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AGRICULTURAL DIALECT WORDS.



I.—WILTSHIRE

With Notes by Professor W. W. Skeat

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In the third volume of the "Beauties of Wiltshire," by John Britton, published in 1825, there is a list of the provincial words of that county. Mr. Akerman in 1842 published a glossary of Wiltshire dialect. Until 1879, these were apparently the only two lists of Wiltshire words. In that year Professor Skeat reprinted Britton's list, comparing it with Akerman's Glossary, and making sundry additions from other sources, the net result being, it was said, that this list practically contained "all that was to be had concerning Wiltshire words before the publication of Halliwell's Dictionary." But a very interesting glossary has been overlooked by all these authorities. It is contained in pp. 258-268 of Davis's "Agriculture of Wiltshire," 1813, 8vo. The importance of the Agricultural reports are well-known to the English Dialect Society, and in 1880, they published Mr. Jas. Britten's valuable "Old Country and Farming Words gleaned from Agricultural Books." The fifth section of this work is derived "from the Reports of the Agricultural Survey 1793-1813," but it does "not include all the counties surveyed by the board of Agriculture." Accordingly the following glossary has not before been brought to the notice of Dialect students; and it will be found that many additions may now be made to the list of Wiltshire words. But the importance of this glossary is not limited to the additions it makes to the word-list; of far more importance are the definitions it supplies to all the words. These definitions take us back to the times when the words were living realities applied to existing agricultural institutions, and it cannot escape attention how archaic these institutions were.

The original is not arranged in alphabetical or any other order; but in arranging it for these pages no alteration whatever has been made in the phraseology used, both word and definition being given exactly as they stand in the 1813 glossary. A reference is added between square brackets where the word is to be found in either Akerman or Britton and in Mr. Britten's "Old Country Words." It will be seen by this means what is the nature of the additions from this list to the other Wiltshire lists.

Professor Skeat has very kindly looked through the proof-sheets, and his notes are indicated by his initials. Professor Skeat says, "In every case the author's etymological suggestions are wrong."

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What he *did* understand was the country talk and the country uses. Such men are of great use in their way. It is a valuable and useful list beyond doubt."

AGISTMENT—Cattle at agistment are those taken to keep by the week or month. [Linc.:

See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, iv.]

AILES—Barley-ails, the beards of the barley.[See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, i.]

AIS, or as—Harrows and drags are frequently called by this term in South Wilts from being originally made in the shape of the letter A. [A bad guess; it is more likely to be the M.E. *eythe*, A.S. *egethe*, a harrow. The pl. would be *aithes* in mod. E., and the *th* would be dropped as in *clothes*. The letter *a* was called *aa*.—W.W.S.]

AISLES—Wheat aisles or isles, an indeterminate number of sheaves set up together in a double row.

ARRAYED, OR RAYED—Used speaking of corn; thus corn well arrayed, or rayed, is corn well dressed and cleaned. [Compare Ree or Ray in Britten's *Old Country Words*, iii,]

BACKHEAVED—Winnowed a second time.

BANE—See "Coath."

BERRY—Wheat is a good berry, when the grain is plump and well filled. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii. and v.]

BOSSELL, corn-marygold—This plant is the plague of the sandy lands in the barley crop, and is frequently destroyed by chalking.

BOURNES—The vallies between the chalk hills or the rivers in those vallies; but usually applied to the river and valley jointly.

BREAD-BOARD—See "grate-board."

BRINDED—Colour of light brown approaching to dunn.

BRITTED—Shed [, as] corn. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii.]

CAFFING or caving-rudder—The winnowing fan and tackle.

CAMMOCK—Rest-harrow.[See Glossary to Piers Plowman.—W.W.S.]

CATCH LAND—Pieces of arable land in common fields of equal sizes, the property not being ascertained, but he that ploughed first chose first. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, iii.]

CATCH MEADOWS—Those on a declivity where the water falls from one level trench to another.

