, when the “starving” is only temporary.

II. From SIXTEEN GLOSSARIES I now give the senses in which starve and its derivatives are
used.

1. VARIOUS DIALECTS: J. O. Halliwell, ed. 1874.
   Starved, excessively cold.

2. Ditto T. Wright, 1880.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

Starved, adj. very cold.

   Starvations, adj. cold, chilling, inclement, fit to starve one with cold.
   Starve, v. a. to cause to suffer from extreme cold; of frequent use in
   the passive, as well as in the participle present.

   Starvations, adj. bleak, barren.
   Starving, adj. keenly cold: “starving weather.”
   Black-starved, adj. blue with cold, like the nose and fingers in
   winter.

5. YORKSHIRE, MID: C. C. Robinson, 1876.
   Starvations, adj. chilly.

   Starv’d, cold. “Ahm ommost starv’d stifi”; also, pined.

   Starved, adj. excessively cold.

   Starved, adj. used as a synonym for cold.

   Starved, part. perished with cold; but not used in Cheshire for
   perished with hunger. Land is also said to be starved when it is cold
   for want of drainage.

10. DERBYSHIRE, BAKEWELL DISTRICT: J. Sleigh, 1865.
    Starve, to clem or famish.

11. SHROPSHIRE: Miss Jackson, 1879.
    Clem [klem-], v. a. to pinch with hunger; to famish.
    Common. Starve is never used in this sense; it is applied to cold
    only.

12. STAFFORDSHIRE: C. H. Poole, 1880.
Starve, to be deprived of warmth. To avoid ambiguity, so as not to
confuse the meaning of this word, the old writers used the term -
“hunger starved”.

“We have been very much affected with the cries and wants of the
poor this hard season, especially those about the town, who are
ready to starve for want of coal.”

Sir E. Turner, temp. Charles II


Starve, v. n. to be chilled through; perished with cold: never used for
perishing of hunger.


Starve, v. to chill. “It was so cowd I was omust starved to dead”.

15. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: T. Sternberg, 1851.

Starved, cold. “I be so starved”. “It’s a starvin wind”.


Starve, v. to be cold.

Starven, adj. pinched with cold. “Alice is such a nesh little thing!
W’en ‘er’s plaayin’ with th’ others in an evenin’, ‘er’ll run into
the ‘ouse, an’ ‘er’ll say, ‘Oh, mammy, do put I on a jacket, I be
so starven!’ ”

III. ETYMOLOGY. — Starve is derived from the Anglo-Saxon stcorfan, to starve, die,
perish; Du. sterven, v. n. to die; Ger. sterben, v. n. to die; to die away; to cease,
perish, become extinct. Cf. Icel. starf, a trouble, labour; and starfa, to work, labour.

In conclusion, I have the pleasure to cite Prof. Skeat’s article on this word from his
Etymological English Dictionary.

Starve, to die of hunger or cold, to kill with hunger or cold. Orig[inally]
intransitive, and used in the general sense of "to die”, without reference to the
means. M[iddle] E[nglish] steruen (with u=v), strong verb; pt. t. starf, Chaucer,
C[ant.] T[ales], 935, pp. storuen, or i-storuen, id. 2016. — [=directly derived from]
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

A.S. steorfan, to die, pt. t. stearf, pp. storfen; “stearf of hungor” = died of hunger, A[ng]-S[ax]. Chron. an. 1124, last line. Hence was formed the trans. verb sterfan, to kill, weak verb; appearing in astarrfed, pp., Matt. xv. 13 (Rush- worth gloss). The mod[ern] E. has confused the two forms, making them both weak. + [= not derived from, but cognate with] Du. sterven, pt. t. stierf, storf, pp. gestorven. + [not derived from, but cognate with] G[erm]. sterben, pt. t. starb, pp. ge-storben. All from Teut[onic] base STARB, according to Fick, iii. 347; he also cites Icel. starf, labour, toil, starfa, to toil, as belonging to the same root.

[16]

LAKE = TO PLAY

The modern use of this word, with its commonest variant LAIK, and scarce variants LAKE and LEAK, is dialectal. In Early and Middle English it stood side by side with the word play as a literary word, and was used quite as extensively. As we shall see, both are derived from the Anglo-Saxon. But, while “to play” and its derivatives have kept their stand as literary English to the present day, “to lake” and its derivatives have long since become dialectal, and confined chiefly to the northern counties. The dialectal range of lake is much less than that of clem.

A. — MODERN DIALECTAL RANGE.

I. FROM GLOSSARIES OR PRINTED BOOKS.

i. A TABLE OR LIST OF THE GLOSSARIES

in which the verb to lake and its derivatives are found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Words and Parts of Speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>N. Bayley, 1749</td>
<td>do. v.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>J. T. Brockett, 1825</td>
<td>do. v.; laking, sb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>Grose and Pegge, 1839</td>
<td>leak, v.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>lake, v.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Words and Parts of Speech</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>W. Holloway, 1839</td>
<td>do. v.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>T. Wright, 1880</td>
<td>do. <em>sb.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>laike, lake, <em>vv.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Jollie’s Manners and Customs, 1811</td>
<td>laiker, <em>sb.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>A. C. Gibson, 1869</td>
<td>laik, laikins, <em>sbb.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>R. Ferguson, 1873</td>
<td>laik, <em>v.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>lakin, <em>sb.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>leayk, <em>sb.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cumberland and Westmorland</td>
<td>Poems, Songs and Ballads, 1839</td>
<td>laik or lake, <em>v.</em>; laiker, <em>sb.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Durham (Teesdale) [Dinsdale], 1839</td>
<td>lake, <em>v.</em>; lakes, lakin, babby-lakin, <em>sbb.</em></td>
<td></td>
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[17]

A TABLE OR LIST OF THE GLOSSARIES — *(continued).*

<table>
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<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Words and Parts of Speech</th>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Whitby District</td>
<td>F. K. Robinson, 1875</td>
<td>laik, <em>v.</em>; lake or lairk, lakes,</td>
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</tbody>
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The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Swaledale</td>
<td>Capt. J. Harland, 1873</td>
<td>lake, v.;</td>
<td>laking, babby-laking, sbb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mid-Yorkshire</td>
<td>C. C. Robinson, 1876</td>
<td>laik, v.;</td>
<td>laikins, laikin-brass, sbb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>West Riding</td>
<td>Dr. Willan, 1811</td>
<td>lake, v.;</td>
<td>laking, sbb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Craven</td>
<td>Rev. W. Carr, 1824</td>
<td>do. v.;</td>
<td>lacons, lakins, sbb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Holderness</td>
<td>Ross, Stead and Holderness</td>
<td>lake, v.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1877</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Leeds District</td>
<td>Thoresby to Ray, 1703</td>
<td>do. v.;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Leeds</td>
<td>C. C. Robinson, 1862</td>
<td>laik, v.;</td>
<td>lakins, sbb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td>Append. II. to Hunter’s Hallamshire Glossary</td>
<td>lake, v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1829</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Huddersfield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Hallamshire (Sheffield Dis.)</td>
<td>Rev. Joseph Hunter, 1829</td>
<td>do. v.;</td>
<td>lakin, sbb.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Furness</td>
<td>J. P. Morris, 1869</td>
<td>laik, sbb.;</td>
<td>lakin’, part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Nodal and Milner, Part II, 1882</td>
<td>lake, v.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>J. E. Brogden, 1866</td>
<td>laking-about.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gloucestershire (Cotswold)</td>
<td>Rev. R. W. Huntley</td>
<td>laiking, part.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ii. DEFINITIONS OR SENSES.

A considerable variety of words, phrases, and sentences is used in these definitions. The numbers appended to these refer to the glossaries in the foregoing table in which each such word, phrase, and sentence is found.

[18]

a. VERB.

_Lake_: To play — 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32.

To sport — 17. To perform — 18.
To engage in a game — 24.
To trifle or act with levity — 24. To be idle — 28.
When men are out of work they are said “to lake” — 28.

_Laik_: To play — 12, 14, 20, 26, 30.
To amuse oneself — 12.
To play, as children; or at cards, or other game—23.

_Laik_: To play — 8.

_Leake_: To play like children — 5.

b. SUBSTANTIVES.

_Lacons_: Playthings, toys — 22.

_Lake_: A Play — 7, 30. A player, or actor — 8.

_Laker_: A player or actor — 7.
A player, or rather one who plays — 17.
One who plays — 30.

_Lakers_: Players — 18.

_Lakes_: Sports, games — 16.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

Entertainments — 18.

*Lakin*: A plaything — 7, 8, 29.
   A child’s plaything — 16.

*Lakins*: Things to be played with, toys at large — 17.
   Trifles — 18. Playthings — 22, 26, 28.


*Lakin-house*: A gaming house; the children’s playroom; a theatre — 18.


*Babby-lakin*: A child’s plaything — 16

*Laking-brass*: Money given to a child to spend on its own amusement; in toys, &c., as it may be — 17.

   The stakes on the gaming-table termed “the bank”; pocket money for enjoyment — 18.

*Babby-laking*: A plaything — 19.

   (2) A term used by boys to denote their stake at play — 35.
   (3) Used metaphorically to denote the strife of battle — 35.

*Laik*: See laik (2), (3).


*Lairk*: A game — 18.


c. ADJECTIVE.

*Lakisome or lakish*: Frolicsome — 18.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

d. Participles.

Laked: Played or performed — 18.
Lakin: Playing or sporting in all senses — 18.
Laking: When a mill has stopped running temporarily, the hands are said to be "laking". — 26.
A toy — 30.
Looking: Amusing himself — 15.

Laiking: Idling, playing truant: Quasi, lacking service, master-less — 34.

iii. Quotations or Illustrative Sentences.

from a few of the foregoing glossaries, referred to by their respective numbers.

11. Cumberland: But laiks at wate-not-whats within


Here’s babby-laikins — roth o’ spice,

On sto’s an’ stands extended. Stagg. Rosley Fair

15. Westmorland: But hah! wha is this that fancy marks, shooting dawn the braw of

Stavely, and laaking on the banks of Windermere? A Bran

New Work, 11.49-51.

18. Yorkshire, Whitby District:

Lake, or lairk, sb. “He’s full of his lake”, his fun.
Lake, v. “That caard weant lake at that bat", that game will not play
at that rate, or that affair will not succeed in the manner it is
carried on.

Lakes, sb. “All maks o’ lakes”, all kinds of entertainments.

Lakin, part. “I call it a laking do”, a gambling affair.
LAKE = TO PLAY:

26. YORKSHIRE, LEEDS:

“Awāay wi’ yah out an’ lāak a bit — goa a lāaking i’ Tommy’s cloise till I fetch yuh”.

“When we’ve lāaked wal te-a-time we’ll come home mother!”

28. Ditto ALMONDBURY and HUDDERSFIELD:

An ancient dame who lived at Sharp Lane end, being of an economical turn of mind, was fond of knitting, and said one evening at the conclusion of her labours, “Au ha’ burnt a hopenny cannlle, and addled a fardin — it’s better not lakin”.

31. LANCASHIRE, FURNESS:

Mr. J. P. Morris cites the two quotations following from Cumberland Ballads; of course thus implying that the dialectal forms in these instances are identical with those of Furness —

Nae mair he cracks the leave o’th’ green,
The cleverest far abuin;
But lakes at wait-not-whats within,

Aw Sunday efter-nuin.


May luiky dreams lake round my head this night,
And show my true-luive to my longing sight.


33. Ditto FURNESS:

A lot of us lads wer’ lakin down èt t’ lā end o’ Brou’ton.

