Wright about Wight: A dialect glossary of the Isle of Wight based on EDD Online

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Abstract
Describing specific dialect areas in terms of their lexis is an attractive idea now that the latest version of the English Dialect Dictionary Online (EDD Online 3.0, 2019) allows for quick and easy lexical retrievals of English dialect words of the Late Modern English period. This paper uses the Isle of Wight (I.W.) as a test case for putting such an idea into practice. The 137 words uniquely attributed in the EDD to I.W. are analyzed and interpreted in relation to the 1500-odd words used on I.W. alongside other areas of the UK. The paper informs the reader of the available query modes and discusses their pros and cons, quantifying and mapping the different numbers of isolated words in use on I.W. versus those unique to other English counties. The larger number of words that the island shared with the counties of the “mainland” will likewise be considered, thus allowing for first steps towards a “dialectometrical” analysis. The findings are related to the historical background of I.W., particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Keywords: dialectology; lexicography; Late Modern English; dialectometry; dialect geography

1. Introduction
Joseph Wright (1850–1930), the compiler of the English Dialect Dictionary (EDD; 1898–1905), described the dialectal distribution of his words and dialect features in terms of counties, in particular as far as England is concerned. The number of references to counties overall amounts to 63,687 (40,259 to England alone), whereas there are only 15,528 ascriptions of dialect items to larger areas (“regions” and “nations”), such as the Highlands of Scotland and the US, respectively. Exact numbers such as the ones just given can be provided by the English Dialect Dictionary Online 3.0 (EDD Online; Markus, 2019a), a database of the EDD, created by a research team at the University of Innsbruck (supervisor of project: Manfred Markus). The interface of this database allows for quick and easy retrievals of English dialect words of the Late Modern English period from 1700 to 1904. Its sophisticated potential has generally been depicted in previous publications (e.g., Markus, 2019b, 2020, 2021a). This paper suggests focusing on EDD Online’s usability as a tool for creating county glossaries, taking the Isle of Wight as a test case.

The EDD, which is the most comprehensive English dialect dictionary ever published, refers to the Isle of Wight (I.W.) 3,887 times. This is quite a number, given that Wright himself was a Yorkshireman and, therefore, naturally favoured northern English counties (cf., Praxmarer, 2010). By comparison, the Isle of Man can only boast of 1,216 references. This major role of I.W. prompts a few questions: Did Wright have special reasons for being so interested in I.W.? specific words? Did the fact count that I.W. had been part of Hampshire, the “mainland” county facing it, until it became an autonomous county in 1890? Or was it simply the dialectal or sociocultural status of the island that awakened Wright’s keen interest? A linguistic question to be raised in the face of almost 4,000 references to I.W. in the EDD concerns the validity and interpretability of the statistical numbers just mentioned. Statistics, as we all know, can easily be misleading. To be convincing, the numbers must be made transparent. This then is the second test object of this paper, EDD Online itself, with its tools of quantification.

Quantification and the measuring of dialect distribution (dialectometry) are two of the leading topics in recent dialectology. With all its ramifications, including the creation of maps based on frequencies, dialectometry is, however, a very ambitious theory. This paper will only scratch the surface of the theoretical and dialectometrical implications of quantification and focus instead on the practical aspects of EDD Online as a tool for providing dialect glossaries.

2. EDD Online searches in the (default) OR-mode
The “OR-mode” in EDD Online implies that different objects of search (e.g., dialect areas) are being combined by the Boolean operator OR, rather than by AND or ONLY. OR is the default query mode. Figure 1, on top of the right half, shows the three options, with OR in this case used for our query.

The screenshot of Figure 1 may introduce readers who are not familiar with the interface of EDD Online to the EDD’s subdivision of dialect areas into counties, regions, and nations as well as to four further options (the blue buttons on the top right) applied by Wright for different degrees of precision: only the first one, “prec” (for “precise”), implies exact reference to the whole area at issue, in our case the Isle of Wight. The other three buttons mark a part(ial), fuzzy, or directional (north, south, etc.) reference to dialect areas. Our interface by default keeps all four options
activated, which seems justified in the face of the overall small role of nonprecise dialectal references in the EDD.

However, the main point in Figure 1 is the result of our query presented in the retrieval window (the left half). As can be seen, the search provides 1,550 items (i.e., headwords), with 1,549 entries involved. Both numbers are automatically provided in the dark bar above the retrieval window. The references to the Isle of Wight come in the abbreviated "naked" form "I.W." or with additional index figures (1, 2, etc.) that stand for Wright’s main sources for the island, with the coded abbreviations identified in the EDD’s Bibliography. These indexed source references have been interpreted, tagged, and counted by the Innsbruck team as information both on the sources themselves and simultaneously on dialect areas. On this basis of counting, the interface, in the background, sums up all the ascriptions to "I.W.\*", in this case 3,887. The summation is triggered by an option "column 2 counted," provided in the small sorting menu (the white bar above the retrieval window). Figure 2 shows this rearrangement of the result list of Figure 1.

The entry example ACOLD of Figure 2 reveals the principles underlying our OR-query. Each headword with at least one I.W. reference is included, no matter whether other counties are concerned as well. Moreover, this "all-inclusive" mode of retrieving dialect words compiles all I.W. words affiliated with the island, no matter for what reason. Figure 3, in the sorting mode that focuses on the headwords concerned by our query, presents the beginning of the A–Z glossary list.