CAVE, or dust—The chaff of the wheat and oats which is generally given to the horse. [See "caving," Britten's *Old Country Words*, vi.]

CHARLOCK—A weed in parts of South Wilts.

CHILVER-HOGS—The name of sheep from Christmas till shear time. [A.S. *cilforlamb*; see *Wilts Glossary*.—E.D.S.]

COATH or BANE—The rot in sheep of which the first symptoms are flukes, provincially "plaice" in the liver. [Compare "Plaice-worm" in Britten's *Old Country Words*, ii. See *Coathe* in Halliwell; A.S. *cothu*, disease.—W.W.S.]

COCKED BARLEY and OATS—Barley and oats are always poked or cocked, seldom carried from the swath. Oats sometimes reaped and sheaved in North Wilts. Hay is poked, cocked, first in foot-cocks, and when dry in hay-cocks. [Compare the same word used for "hay-making" in Britten's *Old Country Words*, i. iii.]

COMBES—The wooded side of hills. [A *combe* is a hollow in a hill-side; W. *cwm*.—W.W.S.]

CORD of PLOCK WOOD—A pile of cleft wood, eight feel long, four feet high, and four feet wide [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, iii. vi. vii.]

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COUCH—Black couch, *agrostis stolonifera*, or couchy bent. White couch, *triticum repens*, called in other counties stoyle squith or quitch.

COULTER—The cutting part of a plough, which divides the land.

CROOKS—Wiltshire shepherds seldom use crooks, as the sheep are so much easier caught when in fold, but they always used dogs to keep the sheep out of bounds, as by these means are enabled to feed close to an unenclosed piece of standing corn without injuring it.

CROWPECK—Shepherd's purse, or shepherd's pedler.

- DOWNs—The chalk hills, particularly when in a permanent state of pasturage.
- DRAGs—A provincial name for harrows. [Derby, See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii.]
- DRAIL—The iron bow of a plough from which the traces draw, and which has teeth to set the furrow wider or narrower.
- DRASHOLS—See "threshles." [*Drashel* is the common Wilts pronunciation of *thrashel*; so also *drow* for *throw*.—W.W.S.]
- DRAUGHTs—Hazel-rod selected for hurdle-making.
- DRIFTS—The rows in which underwood is laid when felled.
- DRUGGING TIMBER—Drawing [timber] out of the wood under a pair of wheels.
- EA-GRASS—After-grass.
- EDGE-GROWED—Barley is edge-growed, or in two shares twi-ripe. Barley coming irregularly from a want of rain after first sown, of course ripening unequally. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii. *Twi-ripe*, ripening twice, or at two different times; cf. *twi-bill*.—W.W.S.]
- FIELD—Parts of a barn, that part of a barn between beam and beam: e.g. a barn of four fields. [Also called a *bay*.—W.W.S.]
- FLYALS—See "threshles."
- FLOWING or FLOATING MEADOWS—Those that are laid up in ridges, with water carriages on each ridge and drains between.
- FOSELS or FOLDSHORES—The stakes to which the hurdles are fastened with a loose twig-wreath at the top. [Fosel=fold sail; see *sails*.—W.W.S.]
- FRITH—Thorns or bush underwood. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, iii. vi.]
- FRYING, FREAING, or FRITHING—Making covered drains filled up with brush-wood.
- GAY WHEAT—[Wheat] rank in the blade.
- GORE—A triangular piece of ground. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, vi.]

GRATE BOARD or BREAD BOARD—The mould or earth-board of a plough which turns the furrow; earth being frequently called grate.

GRATINGS—The right of feed in the stubs or stubbles.

GRIPLE—Wheat is laid down in gripe when laid down in handfuls untied. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, v.]

GRIPING or TAKING UP GRIPES—Draining with covered drains chiefly with turf or stone. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, iii.]

GROUND-REST—Wood on which the shares of a plough rest. [Not at all; I believe *rest* is for *wrest*; see *wreest* in *Old Country Words*, iv.—W.W.S.]