J. P. Morris. Seige o’ Brou’ton, p. 3.

I. DIALECTAL RANGE FROM MY OWN RESEARCHES.

1876 TO 1879.

As only a small portion of the area in which “Lake = to play” prevails, lies within the area investigated by myself, the instances of its use which I have recorded are comparatively few.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

1. LANCASTER, BURNLEY, August, 1876:

   a. This word is indigenous or in regular use here —

      (1) In the active sense of playing at games, and ordinary children’s play.

      (2) In what may be termed the passive sense of cessation from labour, (a) through the stoppage of mills and other works, or (b) in other cases.

   b. My principal informant was Mr. James Fielding, an intelligent mill operative [then] thirty years of age, and a native. He dictated to me the Burnley version of Mr. Ellis’s “Comparative Specimen”, and on the word in question gave me the following examples —

      Question. — How lung arta (art thou) lakin’ for? [a’ūū lūng u’rt’u] lai·ki’n f:au·r ?]  
      Reply. — We’re brokken down (at the mill) for all th’ afternoon [wi’)r brok·’n d:a’ūūn fu’r) au·l th) aaf·t’u’nouōōn]. ô  

      Taw-lakin’ [tau·lai·ki’n] = playing at marbles.

      N.B. — Taws [tau·z] = marbles.

   c. Mrs. Fielding said to some one —

      [We’n] bin lakin’ this week [wee’n bin lai·ki’n dhis w:ee·k’]; the mill being stopped.

   d. Boy, playing with others at cricket, in reply to a question put by myself —

      W’en we’re lakin’ at cricket [waen wi’)r lai·ki’n u’t) kriki’t].

   e. Mill operatives speaking of a man who was temporarily doing a job of work which was inferior to that of his own occupation, one of them observed —

      He’d better do that than (or tin) lakin’ [i’)d baet’u’r d:oo· dhaat dhu’n [or ti’n] lai·ki’n].

2. LANCASTER, COLNE, December, 1879:
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

Heard *lakin’* = playing, spoken by three persons, and pronounced as follows.

- a. Youth — [lai·ki’n].
- b. Man to another — [lai·ki’n].
- c. Woman — [l:e·yki’n].

3. **Yorkshire, Marsden nr. Huddersfield, April, 1878:**

- a. Boys playing at “pig and stick” —
  
  Used *lake* [lai·k] = to play, several times; also, *a laker* [u’) lai·ku’r] = a player, who was wanted to make up the number on one side.

- b. Eight or nine girls, say 15 to 17 years of age, playing at ball —
  
  Used *lake* [lai·k] = to play.

**III. CORRESPONDENCE IN THE MANCHESTER CITY NEWS.**

In January, February, and March, 1878, there was some correspondence in this paper on “The Dialectal Range of the Words *Lake* and *Clem*”. I now give a selection from the portion relating to *lake*:

(1) Mr. Hardwick, in his note on Boggart Ho’ Clough, remarks that he never remembers hearing the “Yorkshire word *lake* (to play) used in Lancashire, except at Clitheroe, on the Yorkshire border”.

Yet the word has a much wider range in Lancashire than he supposes. “Lake” is in common use for play from Rochd down Whitworth Valley, Rossendale Valley, and round by Haslingden and Ramsbottom. In Rossendale at the present time [Jan. 1878], “laking” is a word in too many mouths, owing to the cotton mills running short time.

**H. Kerr**

Stacksteads, Rossendale [Lancashire].

(2) Referring to the Yorkshire word “lake” (to play) in my previous communication, I merely observed that I had myself only heard it spoken indigenously in the neighbourhood of Clitheroe on the Yorkshire border; but of course I implied the
probability of its location in places similarly situated. I never heard it in the
neighbourhood of Manchester, except as a professed importation, and I have met with
no one that ever did.

CHARLES HARDWICK

(3) .... I was born in the ancient village of Clough-fold in Rossendale, and spent the first
twenty years of my existence in its immediate neighbourhood, and during that period
the words “lake” and “lakin” were in daily use, and in the mouths of the villagers were
veritable “household words”.

J. C. T.

Heaton Chapel [Lancashire].

(4) Many years ago, at a magistrates’ meeting in Lincolnshire, a country fellow who had
eloped with another’s wife was charged with felony in reference to some articles which
she took with her. The defence was that it was merely a “May-lek”, or May game,
which the people of that class indulged in at that season, and that in this case it had
taken the form of a thoughtless jaunt to a neighbouring large town. The word is of
Scandinavian origin. In Stockholm museum one of the paintings is described as
“Bönder som leka blindbock” (peasants who play blindman’s buff); and another, a boy,
“som leker med kort” (who plays with cards). The svensk, like our English word,
evidently only means mere sport, for where any game of skill is intended “ spela” is
used, as “A gentleman and two ladies”, “som spela kort” (who play cards); “Ossian and
the young Alpin”, “lyssna till Malvina’s harpspel” (listen to Malvina’s harp play). There
seems yet another distinction between the skill of mind indicated by the verb “spela”,
and of hand denoted by the noun “slojd” (pronounced nearly as “sloight”), and which
seems to remain in use with us only in the term “sleight of hand”. In Sweden it signifies
any handicraft skill, and there are “slojds” schools for teaching such. The Danes have for
nouns “leg” and “spil”. We seem to preserve the “spela” and “spil” almost identically in
our “spell” (to enumerate the letters of a word, a charm, to trace out, to take one’s turn
at work, &c.); and though our meanings have got more confined to particulars, the
essence of the word - the mental skill - is common to both. The words “lek” and
“clam”*. I have heard in use in the wapentake of Corringham, Lincolnshire, of the
provincialisms of which I observe the English Dialect Society has published a glossary.
Is not to “lark” a variation of “lek” or “lake”?

H. J. P.


(5) I hope it will not be forgotten, even by the prejudiced, that the old A.S. equivalent for “play” is not so dead a horse as is imagined. The word “lark” — not alauda — is common to all dialects, and it is only làc with a slight burr. So all systematizers of the English language, from Latham onward, take care to make known. Much so-called slang is only good old English which has taken a Bohemian turn, and I confess to a weakness for your genuine Bohemian… HITTITE.

(6) I have read with interest the various contributions of your correspondents anent this word, but have not seen mention by any of them of its use in the part of Yorkshire to which I belong. It is in general use, and has been during my recollection — over forty years — in the large district which lies between and adjacent to the towns of Halifax and Huddersfield, in the West Hiding of Yorkshire; including the townships and villages of Sowerby Bridge, Elland, Greentland Norland, Soyland, Barkisland, Stainland, Ripponden, Rishworth, and many others. The pronunciation of the word varies in the different localities, but all the places named above use it in one or the other of the forms as at the head; for instance, in Stainland “lake” is the form adopted, while in Barkisland, only a mile distant, “laik” is the version. The word is used to express either games of amusement or skill, or as a cessation from labour; thus they say, “ahr (our) lads are off laikin at football”; or, “yon lot are laikin at cairds” (cardplaying); and in summer or droughty weather, when the water in the brook runs low, and in consequence the mills stop working, the hands, when questioned as to their absence from work, reply, “we’re laikin for water”, *i.e.*, playing, or not working for want of water.

OLD BEN.

(7) The expression “taw-laikin” = playing at marbles, which occurs in the comments on
the above subject by your learned correspondent Mr. Hallam, brings to my recollection a reminiscence or my boyhood, which had all but escaped it. When playing at marbles each of us put one or more into the ring to be played for, and they were called our “lakers”, the one we played with our “pitcher”. This occurred north of the Grampians over fifty years ago, but I have never noticed the expression “lake” in this neighbourhood applied either to marbles or any other juvenile games.

A. J.

The article by the writer was in two sections, which were respectively inserted March 2nd and 16th, 1878; but the space occupied was only equal to about four pages of the present article. In the area or dialectal range, the number of glossaries enumerated was twenty-four, but now thirty-five. In the section on the early usage of lake and play, references to early works and forms only of the two words were given; I have now added quotations from a number of Early and Middle English works, exemplifying the uses of these words. See B II.

[24]

B. — ETYMOLOGY, AND EARLY OR LITERARY USAGE.

1. ETYMOLOGY.

The word lake or laik is derived from Icelandic. I therefore give the verb and substantive, with their meanings, from Vigfusson; and cognate words and definitions from other Teutonic languages.

1. Icelandic:

Leika, [vb.] pres. leik; pret. lék, léku; part. leikinn; [Ulf[ilas] laikan = σχιρταν;
A. S. lác; mid. H. G. leiche; Dan. lege; Swed. leka; North E. to lake]:— to play, sport.

2. to delude, play a trick on.

Leikr, [sb.] m., mod. dat. leik, acc. leiki, [Ulf[ilas], laiks = χορος, Luke xv. 25; A. S. lác; North E. laik; O. H. G. leik; Dan. leg; Swed. lek]:— a game, play, sport, including athletics. 2. metaph. a game, sport.

Leikari, a, m. [North E[nglish] laker], a player, esp[ecially] a fiddler, jester.
2. **Swedish:**

*Leka, v. a. and n.* To play, to sport, to toy.

*Lek*, sb. m. Sport, play, fun, game.

Tauchnitz, Edit.,
Leipsic, 188v

3. **Danish:**

*Lege, v.i. & a. to play.*

*Leg*, [sb], game, play; *jule-leg*, Christmas-game.

Ferrall & Repps,
Kjobenhavn, 1861.

4. **Anglo-Saxon:**

*Lácan*, [vb.]: (p. *leólc*, *léc*, we *lécon*; pp. *lácen*), 1. To offer, present, sacrifice.

2. To celebrate religiously, to dance, play.

*Làc*, *geláć* [sb.]. 1. A gift, offering, sacrifice. 2. Play, sport.

Dr. Bosworth’s *Compen. Ang.-Sax. Dict.*; corrected by Ettrümmer.
Lond., 1852.

5. **Meso-Gothic:**


*Laiks*, str. sb. m. (pi. *laikos*), a sport, a dance, a dancing. Lu. 15. 25. [cf. E. ‘a lark’, i.e. a sport, frolic.]


[b25]

The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

N.B.—He also gives the cognate forms in about twenty languages, ancient and modern.

c. I give the passages referred to from the Gothic version by Wulfila or Ufílas, A.D. 360: —

Luke i. 41. — “Yah warϦ, swe hausida AileisabatϦ golein Mariiens, lailaik barn ᵑ qībau ᵐizos”; “And it came to pass, that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb.”

ib. i. 44. — “Sail allis sunsei warϦ stibna goleinais ᵝeinaizos ᵑ ausam meinaim, lailaik ᵐata barn in swigniṥai ᵑ in wambai meinai”; = “For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy”.

ib. vi. 23. — “Faginod in yainamma daga, yah laikid”; = “Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy”.

ib. xv. 25. — “WasuϦ-Ϧan sunus ᶵ sa albiza ana akra; yah qimands, atiddya newh razn, yah gahausida saggwins yah laikins”; = “Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing”.

ii. REV. J. C. ATKINSON’S Cleveland Gloss., 1868:

Lake, laik, v. n. To play, to sport.

In addition to the forms of the verb from Anglo-Saxon, Meso-Gothic, Old Norse (Icelandic), Danish, and Swedish, as given above, he also has — Old Swedish leka; Swedish dialects laika, lāka; N. Frisian leechen, leege; and Mid. Germ. leichen.

II. EARLY OR LITERARY USAGE: BEING (i.) FORMS, AND (ii ) QUOTATIONS, FROM THE 12TH TO THE 10TH CENTURY,

i. FORMS.