Figure 3 shows with the opened entry that Wright also included prefixes such as a- in his lemmas (though lemmatised affixes are extremely rare). One can also see that I.W., in the given case, only plays a marginal role in the entry, as part of the source reference I.W.1 (see the blue marking). It is, however, technically feasible to extract the words of the retrieval list on the left by skipping the affixes and by copying and pasting the individual entries on the right. While this creation of an I.W. glossary means some work for the 1,549 entries, it can be done. But does it make sense?

The possible reasons for affiliating headwords and counties in the EDD are manifold; the ascription of a headword to a dialect source (such as I.W.1) is only one of them. Other reasons are linguistically motivated. The EDD is full of information on pronunciation, spelling variants, types of word formation (such as compounds), etymology, the time when a form was in use, and many other categories of linguistic interest. The dialect marker “I.W.” may, in the context of an entry, refer to any of these criteria. This referential complexity is an asset of EDD Online when it comes to specific linguistic issues (cf., Markus, 2021 on the compatibility of source information with other query parameters and filters). However, when the aim is to create a county glossary, as in our case, the entries found in the OR-mode are overloaded with linguistic information that may only marginally be connected with I.W. What we need is a search mode that retrieves unique headwords of the island, excluding both linguistic features as criteria of the affiliation and other counties than I.W. In EDD Online, this search mode is provided by the tool of ONLY-queries.

3. Search for unique headwords in the ONLY-mode

The predictable wish of users to select the lexis unique to a certain area motivated the Innsbruck programmers to implement a button
for dialect-specific queries, called ONLY (see the button above the filters). This offers itself as the first step for creating a glossary.

The output of the query of Figure 4 is 137 headwords. This is not even a tenth of the headwords retrieved in the OR-mode (Figure 3), but the good news is that Wright has excluded any other area than I.W. Again the default mode of the interface is to present the words together with the abbreviations for the dialect area or areas selected by the user, as shown in Figure 1.8 In the present case, however, users would certainly be interested in the list of the headwords alone, given that all of them have “I.W.” as a dialect marker and that no other county is involved. The little white box on top of the retrieval window allows for access to different modes of presentation. One is column 1 a-z. A short extract of the result is shown in Figure 5.

The 137 words unique to I.W. are presented as a glossary in the Appendix. The chance of easily producing glossaries of this kind and quality—they would generally be more substantial and

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Figure 2. Search for I.W. words, with quantification of the dialect references involved and the first entry opened.

Figure 3. Listing I.W. headwords (based on OR search mode).
professional than the glossaries published by the English Dialect Society (EDS) in the nineteenth century—is also enticing in view of other English counties. For Hampshire, for example, the interface delivers 284 headwords and for Devonshire 1,105. Users are encouraged to produce such county-specific dialect glossaries based on EDD Online, on condition that they give copyright credit to their source of information.

Glossaries of this kind would have to be examined manually and in an analysis that focuses on the individual entries. This is the concern of the next section.

4. Interpretation of the glossary

Many samples in the Appendix glossary encourage some linguistic interpretation. ALEER, for example, is an obscured formation of West Germanic origin (cf. German leer) with a reduced prefix a-. Hoping for some systematic insights, users could investigate the etymologies and word formations of the other headwords. Wright provides French cognates for BRISH (‘brush’), RIXE (‘combat’) and SAMPER (< OFr ‘herbe de S. Pierre’), east Frisian cognates for LEBB (‘the stomach of a calf’) and MIZE (Efris. mis ‘humid’), and OE precursors for ALEER (‘empty’) and SLETCH (‘cease’). This etymological dispersal suggests a multilingual background of I.W. and quite agrees with the hybrid etymological heritage of English as a whole. However, given that Wright was generally fond of adding etymological explanations, the overall poor results concerning etymological influences in I.W. underline what we can observe with the other headwords as well: they are, even if originally the result of import, usually assimilated and sometimes “homemade” and, therefore, hardly attest to language contacts in the past. The isolated situation on the island (at least in Modern English before the nineteenth century) and the frequent change of earlier occupants (on which some details in Section 5) may have, by and large, discouraged borrowings and encouraged other types of word formation.

A more striking characteristic of the glossary words is assimilation, a process of erosion that resulted in many deviant formations (which Wright called “corrupt” forms): PREDNEY is a variant of “presently,” SKURE is another spelling for “secure,” RAATHY is a derivation of “wrath” equipped with deviant spellings (<wr> → <r>, <a> → <aa>). VLUCKER is a variant of “flutter,” SWOP stands for the standard form “sop,” TARNELLY for “eternally,” TINUALLY for “continually.” Another unique form is N-ECKLE, which is an “agglutinated” “an hackle” (meaning “covering”). The most frequent type of word formation to be addressed as a subtype of nonstandard forms is based on apophesis or aphaeresis, the loss of unstressed word-initial vowels or syllables, respectively. Thus, in addition to TARNELLY and TINUALLY just mentioned, we have...

Alongside VLUCKER, some other special spellings that deviate from the standard are phonologically motivated.11 For example, the I.W. dialect often substituted voiced fricatives for voiceless ones, such as /v/ for /f/—as in VIRE-PAN (‘fire-pan’), VIRE-SPANNEL (‘dog given to lying before the fire’), VARE (‘fare’) and VARMER (‘farmer’). This feature is generally known from other English southwestern counties such as Somerset. This also holds true for other voiced instead of voiceless fricatives, such as /z/ for /s/. In our I.W.-glossary, the <x>-spellings in MIZE (for ‘moise’ water’) and PURVIZER (‘proviso’) are interpretable as analogous cases of the /v–f/-alternation.