HAIN UP THE LAND—To shut it up for a crop of hay. [West Eng., see Britten's *Old Country Words*, vi.; *Wilts Glossary*, E.D.S.]

HAM, and particularly MILL HAM—A narrow strip of ground by the side of a river. [Devon, Britten's *Old Country Words*, vi., sub voce "haugh."]

HAND—Corn has a good hand when it is dry and slippery in the sack, a bad hand when damp and rough.

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HARLED—Oats, well harled, or well kidded [*i.e.*] well eared. [Britten records a different meaning, *Old Country Words*, ii.]

HARROWS, parts of, called by provincial names. See "ais," "drags," "harrows," "shares," "tines," "whippence."

HARROWS—The longitudinal bars of harrows.

HAULING is applied to the carriage not only of timber but of all other commodities.

HAYES—As a termination of a word, such as calf-hayes, cow-hayes, &c.; a piece of ground enclosed with a live hedge; from the French word *haie*, a hedge. [A common error; it is simply the A.S. *hege*, a hedge.—W.W.S.]

HAY-RICKS are usually made round and cut out at the bottom, from three or four feet high, to make the rick stand like a ninepin, sometimes oblong with coated ends, not gable ends.

HEALED—Wheat, not well healed, not well covered with earth when sown. [Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii. A.S. *helan*, to cover.—W.W.S.]

HINTED—A barn process, well hinted—well secured. [Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii. From A.S. *hentan*, to grasp.—W.W.S.]

HOG—From hough or hook to cut; as a hog'd mane or hog'd thorn edge, originally meant a cut or castrated animal and in that sense was applied equally to all kinds, as a hog colt, a hog sheep, a hog pig; but at this time it is used in a more extended sense for any animal of a year old, as a hog bull, a chilver hog sheep.

HOP and RAY—Hop, clover, and ray-grass sown together, a very common and good custom.

HURDLES—For sheep-folding, six feet long, three and a half feet high, made of hazel-rods closely-wreathed, the upright rods called sails and the long rods wreath.

ISLES—See "aisles."

ISNET—Alkanet bugloss.

KIDDED—Beans or oats well kidded [have] the stalks full of pods; [they are] bunched, when planted in bunches and not in rows. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, i. and ii.]

KNEE-SICK—Wheat is knee-sick [when] weak in the stalk and dropping on the first joint. [Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, v.]

KNIFE—Cutting-knife, the hay-knife; the blade, a right-angled triangle, and the handle of wood, bent.

LAINING—When the smith dresses the wing and point of a share it is called laining.

LAMBS'-CAGES—Cribs for foddering sheep in fold; they are usually made semi-cylindrical, with cleft Ash-rods about six to seven feet lon and about one foot diameter.

LINCH, LINCHET or LANDSHARD—The mere green-sward dividing two pieces of arable in a common-field called in Hants, a lay-bark. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii. iii; Seebohm's *Village Community*. 5. *Linch* is quite a distinct word from *land-shard*.—W.W.S]

LINED—An animal is lined who has a white back.

LODGED—Wheat is lodged [when] thrown down by wet or wind. [Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, ii.]

LOT-MEADS—Common meadows divided into acres or equal sized pieces; but the property to the hay of each piece being determined yearly by lot.

LUG—Called in other counties a rod, pole, or perch, or land-yard (all these names meaning the stick by which it is measured), is of three lengths in this county—15, 18, and 16 1/2 feet. The first of these measures is getting out of use, but is still retained in some places, particularly in increasing

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mason's work. The second is the ancient forest measure, and is still used in many part of the county for measuring wood-land. But the last, which is the statute perch, is by much the most general. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, vii.; *Wilts Glossary*, E.D.S.]

LUGS—Poles. [Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, v. See above.]

MAIN-PIN, or THOROUGH-PIN—The pin which fastens the bed of a waggon to the carriage.

MAUDLIN, or MATHERN, or WILD CHAMOMILE—These weeds usually prevail when the ground is overworked and made too light. Common to cold wet arable lands in North Wilts, [Britten and Holland's *English Plant-Names*.]