The numbers 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 refer to the centuries respectively.

SUBSTANTIVE.

Singular and plural.—12 lakess, larke, leżkes, leż3kess, loac, loc; 12-13 lae, lakes; 12-14 laik, laike; 13 lak, lok, lokes; 13-14 lake, leik, leyk; 14 layk, laykeʒ, layking; 14-15 laikes, laykes; 15 laiching,
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)
lakan, lakayns, laykin’, laykyng; 15-16 layke; 16 laykin. No date:
lakynes, lakys, layks.

1. To spring, leap, jump. 2. To hop, skip, jump. 3. To skip, leap, bound wantonly. 4. A dance; fight, brawl, sport. 5. A dance, assembly of people singing and dancing; a chorus.

[26]

Verb.

Present tense. — 14 laykeʒ; 14, 16, layke; 15 lake, lakys.

Past t. — 12 laiket, lakeden (pl.), lakedenn (pl.); 12’ 14 laiked; 13 leikeden (sing.), leykeden (sing.); 14 laikid, layked, layked him, laykeden (pl.); 15 laiked him, laykede hime.

Imperative. — 12 lakys (pl.).

Infinitive. — 12 lake, laken, lakenn, leʒʒken. leʒʒkenn; 13 layke, leike, leyke, leyken; 14 laike, layke, layky hem.

Part. pres. — 14 layking.

N.B. — I find Dr. Stratmann, in some of his examples, has i where the originals have y.

ii. Quotations.


Vb. (1) to do, to act: —

And euyn laiked as hom list, lettid hom noght. 1. 7046

(2) to fight: —

Thus Þai laiket o þe laund the long day ouer. 1. 9997

(3) to say, to express: —

Lakys now, ledys, what you lefe think,
And what ye deme to be done at this du tyme. 1. 9807
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

sb. a play; hence a fight, danger, struggle: —

Laike — 11. 7811, 9658, 9847

Laik —

Þe day wex dym, droupit þe sun.

þe lyght wex lasse, and þe lark endit. 1. 10408.

Larke, conflict, battle: —

Gret slaght in þe slade, & slyngyng to ground,

And mony lost hade þe lyfte, or þe lark: endit! 1. 7694


sb. Lac, ottering, gift.

Litel lac is gode lief þe comœ of gode wilde. 1. 203


sb. dat. brôhten tô lâke. 63 (Stratmann.)

C. 1200.  The Ormulum [Lincolnshire], ed. White, 1852.

vb. Lakenn (laken), to make offerings.

To þeowwten Godd þ lakenn.

1. 973.

Leʒʒkenn (leʃken): —

Alls iff he woldde leʒʒkenn.

1. 12044.

Lakesst, 2 p. sing: — Þa lakesst tu Drihhtin wiþ shep gastlike i þine þæwess.

1. 1172.

Lakedenn (lakeden), pa. t. plur: Þa þre kingess lakedenn Crist.

1. 7430.

sb. Lac. offering, gift.

Off Þatt Judisskenn follkess lac.

1. 964.

þ bi Þatt allterr wass þe lac
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

O fele wise ʒarrkedd.
1. 1062.

Lac, plur: —
Her habbe icc shæwedd þrinne lac forr þrinne kinne leode.
1. 1144.

Lakess, leʒʒtkess (leʒkess), plur.: — Þa þre kingess lakedenn
Crist

Wiþ þrinne kinne
lakess,
Wiþ reless, þ wiþ gold, þ
ec
Wiþ myrra, an dere sallfe.
1. 7431.
1 skemmtning þ inn idelleʒʒe
Inn æegaede þ i leʒkess.
1. 2166.
Wedlac = wedlock.
1. 2499.

1205. LAYAMON'S  Brút [Worcestershire], ed. Morton, 1847.
sb. Lác — Heo nómen þat lác.
1. 17748.
Láke (dat.)
1. 31953.

(Stratmann).

c. 1230. Ancren Riwe [Dorsetshire], ed. Morton, 1853.
sb. Lokes = gifts — Hit nis nout for nout irmware iðe holie gospelle of þe Þeo
kinges þet comen uorto offren Jesu Crist þeo deorwurðe Þeo lokes.
p. 152, 1. 10.


sb. Brudlac [= bridelaik], nuptials —
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

Elewsius Þat luuede hire Þuhte sw[i]ze longe Þat ha neren to brudlac ȝ to bed ibrohte.

To Eleusius, Þat loved her, it seemed very long, that she were not to bridal and to bed brought.  p. 7.

[28]


sb. Loac = gift, present —

And iacob sente fer bi-foren
him riche loac and sundri boren,
And iordan he dede ouer waden,
Orf & men, wiō welēe laden.
1. 1798.


vb. Layke, leyke, leyken, to play; Leykden, pa. t. pi. played. —

Bigunnen be[r] fot to layke:
Þider komen bothe stronge an wayke.
1. 1011.

Al-so he wolde with hem leyke
Þat weren for hunger grene and bleike.
1. 469.

It ne was non so litel knaue,
For to leyken, ne forto plawe.
1. 950.

Of him he deden al he[r] wille,
And with him leykeden here fille.
1. 1021.

sb. Leyk, game —

Þat he ne kam Þider, Þe leyk to se.
Wrestling with laddes, putting of ston,
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

Harping and piping, ful god won,

*Leyk* of mine, of hasard ok,

Romanz reding on Þe bok.

1. 2326.

In the edition by Sir F. Madden, for the Roxburgh Club, 1828, *th* is used for Þ.

Stratmann quotes — *leike* for *leyke*, *leikeden* for *leykeden*, and *leik* for *leyk*.


*sb.* lutel lòc (lāc) is gode lêf.

VIII. 37.

Þreo kinges . . . . lok him brojte.

XIX. 128.

(Stratmann.)


*vb.* Layke, to play, to sport:

& Þat yow lyst forto layke, lef hit me kynkes.

1. 1111.

Þer laykeʒ Jus lorde by lynde wodeʒ eueʒ,

& G. Þe god mon, i[n] gay bed lygeʒ.

1. 1178.

Þay lazed & layked longe,

At Þe last scho con hy[m] kysse.

1. 1554.

*sb.* Layk, *[laike, lake]* = sport, game:

Þe joye of sayn Joneʒ day watʒ gentyle to here,

& watʒ last of Þe layk, lendes Þer Þoʒten.

1. 1023.

---

To bed ȝet er Þay ȝede,

Recorded couenanteȝ ofte;

Þe olde lorde of Þat leude,¹

Couþe wel halde layk a-lofte.

1. 1125.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

This edition contains all the previous quotations, and the two following:

*sb. Laykeʒ = sports; laykyng = sport, playing.*

Preue for to play wyth in òper pure laykeʒ; [*i.e., He seeks the most valiant that ne may prove him*].

1. 262.

Wel by-commes such craft vpon cnstmasse,

*Laykyng of enterludeʒ, to laʒe & to syng.*

1.472.

N.B. — Dr. Murray gives the date as c. 1325, and Prof. Skeat as c. 1360.

14th Cent. (c.1300, Dr. Murray) *English Metrical Homilies*, ed. Small, 1862.

*vb. Laikid, 71.*

*sb. Sinful laik, 58.*  
(Stratmann.)


*sb. Laik play, game —

We ne louen in our land: no laik nor no mirthe.

1. 465.


*vb. Layke, to play; (pt. t. layked, pt. t. refl. layked him; pl. laykeden; pr. part. layking)*:

& to hete here ðan to layke· here likyng ðat time.

1. 1021.

& layked ðere at lyking· al ðe long daye.

1. 1026.

(Stratmann has laiked in error.)

& layked him² long while· to lesten ðat merÞe.

1. 31.

& as ðei laykeden in here laike· ðei lokede a-boute.

1. 3110.

so louely lay ðat ladi & ich· layking to-gaderes.

1. 699.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

sb. — \textit{Layk, laike} = a “lark”, a game, play: —

ak so liked him his \textit{layk} wi\textit{þ} \textit{ðe} ladi to pleie.

(Stratmann has \textit{laik} in error.)

1. 678.

And see \textit{laike} in line 3110 above.

1. lede?
2. amused himself, pleyed about.

[30]


sb. — \textit{Leyk}, play, game: —

\textit{Þ}us \textit{ðei} ladden \textit{ðe} lyf\textit{þ} and lengede longe,
\textit{Þat} luyte liked his \textit{leyk}\textit{þ} \textit{ðer} as he lengede.

(Stratmann has \textit{leik} in error.)

1. 17.


\textit{Sb.} — \textit{Laykes}, sports, games: —

At Hamton, als I understand,
Come the gaylayes vnto land,
And ful Cast thai slogh and brend,
Bot noght so mekille als sum men wend.

For or thai wened war thai mett
With men that sone thaire \textit{laykes} lett.

Edw. III’s Expedition to Brabant, 1339. 1. 64.

N.B. — (1) In \textit{Specimens of Early English}, Part II., ed. Morris and Skeat, \textit{ð} is used instead of \textit{th}.

(2) Stratm. quotes \textit{laike}s from Ritson’s edit. p. 10, (1825).


\textit{vb.} — \textit{Layke}, to play: —
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

& laykeʒ wyth hem as yow lyst & leteʒ my gestes one.

(Stratm. has laikeʒ in error.)

B. 1. 872.

sb. — (1) Layke, sport, play, amusement: —
& alle ðe laykeʒ ðat a lorde aʒt in londe schewe.

B. 1. 122.

& if he louyes clene layk ðat is oure lorde ryche.

B 1. 1053.

(2) Layke, device: —
ðat for her lodlych laykeʒ alosed ðay were.

B. 1. 274.

& if we leuen ðe layk of oure layth synnes,
& styyle steppen in ðe styʒe he styʒteles hym seluen,
He wyl wende of his wodship, & his wrath leue,
& forgif vus bis gult ʒif we hym god leuen.

B. 1. 401.

God is mercifull.


vb. — Laike, to play, sport: —
And ʒif him list for to laike. ðenne loke we mowen,
And peren in his presence. ðer-while hym plaie liketh.

Prol. 1. 172.

[31]

C. 1380 (2)  W. LANGLAND (or Langley). — The Vision and Creed of Piers Ploughman;
ed. T. Wright, 1856.

sb. — Layk, play: —
And poverté nys but a petit thyng,
Apereth noght to his navele;
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)
And lovely layk was it nevere
Betwene the longe and the shorte. p. 287, 1. 9388.

C. 1380. Sir Ferumbras, in English Charlemayne Romances, ed. S. J. Heritage; E.E.T.S., Ex. Ser. 34; 1879.
*vb.* Layky hem.
The French make merry.

For of vitailes þai hadden þo plente: & burdes briȝ e
To ete & drynke & murie bee! & to layky hem wan þay wolde. p. 106, 1. 3356.

*sb.* Laikes, XLII. 5. (Stratmann.)

C. 1400. (2) Awntyrs of Arturhe, in Ancient Romance- Poems; ed. Sir F. Madden, 1839.
*sb.* Laike, strife of battle: —
Lordes and ladies of þat laike likes
And þonked God fele si the for Gawayñ1 the gode.

1n = ne. XLII. 5.

C. 1400. Golagros and Gawane, in Ancient Romance-Poems; ed. Sir F. Madden, 1839.
*sb.* Lake = strife of battle: —
Thus may ye lippin on the lake, throu lair þt I leir.
1. 832.