Another phonetic feature for I.W., seen in CAA (‘cry like a rook’), RAATHY (‘wrathy/angry’), SPAAN (‘a scolding, abusive woman’), et al. is /a:/ expressed by <aa>-spelling. Such double spellings of vowels are survivals from Middle English (see Markus, 2001). They were mostly practiced in England’s north, because in the area south of the Humber, /a:/ was generally raised to /ɑː/ (in historical notation: /a/ to /ɑ/).12 The use of <aa> in the south is an example of persistent survival, typical of rural and relic areas and not surprising in the case of an island. On I.W., it is unique when used in diphthongs, as in MAAYOCK (‘maycock’). <ee> and <oo> are likewise concerned: KEEAP (‘cape’), SOOURDER (<oo>) for /u:/; ‘game-cock’).13

However, singular observations of this kind based on a relatively short glossary are bound to lack statistical evidence. The words found this way are sparse and could be untypical of the given feature. While the words as such are unique, the implicit types of word formation and the characteristics of phonetics/phonology, spelling, or whatever else may not be I.W.-specific and might well be shared by other areas. What we therefore need is a comparison to other counties. Even the very number of the unique words mentioned earlier (137) is meaningless unless related to the frequencies concerning other counties. Moreover, the items really worth comparing are not the numbers of headwords or entries (their absolute digits depend on Wright’s favouring or disfavouring counties), but the numbers of dialect references that come with the headwords or entries. The Innsbruck team has therefore implemented the possibility of clustering ONLY-queries, that is, of addressing several counties (likewise regions or nations) simultaneously.14 Users can, for example, combine all the counties of the south of England—Hampshire, Sussex, Surrey, Kent, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Devonshire, Somerset, Cornwall, and the Isle of Wight—to see that where unique words are predominant or, on the other hand, the lexis is more a result of dialect mixture. The map in Figure 6 presents the numbers of unique headwords’ county references normalised in relation to their totals (i.e., the sum of all the references to the ten counties) as well as to the overall references to each of these counties in the whole dictionary.15

The map in Figure 6 reveals a distribution of lexical segregation versus mixture in England’s south in line with what one would expect: the two extremes are Berkshire (in royal blue) with the fewest isolated words, and Cornwall with the most. In the middle, the lighter blue that includes Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Wiltshire, Surrey, and the Isle of Wight marks an area of some relative mutual influence (the %-number of unique words is 20–29). We can also see that Devon ranks higher than Somerset, which, for its part, is on an equal level with Kent and Sussex. In sum, I.W. does not have a higher normalised percentage of unique words than the mainland counties facing it.

Apart from this comparison of southern counties with regard to unique words, users may wish to compare the numbers of headwords themselves as attributed to the counties, rather than the county references. The ensuing ranking list (bottom-up) is: Surrey (113), Berkshire (127), I.W. (137), Hampshire (284), Sussex (294), Dorset (362), Wiltshire (365), Kent (488), Somerset (746), Devonshire (1,105), and Cornwall (1,439). By and large, these figures confirm the earlier results based on county references: the Isle of Wight did not harbor many unique words but is, alongside Surrey and Berkshire, at the ranking list’s lower end. The marginal counties of the south, that is, Somerset, Devonshire and Cornwall in the west and Kent in the east, dominate the scene concerning lexical specificity. The counties in the mid-south were, like the Isle of Wight, less productive in coining or keeping words of their own.

However, the latter ranking list just described is, in my view, of limited value because it is not based on normalised figures of usage frequency, whereas those of the county references are. Another,
practical, advantage of the reference figures is, of course, that they do not have to be gleaned manually but are provided by the EDD software and that they can automatically be transferred to a map. The main drawback of simply counting words is, however, a conceptual one: when one thinks about it, unique words of an area are never equally integrated in people’s usage. They may be part of everyday lexical usage or marginal, and there may be just one source of evidence in the EDD or several sources. It therefore makes sense not to consider them as if they were all alike but to “weigh” them according to their degree of usage integration. The more often Wright found reasons for ascribing them to I.W., the more evidence this is for their lexical relevance.

EDD Online harbors many types of statistical data beyond head-words and county references. Within seconds, users can retrieve seventy-two derivations, 208 compounds, 333 combinations, 279 phrases, 739 variants (with evidence of the spellings tackled earlier), 244 headwords with an etymological marker, and 1,460 references to etymological precursors up to 1500, all and sundry attributed to I.W. On this basis we could raise many questions on linguistic features of the I.W. dialect. This paper, however, has focused on the glossary as a whole, its production, and the possibility of drawing some provisional conclusions on lexical features. An in-depth study of detailed linguistic features must be undertaken on another occasion.

The task that remains in this paper is an interpretation of our observations in relation to I.W.

5. The Isle of Wight: Geography, history, and its dialect lexis

For readers less familiar with the geography of Britain, Figure 7 presents a simple map, free of copyright restrictions, of I.W. and its English mainland surroundings. The Isle of Wight, with its geographical position in the Channel off the coast of Hampshire, its mild climate, and its natural beauty, has always attracted occupants and settlers, and later, tourists and residents. Its history of the last two thousand years reveals that it was of interest to the Romans, the Frisians (who, as seafarers and traders, were immediate...
neighbors), the Jutes (who settled along the southern English coast from Kent to Hampshire), and the West Saxons (who conquered the island in 688 under King Ceadwalla). The new millennium brought the influx of the Danes (Cnut), the Anglo-Normans with their French dialect, and the French of the Hundred Years’ War. Later, I.W. was administered as part of Hampshire, so that some linguistic influence from the mainland can be assumed. In the 19th century, I.W. became a favourite destination of holidaymakers and tourists, and many well-to-do people, including Queen Victoria, had a residence there. In the early 1800s, the first steamship ferry began to operate, one of the reasons why the island is now relatively densely populated (372/km²).