MELILOT, or KING'S CLAVER—[See Britten and Holland's *English Plant-Names*.]

MILLED HOP—Hop clover-seed cleaned from the husk.

NEAT CATTLE—Bull, cow, calf: one-yearling heifer or bull, first year; two-yearling heifer or bull, second year. [See Britten's *Old Country and Farming Words*, iii.]

PEEL—The pillow over the axle of a waggon.

PENNING—See "Poyning."

PICK— See "Prong."

PIGS—Boar and sow; shoots, young pigs of three or four months old; maiden pig, a young sow that has not bred; boar stag, a castrated boar.

PITCHED MARKET—Where corn is exposed for sale as in Salisbury, Devizes, and Warminster, and not sold by sample.

PLAICE—See "coath."

PLOCK WOOD—Cleft wood.

PLOUGH—A waggon and horses, or cart and horses together, are called a plough in South Wilts. [In Somerset a waggon. See Britten's *Old Country Words*, iv.]

PLOUGH—Parts called by provincial names, see "coultter," "drail," "grate-board," "ground-rest," "laining," "shoot," "whippence."

POOKED—See "cocked."

POT—*Dung-pot*, a dung cart. See "Sole."

POYNING, or PENNING—Shutting up the sheep in the fold.

PRONG, or PICK—A fork for the stable or for hay-making.

PROUD—Wheat is winter-proud [when] too rank. [See Britten's *Old Country Words*, i. ii.; sub voce "winter-proud."]

RANGES—Two drifts. See "Drifts."

RAVES, or SIDES—A part of a waggon called the waggon-bed. [See *Raves* fully described in Halliwell.—W.W.S.]

RAYED—See "arrayed."

REAP-HOOK—This is a short-handled hook without teeth, the blade bent beyond the square of the handle, and used to cut to the hand a handful at a time.

RED WEED—The red poppy, which is the plague of the down-lands in the wheat crop if sown when the land is dry.

SAILS—The upright rods of hurdles used for sheep-folding.

SCOOP—A shovel.

SCYTHE or SIVE—The handle [is] called the snead, usually about four feet long in the blade, and the stroke about six feet.

SEED-TIP—The box in which the sower carries his seed. [An error for *seed-lip*, M.E. *seed-leep*; see *Lep* in *O. Country Words*, vi.—W.W.S.]

SHARES—The cross-bars of harrows.

SHEEP—Ram, ewe; lambs till about Christmas; wether-hogs, chilver-hogs from thence till shear-time, two-teeth wethers or ewes from the shear-time after

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one year old; six-teeth, from the shear-time after three years old; full mouthed, from the shear-time after four years old.

SHOOT—Fore-shoot and backward-shoot. Two pieces of wood immediately behind the coulter of a plough.

SHOOTS—Young pigs of three or four months old.

SHOUL—Usually means a shovel, but frequently a spade. [See *Wilts Glossary*, E.D.S.]

SILLOW—See "sole."

SLEIGHTING or SLAYING—Depasturing the sheep in the downs, whence a sheep-down is frequently called a sheep-sleight.

SOLE, SULL, or SILLOW—The word sole, now sull, or sillow, meant a particular kind of plough—viz., a sole-plough, the old ploughs being made without a sole to the share, having only a socket to fasten on the fore-foot or chip; and when these ploughs became general they were called soles, and so distinguished from the old kind of ploughs which are now scarcely known in the country. [See Britten's *Old Country Words*, i. iii., vi.] To understand these terms, recourse must be had to those counties where the old order and terms of husbandry still remain—viz., Devon and Cornwall, where the ploughing is done by oxen, and the carriage by horses under the pack saddle. When a cart or wain was wanted, and which was seldom the case except for timber, the plough-beasts were used, and it was said the plough did such and such work; when dung was to be carried, it was put in tow pots or tubs across the horses' backs, whence dung-carts are still called pots. [Very confused; of course *sole* is a totally distinct word from *sull* and *sillow*; the two latter represent A.S. *sulh*, a plough; and are older words than *sole*.—W.W.S.]