*sb.* Laykes, games:—
The condicion of a kyng-shuld comfort his peple;
For suche laykes ben to love: þere leedes laghen alie.

1. 134:
which means — "Those games are most liked in which all the people who join can laugh."

c. 1420. The Senyn Sages, in vol. iii. of Metrical Romances; ed. Weber, 1810.
*vb.* — Lake = please: —
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

(A! how wimmen conne hit make.
When thai wil ani man lake!)

Tale iv., Ypocras and his neveu 1.

1212.

[32]

Laiked him = pleased him: —

Thare the erl dwelled at nyght,

And laiked him with his lady bright.

Tale xiv., The Two Dreams, 1 3310.

C. 1420-24. Wyntoun, Cronykil of Scotland.

sb. Laikyng, laykyng, play; applied to justyng —

Ramsay til hym coyn in hy,

And gert hym entre. swne than he

Sayd, “God mot at yhoure laykyng be!”

Syne savd he, “Lordis, on qwhat manere

“Will yhe ryn at this justyng here?”

viii. 35, 76. — Quoted in Dr. Jamieson’s Scottish

Dict., s.vv. Laikyng, laykyng.


33, 1879.

sb. Lakayns, toys, playthings: —

He putt vp in his bosom Þes iij. lakayns.

p. 123.

I give the paragraph which describes the three lakayns — also designated cautils: —

. . . . what dude he but yede, and purveyde him of iij. cautils;

The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

purs was a balle of iij. colowris, and hit had a superscripicion, þat saide thus, Qui mecum ludit, nunquam de meo ludo saciabitur, þis is to seye, he that pleithe with me, shalle neuer have I-nowhe of my pley. he putt vp in his bosom þes iij. lakayns.

. . . . And when thes wordes wer borne to þe Emperour, he commaundid his dowter to Rinne with him.

Halliwell quotes from some other edition: —

He putt up in his bosome thes iij. laykayns.

p. 105.


sb. Layke, sport, game: —

Arthur promises rewards.

Thay salfe noghte lesse, one þis layke, zif me lyfe happene, þat þus are lamede for my lufe be þis lythe strandez.

1. 1599.


sb. Laykes, sports, games, a glossarial note says: —

This term is constantly applied by the romance writers to combats.

War was called swerd-layke.

[33]

Than his swerde drawes he.
Strykes at Percevelle the fre,
The childe hadd no powsté
   His laykes to lett·
The stede was his awnne wille,
Saw the swerde come hym tille
Leppe up over an hille
   Fyne stryde mett.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

1. 1704. (Stratmann has laikes.)


sb. Laykin’ or thynge þat chyldryñ pley wythe.

Ludibile.


sb. Layke, a play, game: —

Bot þare es | many thynges þat ere cause of swylke wrcchede

twynnynge, als | mete, drynke, reste, claythynge, layke, discorde,

thcghte, laboure, | hetbynge.

p. 38, l. 21.

C. 1450. Towneley Mysteries [Yorkshire], in Eng. Miracle or Plays or Mysteries; ed. W. Marriott, 1838.

C. 1460. vb. I shalle do a lyttlle, sir, and emang ever lake,

For yit lay my soper never on my stomake

In feyldys. p. 114, l. 4

[Pastores].

Now are we at the Monte of Calvarye,

Have done, folows, and let now se

How we can with hym lake. p. 139, l. 32

[Crucifixio].

sb. Mak applies the word lakan = play-thing to his children —

Bot so

Etys as fast as she can,

And ilk yere that commys to man,

She brynges furthe a lakan.

And som yeres two. p. 117, l. 8

[Pastores].

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*vb. to Layke, play, ludere.*

198, 1. 18.

*sb. A Láykin, babie, crepundia, orum.*

col. 134, 1.

5.

*A Layke, play, ludus, i.*

col. 198, 1. 13.

In *Carlisle Cathedral*: Behind the choir-stalls of this Cathedral is a series of ancient paintings illustrating the legends of St. Anthony, St. Cuthbert, and St. Augustine. On the first part relating to St. Cuthbert is this inscription:

Her Cuthbert was forbid layks and plays,
As S. Bede i’ hys story says.

Quoted in the *Almondbury and Huddersfield Glossary*, but no date given.

**APPENDIX.**

*LARK = A FROLIC, SPORT, FUN.*

This word forms an appropriate Appendix to *lake* or *laik = to play*, as it is derived from the same source, but has *r* inserted. It is a slang word in modern English. In Southern English, as Professor Skeat observes [Etym. Eng. Dict. *s.v. Lark* (2)], “the *r* simply denotes the lengthening of the vowel, which is like the *a* in father”. There is reason to believe that the word is now used throughout England. In most parts of the Midland district the *r* is sounded.

**I. AREA OF USAGE.**

i. I note in the first place: —

a. Prof. Skeat (1) calls the *sb. “Southern English”*.  


(2) calls the *vb. " Modern South-English."*

to play, says — “Cf. A. S. lácan, to play, and the *London English, to lark*”.

[35]

ii. I now give the counties in which I have information that the word is used.

**Yorkshire, Almondbury and Huddersfield:**

The E. D. S. Glossary for this district, *s.v. Lake*. *sb*. Says — “It is the origin of the word *lark*, which is sometimes also used here”.

**Lancashire, Manchester:**

The *sb*. was current when the writer came to reside here forty-one years ago.

**Derbyshire, Chapel-en-le-Frith District:**

At the time I left here for Manchester, forty-one years ago, *lark* = a frolic, etc., was not used. I learned recently from a native of Peak Forest, seventy-three years of age, who has resided at Chapel-en-le-Frith a number of years, that the word has come into use in the district within the last thirty years.

I have recently ascertained by correspondence that the word is current at the following places: each place, of course, represents the centre of a district. I give the definitions or meanings in the words of the respective correspondents.

**Derbyshire, Bakewell and Ashford:**

“We might in conversation *lark* or joke with words; or we might *lark* or joke in play, or in any in- or out-door exercise”.

**Cheshire, East or North East; Bollington, three miles N.E. of Macclesfield:**

The general meaning of a frolic, sport, fun, from *viva voce* information.

Ditto *West; Tarporley:*

“The word *lark* as used here is to play a mischievous trick to any one with no bad intent”.

Ditto *South; Bickley, three miles E.N.E. of Malpas:*

Mr. Darlington, author of the *Folk-Speech of South Cheshire*, says: “As to *lark*, as used in this district, I should define it as a ‘frolicsome prank’.”
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

There is a connotation of mild mischief about the word”.

**Shropshire, South; Much Wenlock:**

“The meaning of lark about here is, a lot going to have a game, or a spree, or amusement”.

**Staffordshire, North; Flash, seven miles N.N.E. of Leek:**

“The word lark... it is very common her in this district”.

Ditto South; Willenhall:

“Lark is a very common expression here for fu though I think it is more particularly meant [for] or applied to, fun which has mischief in it, or fun at the expense of some one else”.

**Nottinghamshire, Worksop:**

“Lark is commonly used in this neighbourhood for flirting — lark with a girl; a party of men drinking [or] carousing, are often described as larking; in fact, frolic, fun, joke, game, are i commonly described as larking; so is telling a friend a falsehood, and making him believe it [to be] the truth, often described as having a lark with him.”

Ditto Mansfield:

“The word lark is often used in conjunction with people having enjoyed themselves, or participated in any kind of fun or mischief; [they] would say — ‘What a lark we had last night’ ”.

**Leicestershire, Market Bosworth:**

“The word lark is generally used in this county for fun or games; and sometimes larkin’ [larking]”.

**Warwickshire, South; Tysoe:**

Mrs. Francis, of Tysoe vicarage, author of the E.D.S. Glossary of S. Warwickshire, says:— “The word ‘lark’ is very commonly used here in the sense you give it, of a joke or a prank;— but I always considered it as only a slang word, as is used by educated and uneducated alike”.

**Herefordshire, The Bache, three and a half miles E.N.E. of Leominster:**
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

“Respecting the word lark, I may say it is very frequently used in this county… viz., [as] a frolic or joke, sometimes at some one’s expense. It is often said of a practical joke — ‘he has been up to another lark’, or ‘he has had another spree’. If a person, during a drinking fit, commits any slight acts of depredation in fun, they say — ‘he has been larking’ ”.

OXFORDSHIRE, HANDBOROUGH and DISTRICT, W. and N.W. of OXFORD:

Mrs. Parker, of Oxford, author of the E.D.S. Glossary of this part of the county, says: — “The word lark is, I believe, well known at Handborough and neighbourhood, both as a substantive and verb; but I don’t think it is much used amongst the people who speak dialect — spree is the usual word... I should think lark is known all over the country”.

II. ETYMOLOGY.

It is sufficient to cite Prof. Skeat’s article on this word from his Etymol. Eng. Dictionary.

LARK (2), a game, sport, fun. (E[nglish]). Spelt lark in modern E[nglish], and now a slang term. But the r is intrusive, and the word is an old one; it should be laak or lahk, where aa has the sound of a in father. M[iddle] E[nglish] lak. lok; also laik, which is a Scand. form. See Will, of Palerae, 678; P. Plowman, B. xiv. 243; Ormulum, 1157, 2166; Ancren Riwe, p. 152, note b; etc. (Stratmann). — [derived from] A. S. lás, play, contest, prey, gift, offering; Grein, ii. 148. +[cognate with] Icel. leikr, a game, play, sport. + [cognate with] Swed. lek, sport. -f [cognate with] Dan. leg, sport. +[cognate with] Goth. laiks, a sport, dance. β All from a Teut. base, LAIK, to dance, skip for joy, play; cf. Goth. laikan, to skip for joy, Luke i. 41, 44, A. S. lácán, Icel. leika, to play ; Fick in. 259.

There is one early quotation in which the form larke occurs, viz. — 1154-89, Destruction of Troy, 1. 7694. See p. 26, supr.
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**NESH.**

This word, with its commonest variant *Nash*, and scarce variants *Naish* and *Nish*, has a wide area of modern *dialectal* usage. Its use as a *literary* word was continuous both in Early and Middle English.