In sum, the history of the island is marked by many new settlers, and different cultures and languages. In the 19th century, it was mainly affected by the influx of residents and tourists from the British mainland. Though an island, it did not remain a rural retreat area. Its most striking dialect features in Late Modern English accord with this role of attracting many, from conquerors and monarchs to Jimi Hendrix, who played his last concert there.

Given this mixed historical and cultural background, it does not come as a surprise that the glossary of the I.W. is only moderately dialect-specific. Words pass language borders quickly, so that a comparison of the unique words of I.W. with those of the other southern English counties, normalised by correlative usage frequencies, led to the conclusion that I.W. was lexically less isolated than, for example, Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset, on the one hand, and Kent, on the other hand. Instead, our quantification reflects the affinity to the mainland counties north of I.W. (Hampshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, and Surrey) and fewer such words than the counties in the southwest and in the southeast. It combines some traditional modes of spelling and etymological traces of languages or dialects of former settlers with the tendency to clip and, thus, uproot words. The spelling variants have revealed voicing and aphesis as the main phonological/phonotactic characteristics, but they proved to be far from I.W.-specific. Orthographic doublets of vowels (<aa>, <oo>, and <ee>) are likewise generally nonspecific except in digraphs of the type <aae>, where they apparently are. However, the text basis for evidential conclusions is too small. In any case, the <aa>-spelling is a relic from Middle English.

By and large, however, I.W. was, by the nineteenth century, not an island of lexical survivals, but—both lexically and administratively—a part of Hampshire. The overall moderate specificity of its dialect, if we dare to give reasons, is a result of its historically conditioned mixed and non-autonomous nature. Owing to its continuing popularity from the eighteenth century on and, in particular, since the nineteenth, the Isle of Wight was bound to lose the distinctive features it may have had in the past.

A substantial glossary of the (unique) headwords of the Isle of Wight in use during the Late Modern English period is, however, only a first step in the right direction. There are many open questions, concerning linguistic patterns, distinctive features, and quantities of distribution, questions that the parameters and filters implemented in EDD Online are ready to help answer. Beyond its lexis, that is, in phonetics, orthography, word formation, and other linguistic domains, the Isle of Wight may, at second sight in the future, prove to have unique traits of its own.

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6. Conclusion

This paper has tested the chance spontaneously to produce county glossaries of a better quality than what the EDS glossarists of the 1850s to 1890s provided. The pieces of information given in the EDD’s entries allow for selective conclusions in the domains of etymology, orthography, and, up to a point, word formation, but it has become obvious that a county glossary has its limits and that the filter inventory of EDD Online would allow for in-depth studies of linguistic features within the domains just mentioned and beyond (e.g., in pragmatics).

In concrete terms, the analysis has shown that the dialect of the Isle of Wight, despite more than the hundred words uniquely attributable to it, does not have a very marked lexical profile of its own. Instead, it shares most of its dialect words with other counties, some 1,400 as a subset of the 1,550 headwords retrieved by EDD Online in its OR-mode. Though an island, I.W. does not, in terms of a quantified uniqueness of the lexis, have more words “of its own” than the opposite counties on the mainland (Hampshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, and Surrey) and fewer such words than the counties in the southwest and in the southeast. It combines some traditional modes of spelling and etymological traces of languages or dialects of former settlers with the tendency to clip and, thus, uproot words.
Notes

1 Until the first half of the 19th century, I.W. was rural, but then a boom in tourism, spurred by growing wealth and Queen Victoria’s and Prince Albert’s residence in East Cowes (Osborne House), led to an increasing contact with the mainland and the island’s partial urbanisation (see https://www.visiteisleofwight.co.uk/things-to-do/victorias-island-trail/victoria-andosborne) (accessed November 20, 2020).

2 For details on the concept of dialectometry, initiated by Goebel (2016), see Markus (2017, 2020).

3 These are discussed at length in Markus (in press).

4 A condensed description of EDD Online is provided by Markus (2019) in the interface of EDD Online itself (see button The Use of EDD Online 3.0—a Short Guide in eddonline-proj.ubik.ac.at.). For a detailed discussion of EDD Online, also as regards its possibilities, see Markus (2021a).

5 The reason for the slight difference between the number of items and that of entries is that one entry may include more than one item/headword.

6 There are many entries that only refer to the dialects vis-a-vis the source references. Moreover, the two types of information generally refer to different parts of an entry.

7 This and some of the following figures are intentionally cut off on the right to increase legibility.

8 As mentioned, the Innsbruck project team decided to count these source references as if they were dialect reference proper because the indexed references to the sources are often the only dialect reference available in an entry. The disadvantage of occasional double counting was considered preferable to missing references.

9 The particular productivity of dialects in terms of word formation has been more generally discussed in Markus (2020).

10 On the general role of aphesis and aphaeresis in dialects, see Markus (2021b).

11 The substitution of /k/ for /h/ is based on phonetic velarisation, which can, however, not be pursued further in this paper.

12 This sound shift has been ascribed to the twelfth to fourteenth century (Pinsker, 1963: §37). In the south, it could only affect new words with /h/, such as loanwords from French.

