

The Vikings and the Victorians and Dialect



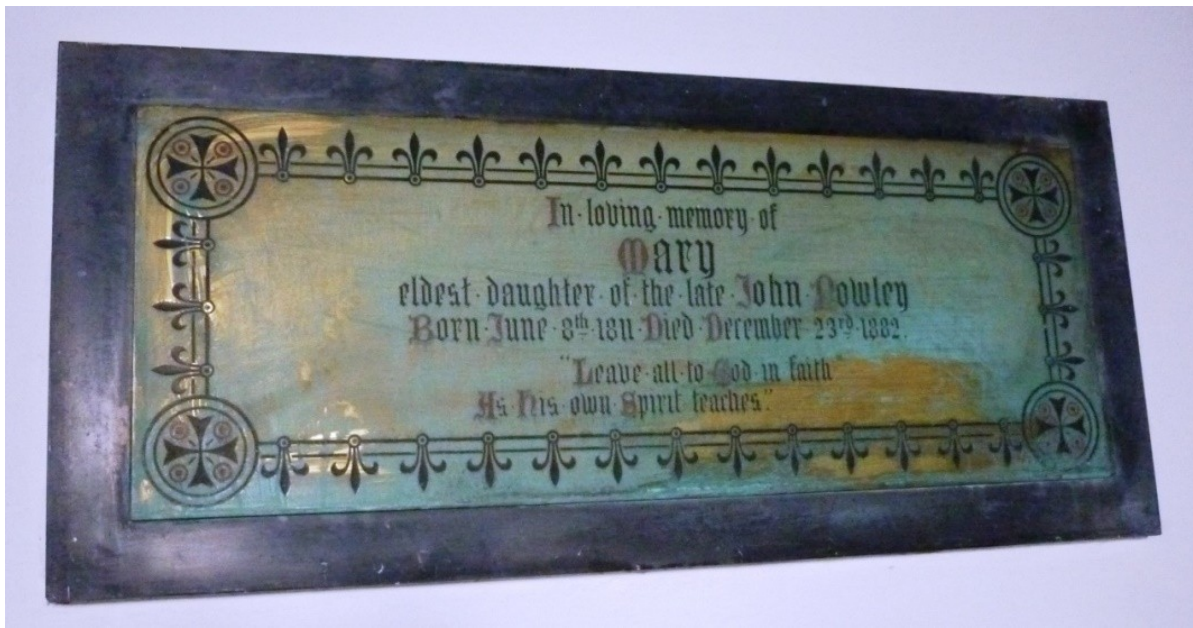
Matthew Townend

Mary Powley (1811-82), 'Eden's Story'

No dream that in the air remaineth,
That Danish voice the shepherd hears;
Where mead, and grove, and rock retaineth
Names each hath borne, a thousand years.
The burden of the Eden's song
Brings echoes of the Northern seas;
And oft, quaint rustic speech may throng
The thought with hints and memories,



Of storms and bloodshed; – strife the sorest –
 When Northmen came in conquering mood;
Crashing like whirlwind through the forest,
 As down their earliest paths they trod.
And how, – their way, resistless, wrestling, –
 Like Autumn's flood the vales they filled;
How, 'neath the fells, familiar, nestling,
 Their homes they made, their fields they tilled.