### A. — MODERN DIALECTAL RANGE.

#### I. FROM GLOSSARIES OR PRINTED BOOKS,

i. A TABLE OR LIST OF THE GLOSSARIES in which the Word is found.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>District</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Orthography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1674</td>
<td>North Country</td>
<td>John Ray, [and E.D.S. Repr 1874]</td>
<td>Nash or Nesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1790</td>
<td>North and South</td>
<td>Francis Grose [also Grose &amp; Pegge, 1839]</td>
<td>Nesh or Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1822</td>
<td>Provincial Word</td>
<td>Robt. Nares (Gloss. To Shakspere and his Contemporaries)</td>
<td>Nesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1839</td>
<td>North or Country</td>
<td>W. Holloway</td>
<td>Nash, nesh</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>“</td>
<td>Various Parts of England</td>
<td>C. Richardson (Eng. Dict.)</td>
<td>Nesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>From Morton’s Cyclop. of Agriculture; E.D.S., 1880</td>
<td>do.</td>
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</table>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>District</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Orthography</th>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1880</td>
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<td>T. Wright (Dict. Obsol. and Prov. Engl.)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Yorkshire:—</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>Rev. J. C. Atkinson</td>
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[39]

**A Table or List of Glossaries — (continued)**

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<td>1811</td>
<td>West Riding</td>
<td>Dr. Willan, in <em>Archaologia</em>, &amp; E.D.S. Repr., 1873</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Sheffield</td>
<td>Abel Bywater</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Ditto North</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Nesh</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Cumberland and Westmorland Lancashire: —</td>
<td>Poems, Songs, and Ballads, with Glossary</td>
<td>Nash</td>
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<td>1757 - 1775</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>J. Collier (Tim Bobbin)</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>Furness</td>
<td>J. P. Morris</td>
<td>do.</td>
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<td>Orthography</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>Cheshire</td>
<td>Col. Egerton Leigh</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>1884-86</td>
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<td>Robert Holland; E.D.S.</td>
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<td>Derbyshire (Bake-</td>
<td>J. Sleigh, in <em>Reliquary</em> for</td>
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<td>January, 1865</td>
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<td>1879-81</td>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>Miss G. F. Jackson</td>
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<td>1880</td>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>C. H. Poole</td>
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<td>his son S. Evans, LL.D.; E.D.S.</td>
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<td>Edward Peacock; E.D.S.</td>
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<td>1839</td>
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<td>G. Cornewall Lewis</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>Nesh, or Nesh</td>
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<td>1882</td>
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<td>Rev. R. Lawson; E.D.S.</td>
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<td>1789</td>
<td>Glouchester, Vale of</td>
<td>From Marshall’s Rural Economy</td>
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<td>Suffolk</td>
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<td>Ditto</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>West of England</td>
<td>G. P. R. Pulman, E.D.S. Nash</td>
<td>Nish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Cornwall, West</td>
<td>Miss M. A. Courtney, E.D.S. Nash</td>
<td>Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Wales, (Radnorshire)</td>
<td>Rev. W. E. T. Morgan, E.D.S. Nesh</td>
<td>Nesh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ii. Definition or Senses

These include a considerable variety of words, phrases, and sentences. The numbers appended to them refer to the glossaries in the foregoing table in which each such word, phrase, and sentence is found.

- Tender, is found in 44 glossaries out of 50; the exceptions are Nos. 14, 18, 19, 22, 31, and 49.
- Delicate, 8, 10 (1), 12 (1), 13, 17, 20, 25, 27 – 29, 31 – 37, 39 – 42. 50 = 22 glossaries.
- Soft, 5, 6, 8, 10 (1), 11, 12 (1), 13, 15, 25, 26, 27, 47 = 12 gloss.
- Weak, 1 (1, 2, 3), 5, 6, 7, 10 (1), 12 (1), 13, 25, 27 = 9 gloss.

[41]

- Puling, 1 (1,2,3).
- Washy, 1 (1, 2, 3), 7, 43.
- Nice, 2, 17.
- Brittle, 3, 15, 20, 21, 22.
- Fragile, 6, 14, 21.
- Poor-spirited, 10 (1), 19, 32.
- Hungry, 10 (2), 12 (2).
- Chilly, 10 (3), 12 (3), 44, 45, 46.
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

Susceptible to cold, 16. Sensitive to cold, 17.

Easily distressed with cold; much affected by cold; fond of *croodling* over the fire, 18.


Unable to withstand physical pain, 29.

Easily susceptible of cold, 31. Lacking energy, 32.

Susceptible of cold, 33, 41, 49. Scrupulous (Metaph.) 33.

Dainty, 34, 36, 39, 40. Susceptible, 34.

Coddling; fearful of cold, 35. Flimsy, 37.

Pale; debilitated, 49.

iii. QUOTATIONS OR ILLUSTRATIVE SENTENCES,

from thirteen of the foregoing glossaries, referred to by their respective numbers. In several cases it is also stated to which of the following categories the word is applied: (1) man; (2) beasts; (3) inanimate objects.

16. YORKSHIRE, LEEDS; C. C. Robinson:

*Nesh*, tender, susceptible; as one is to cold, who declares himself “varry nesh”.

18. Ditto HALLAMSHIRE (Sheffield Dist.); Rev. J. Hunter:

*Nesh*, easily distressed with cold; much affected by it; fond of *croodling* over the fire. This, I believe, is its peculiar signification, and it is now applied solely to man. It bears a near relation to *tender* and *delicate*, but there is a shade of difference which rendered this a genuine Saxon word well worth preserving. A. S. *nesc*. Something of censure is implied in the application of it.

19. Ditto SHEFFIELD; A. Bywater:

To *dee* [die] *nesh*, to give up an enterprise dispirited.

27. LANCASHIRE; Nodal and Milner:

*Nesh.* — A very expressive adjective (of which the current word “nice”, in the sense of “dainty”, has only half the force) is *nesh*, meaning weak and tender, not able to bear pain; in Anglo-Saxon, “nesc” [correctly *hnesce*]. [Sir] Thomas Wilson, in his *Art of Rhetoric* [Retorique, 1553],
perhaps the earliest writer on any such subject in the language, uses the Lancashire noun, and writes, “To be born of woman declares weakness of spirit, neshnes of body, and fickleness of mind”.


Oh, he’s too nesh for owt; they’n browt him up that way. 1881, Colloquial Use.

[42]

28. CHESHIRE; Col. Egerton Leig:

*Nesh*, adj. — Tender, delicate, effeminate. Applied to man, woman, child, or beast.

30. CHESHIRE, SOUTH; T. Darlington:

*Nesh* [nesh] adj. tender, sensitive. I’ve gotten nesh ‘ands [ahy]v got n nesh aan·z]. Yū nesh kitlin! [Yū nesh ky’it·lin!]. I do sū sweet (sweat) at a night, mai·z (makes) me nesh [ahy dóo sū sweet üt ü neyt, mai·z mi nesh].

Plants may, I think, also be spoken of as *nesh* (sensitive).

32. SHROPSHIRE; Miss G. F. Jackson:

(1) *Nesh* [nesh·] adj. delicate, tender; said of the health or physical constitution. Common. (1) ‘It wunna likely as a poor little nesh child like ‘er could do; it ōōd tak’ a strung girld i’ that place’. (2) ‘Yo’ lads be off out o’ doors, an’ nod rook round the fire — yo’n be as *nesh* as a noud ōōman’.

(2) adj. Poor-spirited; lacking energy. — WEM [North Shrop.] ‘‘Er’s a nesh piece, ‘er dunna do above ‘afe a day’s work, an’ ‘er’s no use at all under a cow [milking a cow]’.

34. LEICESTERSHIRE; Dr. A. B. Evans, and his Son:

*Nesh, Naish, Nash*, adj. delicate, susceptible, dainty, tender: often applied to the constitution of man and beast.

‘The meer’s [mare’s] a *naish* feeder’.

35. LINCOLNSHIRE, MANLEY & CORRINGHAM; Edwd. Peacock:
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

_Nesh, adj._ delicate, tender, coddling, fearful cold. ‘She’s strange an’ nesh about her sen, nivver so much as goes to th’ ash-hole wi’ out her bonnet on’.

37. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE; Miss A. E. Baker:

_Nash, or more commonly Nesh._ Tender, flimsy, delicate. A good old word now rarely used: I have heard it said of a sickly child, “It’s flesh is so nesh, I don’t think it will live”.

43. GLOUCESTER, VALE OF; From Marshall’s _Rural Economy_:

_Nesh, adj._ the common term for tender or _washy_ as spoken of a cow or horse.

44. HAMPSHIRE; Rev. Sir W. H. Cope, Bart.:


[43]

47. DORSETSHIRE; Rev. Wm. Barnes:

_Nēsh._ Tender; soft. “This meat is nēsh”, “Da veel nēsh”.

_The nēsh tops_

Of the young hazel, 1788, Crowe’s _Lewesdon Hill_, ver. 30.

iv. I now give EXAMPLES OF VERBS from six of the foregoing Glossaries, and of an ADVERB from J. K. Robinson’s Whitby Glossary.

10. Halliwell:

_Neshin, v._ To make tender. _Cheshire_.

12. T. Wright:

_Neshin, v._ To make tender. _Cheshire_.

28. CHESHIRE; Col. Egerton Leigh:

_Neshin, v._ To make tender, to coddle.

_Prompt. Parv._ and Wilbraham.

29. Ditto. R. Holland:

_Neshin, v._ to make tender. W[ilbraham], who gives it as an old word; it was, therefore, probably obsolete in his day.

30. CHESHIRE, SOUTH; T. Darlington:
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

Nesh it [nesh it] = [naesh it], v.n. to be afraid, shrink from doing anything.

“W’en it cum to gettin’ up at five o’clock ov a cowd winter’s mornin’, hoo nesht it” [Wen it kùm tū gy’et·in úp ūt fahyv üklok· ūv ū kuwd win·tūrz mau·rnin, óo nesht (= naesht) it].

34. LEICESTERSHIRE:

The word is also sometimes used as a verb impersonal. ‘Shay’s a gooin’ to be married, an’ it een’t o’ noo use ‘er neshin’ it’, i.e. being coy or reluctant.

YORKSHIRE; Whitby District:

Neshly, adv. noiselessly.

II. DIALECTAL RANGE FROM MY OWN RESEARCHES.

1875 TO 1887.

This word is constantly used in the dialects of Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, and Staffordshire. It is, therefore, necessary to explain why it has not been recorded oftener during my visits.

[44]

In recording the phonology of English dialects, what is primarily required is the dialectal pronunciation of literary or received English words, in order that the varied forms of pronunciation may be compared for all English counties; hence, purely dialectal words, as clem, nesh, oss, &c., are not available for this general comparison, their area of usage being only parts of the country respectively: consequently, these have not received the same degree of attention as representative received English words, such as father, mother, day, green, house, home, night, noon, &c., &c.

i. TABLE OF LOCALITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO. OF PLACE.</th>
<th>COUNTRY.</th>
<th>TOWN, VILLAGE, ETC., AND DATE.</th>
<th>ORTHOGRAPHY.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>Marsden, April, 1878</td>
<td>Nesh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ripponden, do.</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Town, Village, etc., and Date</th>
<th>Orthography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thorne, 9 miles N.E. of Doncaster, April, 1887</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Barnsley, April 1887.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lancashire</td>
<td>Higher Walton (Near Walton–le-Dale), May, 1875</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Warrington, June, 1875</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ormskirk, Jan., 1876</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Cheshire</td>
<td>Farndon, Dec., 1876</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Derbyshire</td>
<td>Ashover, Dec., 1876</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chesterfield, May, 1883</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Alfreton, Aug. &amp; Dec.,</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sandiacere, Dec., 1883</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Church Greasley, Dec., 1886</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>Much Wenlock, Sept., 1880</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Newport, May, 1885</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>West Bromwich, Oct., 1877</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Willenhall, Aug., 1879</td>
<td>Nash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Burton-on-Trent, Sept., 1879</td>
<td>Nesh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Leek, May, 1880</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Middle Hills, N. of Leek, May, 1880</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oakamoor, April, 1882</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Denstone, ditto</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lichfield, May, 1885</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>Codsall, Dec., 1886</td>
<td>Nash and Nesh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[45]

i. TABLE OF LOCALITIES — *(continued).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Place.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Town, Village, etc., and Date</th>
<th>Orthography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Nottinghamshire</td>
<td>Retford, April, 1879</td>
<td>Nesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mansfield, June, 1879</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Worksop, ditto</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Bingham</td>
<td>Sept., 1879</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Bawtry</td>
<td>Aug., 1886</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Finningley</td>
<td>Aug., 1886</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Leicestershire</td>
<td>Loughborough, Aug., 1878</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Upton</td>
<td>Dec., 1886</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>Trent Side, N. of Gainsborough, April, 1887</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Warwickshire</td>
<td>Nuneaton, Oct., 1880</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Knowle</td>
<td>Dec., 1886</td>
<td>Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Herefordshire</td>
<td>Much Cowarne, Aug., 1881</td>
<td>Nesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Worcestershire</td>
<td>Abberley, Oct., 1880</td>
<td>Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Bewdley</td>
<td>ditto</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Kidderminster</td>
<td>Sept., 1882</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Gloucestershire</td>
<td>Tewkesbury, April, 1885</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Cranham</td>
<td>5 miles S.E. of Gloucester, Sept., 1885</td>
<td>Nesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Stonehouse</td>
<td>Sept., 1885</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Flintshire (detached)</td>
<td>Bettisfield, June, 1882</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Hanmere</td>
<td>(Arowry), June, 1882</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Denbighshire</td>
<td>Wrexham, Dec., 1882</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**—The pronunciation of the form *Nesh* is [naesh] at all the respective places, except at No. 14, Much Wenlock, Salop, where I recorded [naesh or nesh]. The form *Nash* was pronounced [naash] at all the respective places.