13 For full evidence on these spellings unique to I.W., see Markus (forthcoming).

14 In terms of referential relevance, the units “headword” and “entry” can be treated as equivalent in ONLY-queries. Unlike OR-queries, the ONLY-searches produce I.W. ascriptions that clearly refer to the headword and not to any other specific part of an entry.

15 In other words, there are two factors that relativise the absolute numbers: (1) the sum total of all the counties considered, in our case, the ten counties of the south; (2) the minor or major role of each of all counties in the whole EDD, according to which the poorly represented counties, such as I.W., get, as it were, a bonus factor. The ratios are calculated in the background by the EDD Online software.

16 For the difference between combinations and compounds, see Onysko (2012).

17 I will present such a study in Markus (forthcoming).

18 Basic information on the Isle of Wight today is ubiquitous; see A Glossary of Words in Use in the Isle of Wight (Smith & Smith, 1881) and the informative AA Illustrated Guide to Britain (1972:98–99).

19 Bremmer (2009:128) claimed that the close Anglo-Frisian relationship is not only one of inheritance from the common North Sea Germanic ancestry, but also one of ongoing contacts both before and after the migration of the Anglo-Saxons to Britain in the fifth century. Salmons (2017) supported this view with case studies of common Anglo-Frisian phonological features (382–385).

20 Kökeritz (1941), investigating placenames, proved the role of the Jutes not only in (the south of) Kent, but along the southern English coast westward to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. In Figure 6 above, the shape of the green area in the southeast of England, pattering out in the west, confirms a wider expansion by the Jutes than commonly assumed.

21 For the historical background data provided here, see, in addition to the literature mentioned, Falkus and Gillingham (1981:30–31).

22 Richard Puttenham, the author of Arte of English Poesie, in 1589 referred to “London and the shires lying about London within ix. myles, and not much above” as the area of the London standard (quoted from Baugh, 1951:235). Berkshire, while generally classified as a “southern” Middle English dialectal area, is part of that London standard.

23 As regards I.W., the EDD is partly based on two of these county-specific glossaries, by Smith and Smith (1881) and by W. H. Long (1886); the latter was also re-edited online in 2012 and is presently on offer on the book market. A closer look at this work by Long reveals that it includes many words that were not unique to I.W. at the time of compilation (e.g., AATERCLAP, see EDD AFTERCLAP). Both glossaries, as most other glossaries of the EDS, focus entirely on the headwords as such, widely disregarding linguistic information. For a detailed description of the EDS glossaries and their deficits, see Markus (2021c).

References


Long, William Henry. 1886. A Dictionary of the Isle of Wight dialect, and of provincialisms used in the island; to which is appended the Christmas Boys’ play, an Isle of Wight ‘Hoorn Harvest,’ and songs sung by the peasants, forming a treasury of insular manners and customs of fifty years ago. London: Reeves and Turner. Reproduced online.


Appendix. Unique EDD words on the Isle of Wight (copied from EDD Online)

**ALER, adj.** I.W. [aˈliː(r)]. Empty; unladen.
I.W.1 Goo whooaam wi’ the wagon aeler.
[As prob. repr. OE. ge; cp. geliére, empty; or the pref. may = on (the pref. of state or condition). See Leer.]

**ANDIERS, sb. pl.** I.W. Andirons.
I.W.1 Anjur-dogs, kitchen utensils for the spit to run on.
[For etym. see Andirons, and cp. An-dogs.]

**BACCOCBOLTS, sb. pl.** I.W. Typha latifolia, or common bulrush.
I.W. So called from the spikes resembling a roll of tobacco.
[See Bolt.]

**BINDER, sb.** I.W.1 [bai′nds(r)]. A large quantity, esp. of food.
I.W.1 A pretty good binder of it; I.W.2 I ded take in a binder.

**BLETTERS, sb. pl.** I.W.1 Small pancakes, flitters, (s.v. Vlitters.)

**BOMESWISH, adv.** I.W. At full speed, headlong.
See Bonneswish.
I.W.2 I met wold varmer Taalor and hes missus in their new
pony caart gwyne bomeswish over Staplers.

**BONNESWISH, adv.** I.W. Rapidly, swiftly, in phr. to go bonneswish.
[Perh. misprint for bomeswish, q.v.]
I.W.1 There they goos bonneswish.

**BOTHRESH, sb.** I.W.1 The squallling thrush, ‘bull-thrush,’ q.v.

**BOZZOM, sb.** I.W. Also written bozzum. Name given to the plants (1) Chrysanthemum segetum; (2) Chrysanthemum leucomanthemum
(C.J.V.). Cf. budden.

**BRISH, sb.** I.W.12 [briʃ]. A brush.
[Ofr. broisse, a brush (Hatzfeld, s.v. Brosse).]

**CAA, v.** I.W. Also written kaa I.W.1 To cry like a rook.
I.W.1 What bi’st caaun about like that vor?

**CHINKERS, sb. pl.** I.W.2 [tʃi′ŋkəz]. Chinks, fissures.

**CHOPPEKIN, sb.** I.W. [tʃo′pskin]. The chap or under-jaw of a pig salted and smoked.
I.W.2 We had a choppekin that day vor dinner.

**CHUTE, sb.** I.W. [Not known to our correspondents.]
A steep, hilly road. (Hall.)

**CLUNGE, v.** I.W.1 [klənʒ]. To crowd; to squeeze closely together.
[Conn. w. liter. E. cling (vb.). Heavy clunging mists, More Song Soul (1647) 11. (N.E.D.)]