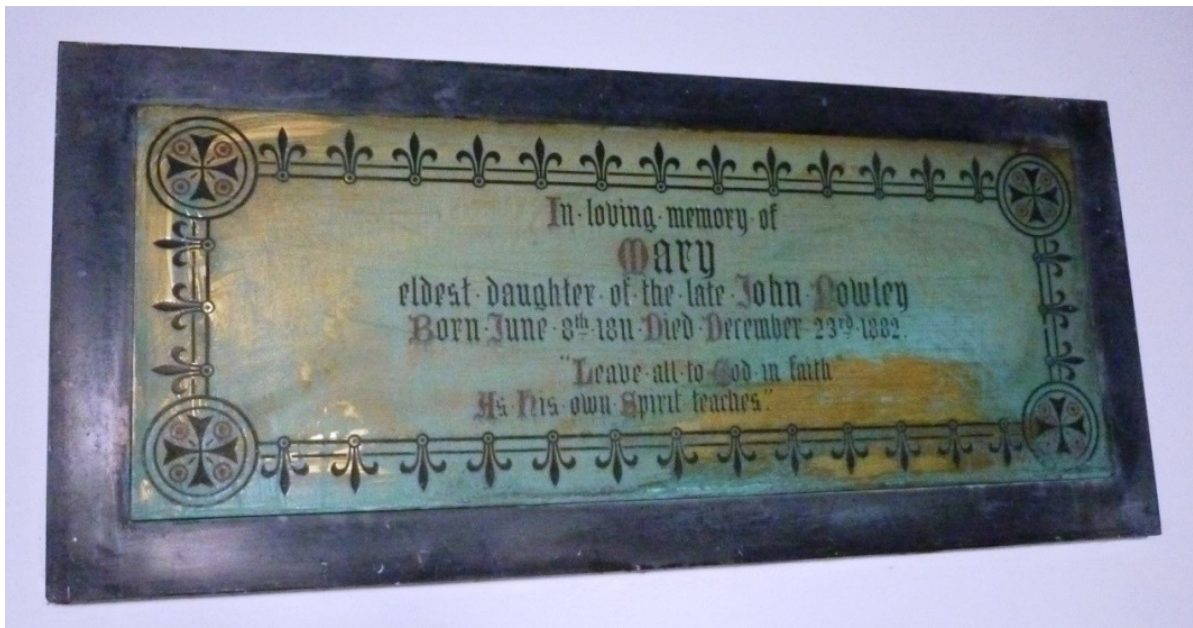


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Mary Powley, 'On An Ancient Grave'

When the names of our hamlets and hills meet my ear,
Or our rude Northern tongue, unenfeebled by time;
When the voice of our fathers' stern Fiend's-fell I hear,
Like a Skald's who is chanting a requiem sublime;

Then this spot conjures up some wild tale of the
North, –

For a spell lures me back, as to kindred remains;
And in fancy I see o'er the hill-tops break forth,
A cloud of the restless, all-conquering Danes.

The name of one hamlet bears record alone

Of lost triumphs, which Fancy would image – in vain;
His deeds are forgotten, his grave is unknown,

But tradition still points where dwelt Melmor the Dane.