**ii. Definitions or Senses.**

The numbers appended to them refer to the respective *places* in the foregoing table. The form “Tender, &c.” was
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[46]

recorded at several places; I have analysed this as, “Tender, delicate”.

Tender — was recorded at 41 places out of 45; the exceptions are Nos. 9, ii, 28, and 41.

Delicate, 1, 5–8, 14, 16–20, 25–27, 29, 31, 34, 36, 38, 43–45 = 22 places.

Delicate in health, &c., 9.

Sensitive to cold, io, 11, 24.

Chilly, 28.

Cold, 41.

Susceptible of cold, 42.

iii. ILLUSTRATIVE SENTENCES.

10. **Derbyshire; Chesterfield:**

    Tha’r so nesh [Dhaa]r sū naesh] = tender, or sensitive to cold.

24. **Staffordshire; Codsall:**

    Her was nash I reckon [Uur wūz naash an raek·n] = tender, or sensitive to cold.

28. **Nottinghamshire; Bingham:**

    I feel nesh = chilly.

30. **Ditto**

    Finningley:

    When young plants which have grown very quickly are cut down by the frost, they are said to be nesh.

35. **Warwickshire; Knowle:**

    How nash you are! [Aaw naash yūō:aar!].

38. **Worcestershire; Bewdley:**

    You be nash [Yōō bēē naash].

39. **Ditto**

    Kidderminster:

    Some on (of) us be nash [Ṣūm on ūz b:ee naash] .

**Note.** — I recorded the following sentence containing a verb at Farndon, Cheshire, in Dec., 1882: —

    Yo’re neshin’ it [yoo]ār naesh in It] = shrinking from it, giving it up.
B. — ETYMOLOGY, AND EARLY OR LITERARY USAGE.

I. ETYMOLOGY.

The word *Nesh* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *hnesce, hnesce*, soft; with which the Gothic *hnaskwus*, soft, tender, delicate, is cognate. See Professor Skeat’s *Etymol. Engl. Dict.* s.v. *Nesh*; also s.v. *Nesh* in *Errata*.

1. ANGLO-SAXON:

Dr. Bosworth’s *compend. Ang.-Sax. Dict.*, 1852 —

*Hnesc* (*hnœsce, nesc*), erroneously for *Hnesce* (*hnæce, nesce*). Tender, soft, *nesh*.

*Anglo-Saxon Gospels*, A.D. 995: ed. by Dr. Bosworth and E. Waring, Esq., 1865 —

Matt. xi. 8. — “Oððe hwí eode ge út geseon? Mann *hnescum* gyrlum gescrýdne? Nú! ða ðe syn *hnescum* gyrlum gescrýdde synt on cyninga húsum”; = “But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses”.

Matt. xxiv. 32. — “Donne hys twig byþ *hnescce*”; = “When his (the fig tree’s) branch is yet tender”.


2. GOTHIC:

Rev. [now Prof.] Skeat’s *Mæso-Gothic Glossary*, 1868 —

*Hnaskwus*, adj. soft, tender, delicate, Mat. xi. 8; Lu. vii. 25 [O. E. *nesh*].

*Gothic Gospels*, A.D. 360; ed. Bosworth and Waring, 1865 —

Matt. xi. 8. — “Man nan *hnasqyaim* wasyom gawasidana? Sai! Paiei hnasqyaim wasidai sind ïn gardim þiudane sind”; = “A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft [clothing understood] are in kings’ houses”.


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Lu. vii. 25. — “mannot in *hnasyqaim* wastom gawasidana?” = “A man clothed in soft raiment?”.

II. EARLY OR LITERARY USAGE: BEING (i.) FORMS, AND (ii.) QUOTATIONS, FROM THE 12TH TO THE 17TH CENTURY,

i. FORMS.

The numbers 12 to 17 refer to the centuries respectively.

[48]

ADJECTIVE.

12, 14, 15 nesse; 13 neys; 13–15 nesche, nesse; 13–17 nesh; 14 neische, nesssse; 14–17 neshe; 15 neisshe.

SUBSTANTIVE.

14 neischede, nesse, neshede; 15 neisshe; 16 neshenes.

VERB.

*Pres. tense.* — 12 neshen, neshesst; 14 nasshe, nhesse; 15 nesche.

*Part. pres.* — 15 neschyn’.

*Part. past.* — 12 neshedd; 13 nesched.

ADVERB.

13 nesse, nesselýche.

ADVERBIAL PHRASES: these signify — entirely, altogether, on every point, in every way, under all circumstances. See Glossary to *Sir Ferumbras*.

13 nesse and hard; 14 nesch oþer harde, nesche and hard, for nesch or hard, in hard & in nesche, to harde & to nesche, at nessche & hard, at hard & neychs; 15 for hard ne nesse.

ii. QUOTATIONS.


*adj.* — if ne herte iss arefull,

† milde, † solite, † nesse.

Pt. I., p. 55., l. 1461.
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v. 2 pres. — Þæer Þurrh Þatt tu brekesst wel Þin corn,

grindesst itt ʒ neshesst.

ib. p. 58, l. 1549.

Part. pa. — wiþlaf Þatt iss wiþelesaew

all smeredd wel ʒ neschedd.

ib. p. 55, l. 1471.

Ditto ed. R. M. White, 1852.

vb. — Neshen.

1. 15909 (Stratmann).


adj. — for thenne iði burð tid in al þe burh of

belleem ne fant tu hus lewe þer þine nesche

childes limes inne mihte reste.

Pt. I. p. 124, l. 5.

[49]

C. 1225. Owl and Nightingale [? Dorsetshire], ed. Stratmann, 1868.

adj. — Nesche and softe.

1. 1546.


In Glossary — Nessche, adv. softly.

Then Paul saw men and women with much meat lying before them, which they

were not able to eat.

Aftur þís. he sayʒ at ene

Men. and. wywmen, moni and lene;

Lene þei weore., wiþ-outen flesche,

þei soffred harde. and noþing nesche;

Much lay bi-foren hem. of Mete

þat hem deynet not. of to ete.

Append. II., The XI. Pains of Hell, p. 227, l. 166.

adj. — Godrich rises, and wounds Havelok in the shoulder:
And woundede him rith in þe flesh,
þat tendre was, and swiþ þe nesh.

p. 79, 1. 2743.


adv. — Nesselyche, nicely.

(Index — Mold the good Queen, K. Henry the first’s wife,
. . . daughter of Malcolm King of Scotland):
Po caste þys gode Mold yre mantel of anon,
And gurde aboute yre myddel a nayre lynne ssete,
And wess þe myssesles vet echone, ar heo lete,
And wypede ys nesselyche, & custe ys wel suete.

P- 435.1. 9.


Past. part. — Nesched.

54, 22 (Stratmann).


adj. — Fleys es brokel als wax and neys.

p. 154; quoted in Cath. Anglicum.


adv. phr. — Names of planetis they beon 1y-note,
Some beon cold, and some beon hote,
By heom mon hath theo 2 sayging on
To lond, to water, to wyn, to corn;
And alle chaunce, nessche and hard,
Knoweth by heom 3 wol Y 4 gred

B 1, 1. 63.

1Noted, called.
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2 Signs, i.e. predictions.
3 Well.
4 Declare.

adj. — Theo sunne ariseth, and fallith the dewyng;

[50]

sb. Nesse = good fortune —

In nesse. in hard, y pray the nowe,
In al stedes thou him avowe. p. 110 (Halliwell).


adv.phr. — Nesch oþer harde —

Queþer-so-eurr he dele nesch oþer harde,
He laueʒ hys gysteʒ as water of dyche. The Pearl, 1. 605.
gyttes (?).


adj. — Nesch.

1330. Robert de Brunne, Chronicle.

adv.phr. — Thorge mountayn and more, the Bascles ge ther weie

Our nesche and hard thei fore and did the Walsch men deie.
Quoted in Carr’s Craven Glossary, 2nd edit. 1228.

A letter this fol toke; bad him, for nesch or hard. Thereon suld no
man loke, but only Sir Edward.
p. 220; quoted in Miss Baker’s Northants Glossary.

1340. Dan Michel of Northgate, Ayenbite of Inwyt, or, Remorse of Conscience [Kent],

v. pres. — Nhessep = makes soft —

Þerne gardyn zette þe greate gardyner | þet is god þe uader |
huanne nhesseþ þe herte | and makeþ zuete | and tretable | ase
wex ymered.
The Salamanca Corpus: *Four Dialect Words* (1885)

p. 94.

**adj. — Nesssse — soft —**

Riʒhuolnesse is propre liehe | þet me deþ be
dome riʒtuol and trewe | ne to nesssse ne to hard.

p. 153.

**sb. — Nesshede = delicacy, softness —**

and of alle zofthede | and nesshede | cloþinge habbeþ an.

p. 267.


**adj. — Þe saule es mare tender and nesshe**

Þan es þe body with pe fleshe.

1. 3110; quoted in Catholicon Anglicum.

[51]


**adv. phr. — nis he holly at my hest · in hard & in nesche?**

1. 495.

I wol here-after witerly¹ · wiþ-oute more striue, wirche holly mi
hertes wille · to harde & to nesche.

¹plainly, certainly, &c. 1. 534.


**adj. — Nesche is quoted by Stratmann, from p. 303; but this should probably be nessche, as quoted in Prompt. Parv. from some edition, p. 368 —**

And the hard erthe and the rocke abyden mountaynes, whan the
soft erthe, and tendre, wax *nesche* throghe the water, and
felle, and becamen valeyes.


**adj. — Nesh.**

1. 1092 (Stratmann).

C. 1380. *Sir Ferumbras*, in English Charlemagne Romances, ed. S. J. Herrtage, E.E.T.S.,
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

Ex. Ser. 34, 1879.

adv. phr. — alle þanne assentede at nessche & hard. 1. 3500.

By þat were Sarazyns stozen¹ vp all frechs², And were come inward at hard & neychs.

¹climbed. ²fresh, new, 1. 5188.


Glossary. — neische, neshe, nesshe, adj. soft, delicate.


Prefatory Epistles, cap. iii., p. 63.

L. — God hath maad neische myn herte. Job. xxiii. 16.


1387. John of Trevisa, tr. of Higden’s Polychronicon (Rolls Series).

adj. — Describes Ireland as — “nesche, reyny, and wyndy” [mollis, pluviosa, ventosa].

1. 333; quoted in Cath. Ang.

[52]

sb. — Also quoted without reference ibid. — “Mars schal take algate þe neischede and þe softnes of saturne.”

Way in Prompt. Parv. quotes from Trevisa’s Version o Vegecius, Roy.