**CLUTTERS, sb. pl.** I.W.12 [klə′təz] Part of the tackling of a plough or harrow.

**COAST, v.** I.W. In phr. To coast about. Of a hawk: to fly so as to keep at a distance.
I.W.1 A hawk or kite flying round a farmyard is said to be ‘cooaustun about.’

**COCKY-BABY, sb.** I.W. The plant Arum maculatum (B. & H.).

**CONTRAVERSE, adv.** I.W.1 [Not known to our correspondents.] Quite the reverse.

**CRABBUN, sb.** I.W.1 [kra′bun.] A dunghill fowl; a coward.
[As form of liter. E. craven, cowardly, a coward, applied technically to a cock that is ‘not game.’ No cock of mine, you crow too like a craven, SHAKS. T. Shrew, ii. i. 228.
ME. craun, vanquished, defeated (MATZNER).]

**CRISH, sb.** I.W.1 [kriʃ]. A crack.

**CURRIDGE, v.** I.W.1 [kə′ridʒ.] To encourage.
I.W.1 Why don’t curridge’n on to fight?

**DACK, sb.** I.W.1 [dæk]. 1. sb. A blow, esp. a gentle or slight blow, such as washerwomen give fine things in washing.
I.W.1 I’ll ghee thee a dack wi’ the zull paddal, 49; I.W.2 I gie ee a dack wi’ the prong-steele if thee doesn’t mind.
2. v. To touch gently; to dab with a cloth; to anoint.
I.W. (J.D.R.); I.W.2 My vinger is miserable bad: just dack en vor me.

**DEYAN, v.** I.W.1 [de′ən.] Used imprecatively, in the same way as ‘damn,’ ‘confound.’
Odd deyan thee. I’ll be deyand if I doant.
Hence Deyannashun, sb. damnation.
Odd deyannashun seyze thee.

**DOMES, adj.** I.W.1 Also in form dompy. [do′mpy, do′mpy.] Short, stunted, ‘dumpy.’

**DRAUGHTY, adj.** I.W. [drā′tə]. Windy, outdoors as well as indoors. (J.D.R.)

**DRILLIN, ppl. adj.** I.W.2 [dri′lən.] Dripping with wet.
[With that, swift watry drops drill from his eye, HEYWOOD.
Troia (1609) (NARES).]

**DRILLING, prp.** I.W. Dripping, soaking wet. Cf. dreening, s.v. Dreen, v.
They be all a-drillen with wet, Gray Ribstone Pippins (1898) 33.

**DRUSS, sb.** I.W.12 [dres]. A slight slope or descent on the road.

**DWYES, sb. pl.** I.W. [dwaiz.] Eddies.
From the dyes of the withy-bed when they dived, MONCRIEFF.
Dream (1863) l. 47; I.W.12

**ENNY, adv.** I.W.1 [ə′ni]. Only. (J.D.R.); I.W.1

**FLANYER, v.** I.W.2 To flourish, brandish.
He’s out there flanyeren about wi’ a sparrod.

**FLUSTERGATED, adv.** I.W. Blustering. (Hall.)

**GAGEMENT, sb.** I.W. Written gaiengemt I.W.1
An engagement, a fight. (Hall.), I.W.1

**GENGE, sb.** I.W. Also written gengaiment.
I.W.1 [gen(d)ʒ]. Depth of the furrow when I get to the end of the field.
Also in comb. Plough-genge.

**GROSSIN, sb.** I.W. Meaning unknown.
The path by a founder of hammock was shut, MONCRIEFF.
Dream (1863) l. 6.

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**GROSSIN, sb.** I.W. Meaning unknown.
The path by a founder of hammock was shut, MONCRIEFF.
Dream (1863) l. 6.
2. Ded ye ever zee sich a gurt zote, maamouthed thing as she is?

I.W.1; I.W.2

Hunched-up, pp. I.W. [mut.] Of a crop of apples, potatoes, &c.; diminished in size. (J.D.R.), I.W.1 See Hunch, sb. 1 2.

Hurde-shell, sb. I.W.2 Tortoise-shell; gen. used attrib. of colour, lit. reddle-shell. I got zummet like a cat now, a hurdle-shell one.

Information, sb. I.W. Gray Ribstone Pippins (1898) 140.

Inless, conj. I.W. [inle-’s.] Unless. (J.D.R.), I.W.1 [In less, for the older on lesse, on a less supposition that; see Skeat Etym. Dict. (s.v. Unless).]


Kites, sb. pl. I.W. The dead boughs of a tree; also in comb. Kite boughs.

Kittles, sb. pl. I.W.2 Strings for tying the mouths of sacks.

Larbets, sb. pl. I.W.2 [lä-bats.] The testicles of lambs.

Lebb, sb. I.W. [leb.] The stomach of a calf. Reserving the lebb, pluck, and haslet, Moncrieff Dream (1863) l. 36; I.W.12 [Efris. lebbe, leb, ‘kälbermagen’ (Koolman); Du. lebbe, ‘runnet’ (Hexham).]

Leeward, adv. I.W. [li’-wéd.] In phr. to go to leeeward, to go to the bad. (J.D.R.)

Loop, v.3 I.W.1 [lɪp.] To elope. She loop’d away wi’ un.

Luc(k), sb. I.W. [leɪk.] A pool of water left behind by the receding tide. (J.D.R.), I.W.12

Lucky, adj. I.W.2 Morose, sulky. He sims to be lucky about zummet or nother.