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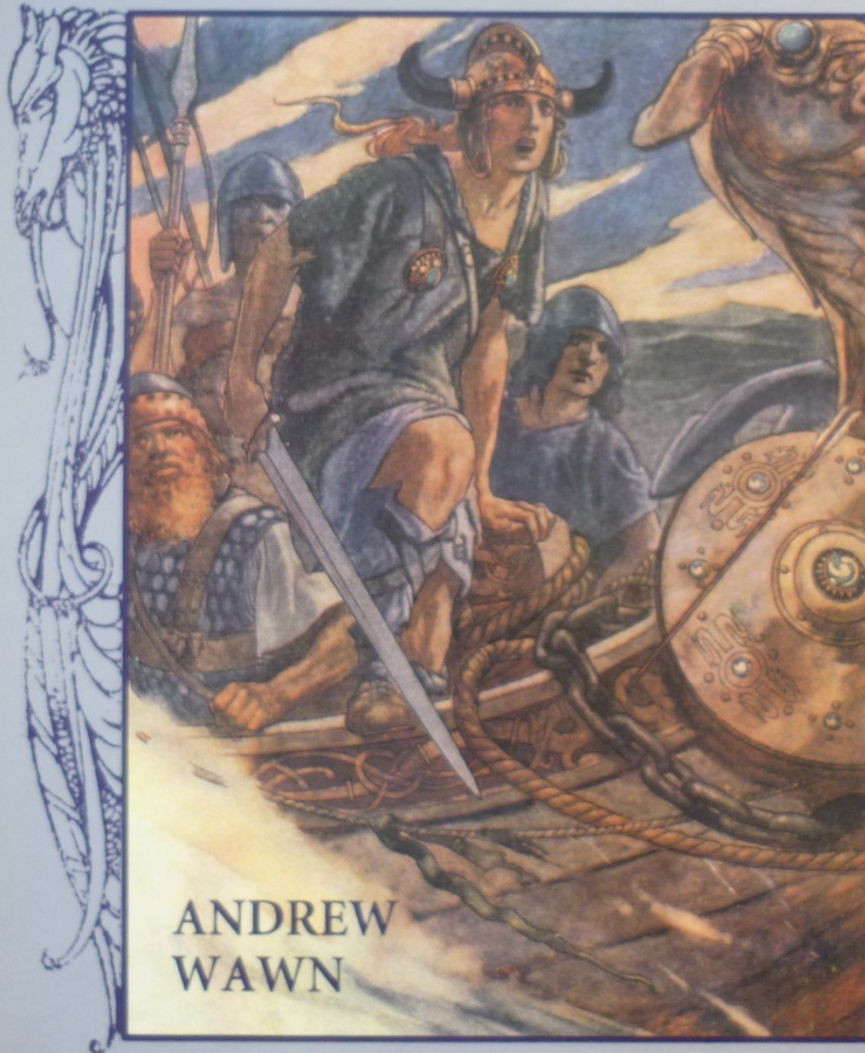
ECHOES OF
OLD CUMBERLAND



MISS POWLEY

THE **VIKINGS** AND
THE
VICTORIANS

INVENTING THE OLD NORTH IN 19TH-CENTURY BRITAIN



ANDREW
WAWN

‘an honour to descend from the bold natives
of the north ...’

‘Foreigners, and particularly the German historians, usually assert, for instance, that the Danish and Norwegian Vikings brought nothing but misfortune upon the British Isles; whilst, on the contrary, everything great and good in England is mainly attributable to the Saxons, or Germans [...] What if we found that, by means of monuments, the popular character, public institutions, and other traits, a constant and beneficial influence could be traced from the expeditions of the Vikings or Northmen, so that the natives of the lands which they subdued accounted it an honour to descend from the bold natives of the North?’

J.J.A. Worsaae, *An Account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London, 1852)

Worsaae's table of place-names

A TABULAR VIEW OF SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT DANISH-NORWEGIAN NAMES OF PLACES IN ENGLAND.

(Extracted and collected from "Walker's Maps," London, 1842.)

Names ending in	-by.	-thorpe.	-thwaite	-with.	-toft.	-beck.	-næs.	-ey.	-dale.	-force.	-fell.	-tarn.	-haugh.	Total.
In Kent, north-east of														
Watling Street	1	..	..	..	..	..	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	6
In Essex	2	3	..	..	..	..	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	11
Bedfordshire .....	..	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Buckinghamshire..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Suffolk.....	3	5	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Norfolk	17	24	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	44
Huntingdonshire..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Northamptonshire.	26	23	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	52
Warwickshire	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3
Leicestershire	66	19	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	87
Rutland .....	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	8
Lincolnshire	212	63	..	1	4	8	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	292
Nottinghamshire..	15	20	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	36
Derbyshire.....	6	4	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Cheshire	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Yorkshire.														
East Riding	35	48	1	6	3	1	1	..	12	2	..	..	..	109
West Riding	32	29	6	8	2	4	..	..	12	..	15	2	..	110
North Riding.....	100	18	2	6	1	7	..	..	40	4	7	1	..	186
Lancashire	9	..	14	2	..	..	2	2	13	..	7	..	..	49
Westmorland	20	6	14	1	..	17	1	..	36	6	42	15	..	158
Yorkshire	43	1	43	..	..	12	2	..	16	1	15	9	..	142
Durham	7	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	2	2	..	..	23
Northumberland..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	3	..	7	..	10	22
In all	604	284	83	24	16	52	15	6	142	15	95	27	10	1373

Besides many other names ending in -holm, -garth, -land, -end, -vig, -ho (how), -rigg, &c., &c.