MS. 8 A. xii.:—

v. — nasshe = to make effeminate — “nasshe the hertes of warriours to lustes, thenne hardenne theim to fighte”.

1393. Gower’s Confessio Amantis.

adj. — He was to nesshe, and she to harde.

Bk. v.; quoted in Miss Baker’s Northants Glossary.

15th cent. Court of Love; a late poem (not by Chaucer) first printed with Chaucer’s works, 1561 (compiled by Jhon Lidgate).

adj.— It semeth for loue his harte is tender nesshe.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

In the *Aiding edit.* of Chaucer’s works, 6 vols. 8vo., London, W. Pickering, 1845, the line reads —

It seemeth for love his herte is tender and *neshe*.

vol. vi., p. 165, 1. 1092.


*adj.* — Mollis, an\(^{\infty}\) *neshe*.

Tener, [an\(^{98}\) tendere or *neshe*].

col. 596, 1. 29.

col. 615,1. 40.


*adj.* — The child was keped tendre, and *nessche* [= soft].

vol. iii., ver. 732.


*Neschyn’ or make *nesche*\(^4\) Mollifico.

\(^4\)Molliculus, *neisshe*, or softe. Mollicia, softenesse, or *neisshe*. Molleo, to be *nesshe*.


*Nesche*, vb. to melt, soften, grow soft: —

Now es na herte sa˙ herde Þat it na moghte *nesche* and lufe swylke a Godd with all his myghte.

p. 31.

C. 1450 or C. 1460 *Towneley Mysteries* [Yorkshire], in Eng. Miracle Plays or Mysteries, ed. W. Marriott, 1838.

*adj.* — Nesh.

(\(? \) p.) 128 (Stratmann).

There is a quotation in the Almondbury and Huddersfield Glossary containing the word in the same spelling.

[53]


*adv. phr.* — For-gete not Þe towell, noþer for *hard ne nessche*.

Section or Tract ix., 1. 241.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)


White herrings fresh —

*adj.* — looke he be white by Þe boon | Þe 'roughe white & ²nesche.*

1. 644.

¹roe.

²tender.

*After a hath —*

Þen lett hym go to bed | but looke it be soote & ¹neshe.

1. 986.

1553. Sir Thomas Wilson, *Art of Retorique.*

*sb.* — To be born of woman declares weakness of spirit, *neshenes* of body, and fickleness of mind.


*adj.* — Of cheese, — he saith it is too hard; he saith it is too nesh.

(? p.) 436; quoted by Nares; and T. Wright, *Dict. Obs. and Prov. English.*


*adj.* — And although a droppe [of water] be most *neshe,* yet by oft falling it pierceth that thing, that is right hard.

The Armorie of Honor, B. 2, fol. 89/1.


*adj.* — . . . , This but sweats thee

Like a *nesh* nag.

*Bonduca;* quoted in Miss Baker’s Northants Glossary, without further reference.


*adj.* — “God save the Queene of England”, he said.

“for her blood is verry *neshe,*
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

as neere vnto her I am

as a colloppe shorne from the flesh”.

King James and Browne, 1. 119; quoted by Miss Jackson, Shropshire Wordbook.

[55]

OSS or AWSE.

This word, in English, seems to be almost wholly confined to modern dialectal speech. Like *clem*, it has a wide range or area of usage.

A. — MODERN DIALECTAL RANGE.

I. FROM GLOSSARIES OR PRINTED BOOKS.

i. A TABLE OR LIST OF THE GLOSSARIES in which the verb and its derivatives are found.

<table>
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<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Words and Parts of Speech</th>
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<tr>
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<td>T. Wright, 1857</td>
<td>Ause and oss, v.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Grose and Pegge, 1839</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Almondbury and Huddersfield</td>
<td>Rev. A. Easther, ed. by</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Cumberland and Westmorland</td>
<td>Poems, Songs, and Ballads, 1839</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>Robert Ferguson, 1873</td>
<td>do. v.</td>
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*Soc. Trans.*, 1867
### The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Words and Parts of Speech</th>
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<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Nodal and Milner, 1876</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Ditto (South)</td>
<td>J. Collier, 6\textsuperscript{th} ed., 1757</td>
<td>do. v.; Ossing, <em>part.</em></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Ditto (do.)</td>
<td>Sam Bamford, 1854</td>
<td>Awse, v.; Awsin, <em>part.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ditto (do.)</td>
<td>J. A. Picton: <em>Notes on S.</em></td>
<td>do. or Oss, v.</td>
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<td>Cheshire</td>
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<td>Ditto</td>
<td>John Ash (quotes Bailey), 1775</td>
<td>do. v.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>R. Wilbraham, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed., 1826</td>
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A TABLE OR LIST OF GLOSSARIES — *(continued)*

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<td>Ditto</td>
<td>H. Wedgwood, 1872</td>
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<td>Ditto</td>
<td>J. O. Halliwell, ed. 1874</td>
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<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Col. Egerton Leigh, 1877</td>
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<td>Ditto</td>
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<td>do. v.</td>
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*Derbyshire: —*

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<th>The Writer (T. Hallam), in <em>MS</em></th>
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<th>Bakewell Dist.</th>
<th>J. Sleigh, in <em>Reliquary</em> for January, 1865</th>
<th>“oss vel hoss” [h is not used]</th>
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<td><em>Provincialism in Wellington Journal</em>, Feb. 5, 1876</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>Miss G. F. Jackson, 1881</td>
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<table>
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<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Hereford and Shrop.</td>
<td>Oss, v.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provincialism in *Wellington Journal*, Feb. 5, 1876

39 Radnoshire | Rev. W. E. T. Morgan, 1881 | do. v |

### ii. Definitions or Senses, and Illustrative Sentences.

I give these in nine sub-divisions. A considerable variety of words, phrases, and sentences is used in these definitions. The numbers appended to definitions, or prefixed to illustrative sentences, refer to the glossaries in the foregoing table in which each such definition and sentence is found.

**a.** To try, 1, 4, 9, 10, 13, 16, 25, 26; to attempt, 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39; to endeavour, 4; to essay, 9, 10;

[to aim at, 3, 17, 20, 22; to offer, 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 23, 27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 38; to offer to do, 3, 17, 18, 20, 22; to offer to do a thing, 25; to set about, 25; to set about anything, 9, 13, 19, 23; to set about a thing, 10; to set about doing, 37; to be setting out, 19, 23; to show a sign of doing, 37, applied to inanimate as well as animate objects.

5. “I’ll neer *oss* to doot”; i.e. I will never attempt it.

6. “He niwer *osses* to du owt ‘at I sehr him tul — niwer”.

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On the occasion when Sir John Ramsden came of age, he gave several public dinners, and on passing between Longley Hall and Huddersfield, he encountered some mill hands, lads and lasses. A lad taps a lass on the shoulder, and she says, ‘Drop it, lad, Au want none o thi bother’. The lad, ‘Au’m noan baan to mell on thee’. ‘Well, but tha were *ossin*’. Sir John was much exercised with this, and took it up at the dinner, where he found plenty of his guests able to restore the dialogue to its beauty, and explain its meaning.

8. “He *ossed* but failed”.

12. (1) s.v. Awse: —

A mon ‘at plays a fiddle weel,  
Should never *awse* to dee.


Come, owd dog, *awse* to shap.


See also Sense f.

Aw shakert un’ waytud till ten,  
Bu’ Meary ne’er *awst* to com eawt.

Harland’s *Lancashire Lyrics*, p. 187.

(2) s.v. Oss: —

His scrunt wig fell off, on when he *os* t’don it, on unlucky karron gan it o poo.


I’r ot heawse in o crack, on leet o’ th’ owd mon i’ th’ fowd, *ossin* t’ get o’ tit-back.

ibid, p. 57 ; 1750.

See also Sense b.

They’d gether reawnd some choilt wi’mayt,  
An’ every bit it *ost* to tak  
Their little meawrths ud oppen too.

13. “He nivv er osses” = He never makes the attempt.

16. “Theaw doesn’t oss furt’ do it”.
25. “He’s owed me ten pound for ever so long, and he ne’er osses pay me.”
26. Tha dusna oss t’ do it = try [Dhaa dùz·nu’ oss t’ dóo it].
27. “He none osses at it”.
30. ‘Er’ll never oss to pūt anythin’ in its place as lung as ‘er can get through ‘em.
36. ‘E ossed to jump the brack, but ‘e couldn’a do’t; t’warn’t likely!’ Seldom used but when the attempt is unsuccessful.

b. To be about to do, i.e., immediately.
12. I’r ot heawse in o crack, on leet o’ th’ owd mon I’ th’ fowd, ossin’ t’ get o’ tit-back. Collier, Works, p. 52; 1750.
25. The following conversation actually took place in Rainow Sund-school: — “Teacher: ‘Why did Noah go into the ark?’ Scholar: ‘Please, teacher, because God was ossin for t’ drown th’ world’ ”.
26. Aw’m ossin t’ goo t’ Buxton [Au)m os·si’n t] gu t) Bûk·stu’n] = I’m about to go to Buxton immediately.
Aw’m ossin t’ate my dinner [Au)m os·si’n t’)ai·t mi’ din·u’r] =I’m about to eat my dinner at once.

c. The manner of “shaping” or “framing” at anything: either — (1), at a particular act or job of work; or (2), at the duties of a new situation or calling.
24. He osses well; said of a new servant who promises fairly.
25. “He osses badly” would be said of a man who began a job in a clumsy manner.
26. ‘Ow does ‘e oss at it? [Aaw düz i’ oss aat i’t?]. ‘Ow does th’ new sarvant mon oss? [Aaw düs th) ni’w saar·vu’nt m:aun oss?].
28. A new servant is said to oss (promise) well.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

30. vb. I think the chap knows his work, he *ossex* pretty well.

   sb. I doubt ‘e’ll never do no good — I dunna like ‘is *ossment*.

*d.* To design, 2; to intend, 2 ; to intend to do, 3, 17, 20, 22.

*e.* To dare, 3, 32, 33, 35, 37; to venture, 11.

37. He does not *oss* [= dare] to do it.

30.

*f.* To begin, 1, 13, 14, 19, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 38 — in this sense, I think, the word is generally in the imperative; to begin to do, 37.


   Waugh, Besom Ben, c. iv. p. 42; 1865.


27. *Oss* at it, mon, *i.e.* begin.

*g.* To make free with: — 3, 5, 21, 23, 24, 30, have the Cheshire proverb, “*Ossing* comes to bossing”; 3, 5, 23, and 30, simply quote the words without comment; 21, T. Wright, has under *oss* (2) — “To make free with. There is a Cheshire proverb, *ossing* comes to bossing (*i.e.*, kissing)”. 24, Colonel Egerton Leigh, has — “ ‘Ossing comes to bossing’ an old Cheshire proverb, means courting is soon followed by kissing”.

*h.* To recommend a person to assist you, 19, 23.

*i.* To direct. See note below.

NOTE. — Mr. T. Darlington, in his *Folk-Speech of South Cheshire*, now passing through the press, has senses *a*, *c*, and *i*: —

   Oss [os·] v.n. and *a*:

   *a* = To attempt: “Ah never *ost* (ossed) at it” [Ah nev·ūr ost aat· it].

   *c* = To shape: “Ye dunna *oss* to do it” = You don’t shape. This is not exactly the same as “to attempt”, though a shade of the same meaning.

   *i* = To direct: “Ah’ll *oss* yō to a good heifer” [Ahjl os· yū tū û gūd ef·ūr].