Lurry, sb.2 I.W.2 [ℓə’-ri.] Loose talk. He ded gooo on wi’ some pretty lurry, I can tell ye. [To turn prayer into a kind of lurrey, Milton Eikonoklastes (1649) xvi.]

Mamouthed, ppl. adj. talking foolishly, stupid. Cf. mawmooin. Ded ye ever zee sich a gurt zote, maamouthed thing as she is?

Maaycock, sb. I.W.1 A conceited fellow; a coxcomb. [A meacock wretch can make the curtse shrew, SHAKS. T. Shrew, II. i. 315.]

Mariners, sb. pl. I.W.2 A game resembling ‘Fox and geese.’

Millet, sb. I.W. The wood club-rush, Scirpus sylvaticus. (B. & H.)

Mit, sb.3 I.W. [mit.] A maggot. (C.J.V.)


Mudd, sb. I.W. [med.] A silly, thoughtless, stupid person. (Hall.) I.W.1; I.W.2 Gen. applied to a child. ‘Ah, ye zote mud, don’t da that.’

Mudgetty, adj. I.W.2 [Not known to our correspondents.] Of straw: broken, short, as trodden by cattle.

Muggleton, sb. I.W.1 An old name for a rat, prob. only used in nursery stories.

Mummy, adj. I.W. [mu’-mi.] Dusk; dark; twilight. It begins to get mummy (J.D.R.); I.W.1; I.W.2 ‘Twas gitten mummy avore I come away.

N-Eckle, sb. I.W.2 [ne’kl.] A house; a dwelling. See Hackle, sb. 1 2.

Neyares, sb. pl. I.W. The nostrils.

I.W.1 [Nares, the nostrils of a hawk (Hall.).] [There is a Machiavelian plot, Tho’ ev’ry nare olfact it not, Butler Hudibras (1664) I. i. 742.]

Nubby-Joe, sb. I.W.2 [nu’-bi-dʒo.] A walking-stick having a large knob at the end. See Knobby, 3.

If I onny gits ’long side on ‘en wi’ my nubby Joe he’ll zoon be afeared o’ me.

Overer, sb. I.W. A settler from Great Britain. Life of Freeman (1895) II. 51. Cf. overrun.

Overrun, adj., adv. and sb. I.W. [ō’-vərən.] 1. adj. Coming from the mainland across the water, not native to the island. They’m better than the overrun ducks (J.D.R.); I.W.1; I.W.2 Overun feller. 2. adv. Over. Too, very. (J.D.R.); I.W.1 ‘It don’t look so overrun toppen,’ i.e. so over well.

3. sb. Any person or thing that is not native to the island; anything coming from the mainland. Also called Overuner or Overner. (J.D.R.); I.W.2 I wish the wind had capsized they there overners comen across. What do they wunt over here, tryen to take the bread out o’ vokeys’ mouths?

Pine-raft, sb. I.W. See below.

Part of the silicified trunk of a coniferous tree, probably allied to the pine; from the ‘pine-raft’ which covers the shore between high and low-water marks, at Brook Point… This sandstone, which forms Brook Point, is the lowest bed seen at the base of the cliff, and reposes on the red and green variegated marls underlying the sandstone with the trunks of the trees forming the pine-raft, Ramsay Rock Spec. (1862) 151.

Pokeassun, prp. I.W. Also written pokassun I.W.1 [pō’-kə-sun.] 1. Prying about; following people slyly to find out what they are doing; gen. with about. I.W.12 2. Pottering about, spending time to no purpose. I.W.2

Poleaps, sb. I.W.12 Also written polehaps I.W.2 [pō’-lə-eps.] A leather strap fastening the harness at the top of a horse-collar; lit. ‘pole-hasp.’ See Hasp. sb. 1

Prajant, adj. I.W.1 [prɛ’-ʒənt.] ‘Swaggerging’; conceited.

Pranke, sb. I.W. [præ’-nkl.] A prawn. (Hall.), (C.J.V.)

Pranke, v. I.W. [præ’-ənkl.] To prance. (C.J.V.)

Predney, adv. I.W.1 [prɛ’-nəni.] A corruption of ‘presently.’ ‘I’ll gi’ ye a belting predney.’

Purviser, adv. I.W.1 With a proviso.


I.W.2 She’s a regular pusseyke little bit o’ goods.

Pute, v. I.W.1 [piət.] To impute.

Quilt, v.3 I.W.12 [kwilt.] To cover a ball with twine.

Quilt, adj. I.W. [kwilt.] Fatigued; unfit for work. (Hall.) I.W.1
RAUTHY, adj. I.W.1 [ră’pi.] Angry, full of wrath; a deriv. of ‘wrath.’


RECT, v. I.W.1 A shortened form of ‘direct.’ Hence Rectun-pooast, sb. a signpost.

RENYARD, sb. I.W.2 [re’njad.] A dial. form of ‘reynard,’ a fox.

RIG, v.5 I.W.1 [rig.] To mark sheep.

RIVE, adj. I.W. [raiv.] Amorous. (C.J.V.), I.W.1

RIXE, sb. I.W. [riks.] A pugilistic contest. (W.W.S.) Cf. rixy, sb.2 and adj.1 [Fr. rixe, a combat.]

ROUNTY, adj. I.W.1 [re’unti.] Of marshes: rough.


RUDDER, v. I.W.2 [ru’ do(r).] To shake the head. The paason ruddered his head at ‘en.

SAMPER, sb. I.W.12 Also written sampur I.W.2 [sæ’mps(r).] Samphire.