SPANCES—A part of a waggon called the waggon-bed.

- SPARKED—Cattle of two colours, mottled.[Mr. Skeat suggests "probably of too active a kind," see Britten's *Old Country Words*, iv., but the above explanation gives the dialect meaning.—I retract.—W.W.S.]
- SPURLING-BOARDS, fenders, side-boards, end-boards—[Boards] to prevent the corn from flying out of the floor.
- STOWLS, or STOOLS—The stocks on which underwood grows.[Britten's *Old Country Words*, vi., explains this word as the same as *moots*, roots of trees. See also Wilts Glossary, E.D.S.]
- STUBS—The stubble of all corn is usually called stubs, as wheat-stubs, barley-stubs, &c.. The right of feed in the stubs is sometimes called gratings.
- SULL—See "sole."
- SWATH—Hay [is] in swath when just mowed. [See Britten's *Old Country Words*, iii; *Wilts Glossary*, E.D.S.]
- TARE—Vetch with wind, the red and white striped convolvulus, these two plants are the plague of a weak wheat-crop in the sand-lands. [With wind is an error for *withwind*, *i.e.*, convolvulus.—W.W.S.]
- TEDDED—Hay is tedded when first thrown abroad. [See Britten's *Old Country Words*, iii., vi.]
- TENANTRY FIELDS and DOWNS—Fields and downs in a state of commonage on the ancient feudal system of copyhold tenancy.
- THRESHLES—A pair of threshles or drashols, or flyals, [*i.e.*] a flail.
- TINES—The teeth of the harrows or drags, so called because formerly made of wood from the old word *tine* a stake. [See Britten's *Old Country Words*, ii., iii., and vi. Etymology is quite wrong; *tine* is A.S. *tind*, a tooth, prong of a harrow.—W.W.S.]
- TINING—A new enclosure made with a dead hedge; from the old word *tine*, a stake. [No; from M.E. *tinen*, to enclose.—W.W.S.]
- TITHINGS—Ten sheaves of wheat set up together in a double row. [See Britten's *Old Country Words*, v.]

TON of ROUGH TIMBER, 40 feet, the load 50 feet, is only used when timber is hewn for the navy.

TRENCHING or GUTTERING LAND—Draining it with open drains.

TWI-RIPE—See "edge-growed."

WAGGON, parts of—Called by provincial names:—raves or sides, spances, compose the waggon-bed; peel [is] the pillow over the axle; main-pin or thorough-pin, the pin which fastens the bed to the carriage.

WAKED—Hay is waked when raked together in rows. [See *Wakes* in Halliwell.—W.W.S.]

WHEAT—Reaping is done with a short crooked hook in handfuls or gripes.

WHEAT-REED—Straw preserved unthrashed for thatching as it is usually done in the south-west part of the county, the ears having been previously cut off to be thrashed.

WHIP LAND—Land not divided by meres, but measured out, when ploughed, by the whip's length.

WHIPPENCE—The weigh-beam and bodkins, the fore-carriage of a plough as also of the harrow and drag.

WIND-MOWS—Cocks of a waggon-load or more, into which hay is sometimes put previous to ricking in catching weather.

WINTER-PROUD—See "proud."

WOOD-WAX—Common in poor pasture; flower yellow.

WREATHS—The long rods of hurdle used for sheep-folding.

YARD of LAND—A quarter of an acre, so called because in ancient common field lands where the furlongs were forty poles long, the quarter of an acre was a land-yard or pole at the end.

YARD-LAND—That is land sufficient for a plough of oxen and a yard to winter them. Ancient copyhold tenements into which manors were usually divided each being occupied by one tenant and enjoying equal stinted rights of common. [The importance of this definition as a current custom of Wiltshire will be fully seen by reference to Seebohm's *Village Community*, pp. 117-125.]