II. DIALECTAL RANGE FROM MY OWN RESEARCHES,

1877 TO 1883.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

This word is constantly used in the dialects of Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, and Staffordshire. See the first two paragraphs in Nesh A. II. pp. 43, 44, Dialectal Range from my own researches.

N.B. — The letters a, b, c, &c., prefixed to the meanings, or illustrative sentences, refer to the respective Senses before given, in I. ii.

Yorkshire: Marsden, April, 1878:

a. Oss [oss], to try.

Lancashire: Goosnargh, June, 1883:

a. Now, John, oss likely [Naaw, J:au'n, oss lahy·kl`] = apply yourself to the task in a workmanlike manner.

Ditto Eccles, June, 1883:

b. Eh, Mary, w`ereta for? O`m ossin` t` goo t` Eccles = [Ai·, Mae·ri`, weerta' f`aur? Ojm ossi'n t`goo t` Ek·lz].

Cheshire: Farndon, Dec., 1882:

a. Yo dunna oss t`go at it [yoa dùn·u` u` oss t) goa aat·) i`t]

Derbyshire: Ashford, April, 1875:

c. `Ae dun they oss? [Ae· dùn dhai oss] = How do they shape?

`Ae dus that chap oss at `is work [Ae` dùz dhaat chaap oss n`t i`z wuurk?] i.e. frame to work skilfully or unskilfully.

Ditto Dore, March, 1883:

a. Aw sh`l ne`er oss [au shl n:ce`ur oss].

Ditto Chesterfield, May, 1883:

a. Tha doesn`t oss to do it [Dhaa dùznt oss tu` dóo i`t].

Ditto Spite Winter, in Ashover parish, May, 1883:

a. Oss [oss] = to try.

Ditto Ashover, May, 1883:

a. or c. `Aa tha osses! [Aa dhaa oss·u`z!] = How thou osses!

Ditto Alfreton, Dec., 1883:

a. or c. Oss as yu mean to do it [Oss u`z yu` mee·n tu` dóo i`t].
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

SHROPSHIRE, WELLINGTON, Dec., 1881:

a. Oss [oss], to try.

Yu wunna oss to do it [yu’ wùnn u’ oss tu’ dōō i’t].

Ditto UPTON MAGNA, Jan., 1882:

a. Oss [oss], to try.

h. To recommend a person to a place — I ossed ‘er to a place [Uy ost u’r tōō u’ pl:ai:ss].

Ditto MUCH WENLOCK, Sept., 1880:

a. Oss [oss], to try.

STAFFORDSHIRE: MIDDLE HILLS, north of Leek, May 1880:

a. Oss [oss] = to try.

[61]

STAFFORDSHIRE: FROGHALL, Oct., 1877:

a. Oss [oss] = to try.

Ditto OAKAMOOR, April, 1882:

a. Oss [oss] = to try.

Ditto LONGPORT, Oct., 1877:

a. Tha doesner oss for do it [Dhaa dúz nu’r oss fu’r dóo [or di’ôô] i’t].

WORCESTERSHIRE: BEWDLEY, Oct., 1880:

a. You dunna oss to do it [yoo dún u’ oss tu’ doo i’i].

Ditto TENBURY, Oct., 1880:

a. Oss [oss] = to try.

Oss ior bed [oss fu’r b:aed] = set about going to bed.

FLINTSHIRE (detached): BETTISFIELD, June, 1882:

a. Yo dunna oss to do it [yoa dún u’ oss tu’ dóó iit].

Ditto HANMER, Aug., 1882:

h. I ossed (or osst) ‘im to that place [Uy ost i’m tu’ dhaat plai:ss], i.e. recommended him to it.

B. — ETYMOLOGY.
The Salamanca Corpus: Four Dialect Words (1885)

i. Some years ago it was thought by various writers that oss or awse was derived from the Welsh osio, to offer to do, to essay.


[62]

ii. It is now, however, considered as undoubted by various eminent philologists that Welsh osio was derived from English oss, instead of vice versa.

1. The following paragraph was courteously written for this article by Professor Skeat, June 15. 1887: — “I have now no doubt that W. osio was merely borrowed from Middle-English, and that the Middle-English word was merely borrowed from the French oser, to dare, which occurs as early as the eleventh century in the Chanson de Roland, 1. 1782. This French oser (like the Span, osar, Ital. osare) corresponds to a theoretical Low Latin verb ausare, regularly formed from the stem aus- which appears in ausus, pp. of Lat. audere, to dare. This explanation is given by Littré and Scheler, and universally accepted by French philologists. It is highly important to observe that Old French not only possessed the verb oser, but the adjective os, signifying ‘audacious’, which is nothing but a French spelling of the Latin ausus. This adjective os also occurs in the Chanson de Roland, 1. 2292. We can thus formally establish a connection with the English word; for this very same adjective os occurs in Anglo-French also, with the same sense of ‘audacious’, in the Life of Edward the Confessor, ed. Luard, 1. 4199, a poem of the twelfth century. We thus learn
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that the word was already known in England in the twelfth century, and we cannot doubt that it was borrowed by English from this Anglo-French source. I believe that numerous words of this sort drifted into Welsh chiefly in the fourteenth century, subsequently to the conquest of Wales by Edward I”.

2. I also insert a short paragraph kindly written by Prof. Rhys, of Oxford, August 9, 1887: —“It [Welsh osio] may be derived so far as phonology goes either from French or from English, but not from Latin. I formerly thought it must be from French, but that was because, probably, I was not aware that it existed as an English word. I should now presume it was from English; in any case there is no Welsh word to explain it. as I cannot regard Welsh os ‘if’ as offering any explanation of the meaning”.

NOTE. — My original article on this word was printed in the Manchester City News, December 31, 1881; the space occupied being about three-eighths that of the present article. Early in January, 1882, I sent copies to a number of members of the English Dialect Society, and likewise to other correspondents; and, in response, received about twenty-seven courteous and appreciative acknowledgments.

3. One of these was from Dr. J. A. H. Murray, dated January 11, 1882,* in which he stated that the evidence, so far as known to him, tends to show that Welsh osio was adopted from English oss, and not vice versa.

4. I conclude by quoting part of Hensleigh Wedgwood’s paragraph from his Dict. of English Etymology, 2nd edit., 1872: — To Oss. To offer to do, to aim at, to intend to do. B[ailley], Fr[ench] oser, to dare, adventure, be so bold as to do a thing; Prov[encal] ausar, It[alian] ausare, osare. Venet[ian] ossare, from Lat. audere, ausum, to dare. The difficulty in this derivation is that oss belongs so completely to the popular part of the language that it is very unlikely to have had a Fr. derivation. W[elsh] osio, to offer to do, is undoubtedly the same word, but we are unable to say w’ether it is borrowed from E. oss or vice versa.
i. I have only been able to obtain five Early English quotations containing forms of *oss*, viz.: three **verbal forms** and two **substantives**, which are given below. I came across the **first** in Early Eng. Allit. Poems some time ago; and the **third** — “Quat and has thou *ossed*, &c.” — was quoted in the Glossary to this volume, *s.r. Ossed*; but as from “King Alexander” instead of “Alexander” simply.

Prof. Skeat has recently edited this latter work for the E.E.T.S., and has called it the “Wars of Alexander”, to distinguish it from **three other Poems all called “Alexander”**. He obligingly sent me the **four quotations** from this, with his annotations, August 3, 1887; and added —

“*Oss* [in these quotations] means to offer, proffer, put forward, &c.; and secondarily, to show, to prophesy. It’s all one in spite of great change in sense”.

* This letter has unfortunately got mislaid or lost.

[64]


\[v, past, t. — Ossed = showed —\]

*Jonah* —

‘Alle Þis meschef for me is made at þys tyme,
For I haf greued my god & gulty am founden;
Forþy bereʒ me to be borde, and baþeþes\(^1\) me þer-oute,
Er gete ʒe no happe, I hope for soþe’.

All this mischief is caused by me, therefore cast me overboard.

He *ossed* hym by vnnyuges þat þay vnder-nomen,
þat he watʒ flawan fro þe face of frelych dryʒyn.

He proves to them that he was guilty.

\(^1\)baþe.


Alexander consults the oracle of Apollo, who returns an answer; after which we
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read —

(1) *vb.* — line 2263:

“Thus answars thaim thaire aid gode, and *osses* on this wyse”;
Where the word *osses* seems to mean shows or prophesies.

(2) *vb.* — 1. 2307:

“Quat, and has thou *ossed* to Alexander this ayndain wirdes?”
*i.e.* What, and hast thou shown to Alexander these favourable (?)
destinies?

(3) *sb.* — 1. 868:

“I did bot my deuire to drepe him, me
thinke,
For it awe him noght sa openly slike *ossing*
to make”;
*i.e.* I only did my duty to kill him, methinks.
For he ought not so openly to make such an attempt.

(4) *sb.* — 1. 732:

“Unbehalde the wele on ilk halfe, and have
a gud eʒ, Les on thine ane here-everward thine
*ossingis* lʒt”;
*i.e.* Look round thee well on every side, and
take good care,
Lest on thyself alone, hereafter, thy
prophecies (or thy attempts) alight.

ADDENDA

DIALECTAL RANGE FROM MY OWN RESEARCHES,
1887.

CLEM.
Yorkshire, Barnsley, April, 1887:

*Clammed* to death [klaamd tu’ d:eeūtl].

Ditto Keighley, May, 1887:

*Clam* to death [tlaam tu’ d:eeūth].

N.B.—The older form is said to be *pine*.

Starved to death [stiaavd tu’ d:eeūth] = very cold.

Ditto Haworth, May, 1887:

*Clammed* to death [tlaamd tu’ d:eeūth].

Derbyshire, Church Greasley, Dec., 1886:

He’s *clammed* to death [aey)z tlaamd t’ death].

Staffordshire, Codsall, Dec., 1886:

*Clammed* to death [klaamd tu’ daeth].

Nottinghamshire, Finningley, Aug., 1886:

Nearly *clammed* to death [neeûrlì’ tlaamd tu’ daeth]; some say — *Clammed* to
deeād [tlaamd tu’ deeūd].

Ditto Bawtry, Aug., 1886:

*Clam* [tlaam’].

Leicestershire, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Dec., 1886:

Half *clammed* [:aif tlaamd].

Ditto Upton, 31 miles S.W. of Market Bosworth, Dec., 1886:

He’s welly (nearly) *clammed* [ey)z wael-ī’ tlaamd].

Warwickshire, Atherstone, Dec., 1886:

*Clammed* to death [tlaamd tu’ daeth].

ADDENDA: LAKE.

LAKE = TO PLAY.

Yorkshire, Barnsley, April, 1887:

*Lake* [lai-k].

Ditto Birkenshaw (or Dudley Hill), near Bradford, April, 1887:

*Lake* [l:i:aeūk].
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Ditto Keighley, May, 1887:

We s’l lakin’ [Wěē] sl bēē ƚ:eůki’n].

Ditto Calverley, Near Leeds, June 1, 1887:

I’m lakin’ [aʊ9m ƚ:eůki’n].

At Easter and Whitsunide of the present year (1887), I visited the following places in S.W. Yorkshire: —

**Easter, April 9th to 12th.** — Thorne, Barnsley, Wakefield, Birkenshaw, Bradford, and Halifax;

**Whitsunide, May 28th to June 1st.** — Halifax, Keighley, Haworth, Skipton, Ribblehead, Giggleswick, Settle, Saltaire and Calverley;

And most of these places I found the word *lake* was regularly used in dialectal speech to the exclusion of *play*. 