[Sampler herbe, BARET (1580); herbe de S. Pierre, sampire (COTGR.).]


SCANTWAYS, adv. I.W. Obliquely. (I.D.R.)

SCOGGEL, v. I.W.2 [skræ’gl.] To eat voraciously; to gulp down. ‘They scogelled up the lot.’

SCRAMNEIL, v. I.W.2 [skræ’nl.] To eat greedily; to swallow up.


SHELTUN, I.W.1 The days be sheltun in; I.W.2 Aater Michaelmas the days begin shelten in vast.


SHOUTO, sb. I.W.1 A donkey. ? A misprint for ‘shonto.’

SHROKE, ppl. adj. I.W. [frōk.] Shrivelled, withered.

Cf. shrocked.

SLICK, v.1; I.W.2 They there apples be all shrroke up to nothen.

SKILIT-VAMP, sb. I.W. A half-boot laced in front; ? misprint for ‘skitter-vamp’ (q.v.).

SKIMMURTON, sb. I.W.1 [ski’matan.] A skeleton.

SKUFFY, adj. I.W.1 [skr’fi.] In a scurry state.

SKUKE, v. I.W.1 [skiu’ə(r).] A dial. form of ‘secure.’


I.W.1 It raained aal day without sletch; I.W.2 2. sb. Cessation.

I.W.1 There’s noo sletch in ut; I.W.2 ‘Twas hard slavery and noo sletch in it, from mornen to night.

[OE. ge-slecan; to make slack; to weaken (B.T.).]

SMOLCHE, v. I.W.1 [smoltf.] To discoulour or daub with paint or dirt.

SNAPSEN, sb. I.W. [sne’psn.] The aspen, *Populus tremula*; also used attrib.

(B. & H.); I.W.1 He shakes like a snapsen leaf.

SNARKER, sb. I.W.2 [sna’ka(r).] A cinder. The cake’s burnt to a snarker.

SNOBBLE, v.2 I.W.12 [sno’bl.] To devour greedily; to gobble; to snap at food. Cf. snamble.

SOOURDER, sb. I.W.1 [sù’da(r).] A game-cock that wounds its antagonist much.

SPAAN, sb. I.W.1 A scolding, abusive woman.

SPAIAKD, ppl. adj. I.W.2 [spék’t.] Speckled, spotted.

Cf. sparked.

SPERE, v.2 I.W.1 [spia(r).] To aspire.

SPINEY, adj. I.W.1 [spai’nidi.] Muscular.

STAS, v. I.W.12 [staest.] To stop; to give up, abandon; to flag.

STOCK, adj.1 I.W. [Not known to our correspondents.]

Strong, muscular. (HALL.) Cf. stocky.

SUSS, sb. I.W. [sur.] A dog-fish. I.W.1 [SATCHELL (1879).]

SWIVELLY, adj. I.W. Giddy. (HALL.) A misprint for ‘swivetty’ (q.v.).

SWOP, v. I.W. [swop.] To dab up with a cloth; dial. form of ‘sop.’ (J.D.R.), I.W.1

TARNELLY, adv. I.W.1 [tâ’nali.] An aphetic dial. form of ‘eternally.’ ‘She’s tarnelly talkun about et.’

THUCKSTER, sb. I.W. [bw’ksta(r).] A courser.

Wait in close covert the thuckster’s ‘so, ho,’ MONCRIEFF *Dream* (1863) I. 26; I.W.1

TINT, v. I.W. [tint.] To blend. (J.D.R.), I.W.1

TINUALLY, adv. I.W.1 [ti’nialis.] An aphetic form of ‘continually.’

TWICKERED OUT, phr. I.W. Tired, exhausted, done up.

A must be purely twickered out wiv het and doust and drouth and all, GRAY Ribstone Pippins (1898) 39; I.W.2 My wold dooman sim prid near twickered out.

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UNDERGROUND, adj.2 I.W. Undergrown, short, dumpty.

I.W.1 He’s a miseryabul little underground chap; I.W.2

VARE, v. I.W.1 [ve(o)r.] With out: to plough the first two furrows of the different lands or ridges of a field. Goo and vare out that ground.

VARMER, sb. I.W. [Not known to our correspondents.]

A large hawk. (HALL.)

VENGEVUL, adj. I.W.1 An aphetic form of ‘revengeful.’

VICE, sb.4 I.W.1 Also in form vize. An aphetic form of ‘advice.’

VIRE-PAN, sb. I.W.2 A fire-shovel. See Fire-pan, s.v. Fire, 1 (45).

VIRE-SPANNEL, sb. I.W.2 A dog given to lying before the fire. See Fire-pannel, s.v. Fire, 1 (59).

VLUCKER, v. I.W.12 [vl’ka(r).] To flutter; to fly about.

VOUR, v. I.W.1 An aphetic form of ‘deavour.’

WINTLE-END, sb. I.W.1 [wi’ntl-end.] The end of a shoemaker’s thread.

WOLD, adj. I.W.2 In comb. Wold England, the country, as opposed to London. See Old, 1 (33).

Joe Tucker went to Lunnon . . . When a come back . . . a zed, ‘Well, it med be all very well vor people that’s used to’t, but gimme wold England – that’s the place that suits me best.’

WRAPPED, ppl. adj. I.W. In form wroopped. [ro’pt.]

Creased. (J.D.R.), I.W.1

ZEMMIES, int. I.W.1 [ze’miz.] An exclamation of surprise or rebuke; also in Comb. Zemmies hauw. Zemmes hauw! what dost do that vor?