Worsaae on dialect

‘The pure English language itself includes, both with regard to its vocabulary and inflexions, many Scandinavian elements, the result of the Danish immigration. But, in the north of England, many words and phrases are preserved in the popular language, which are neither found nor understood in other parts, although they sound quite familiar to every Northman.’



J. J. A. Worsaae

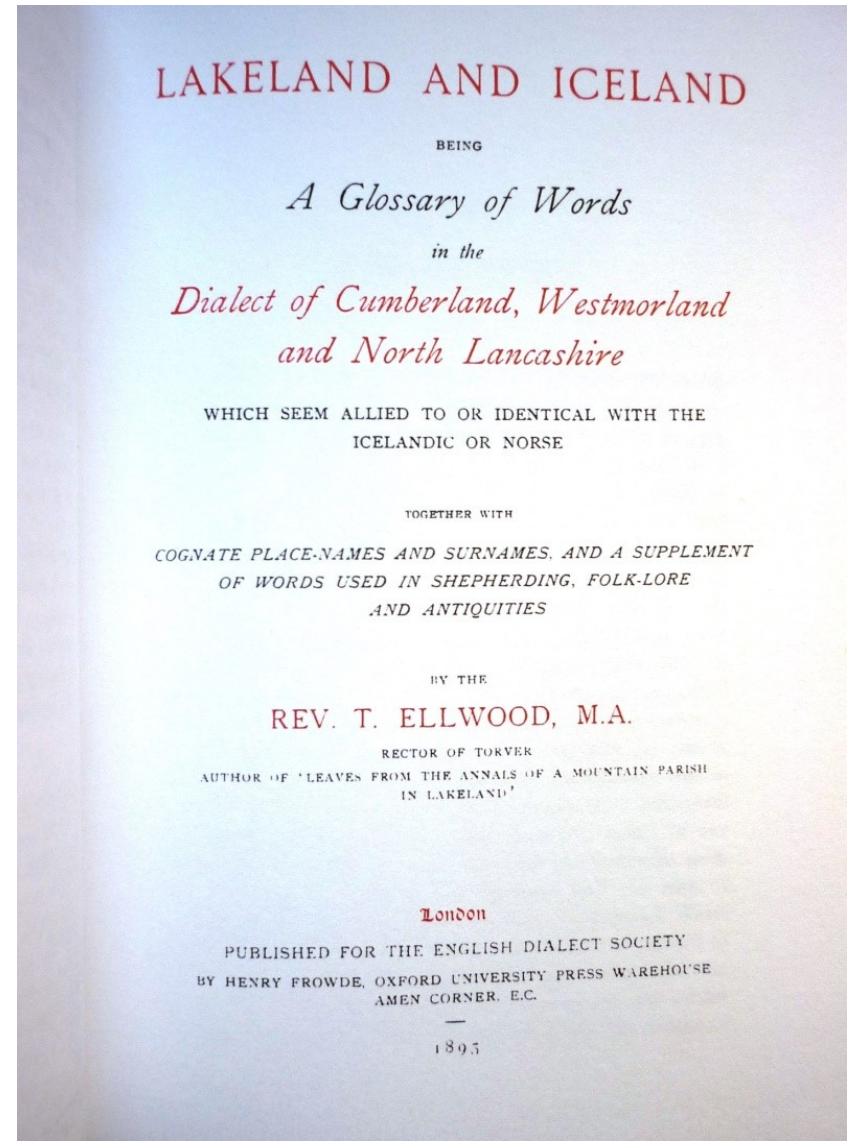
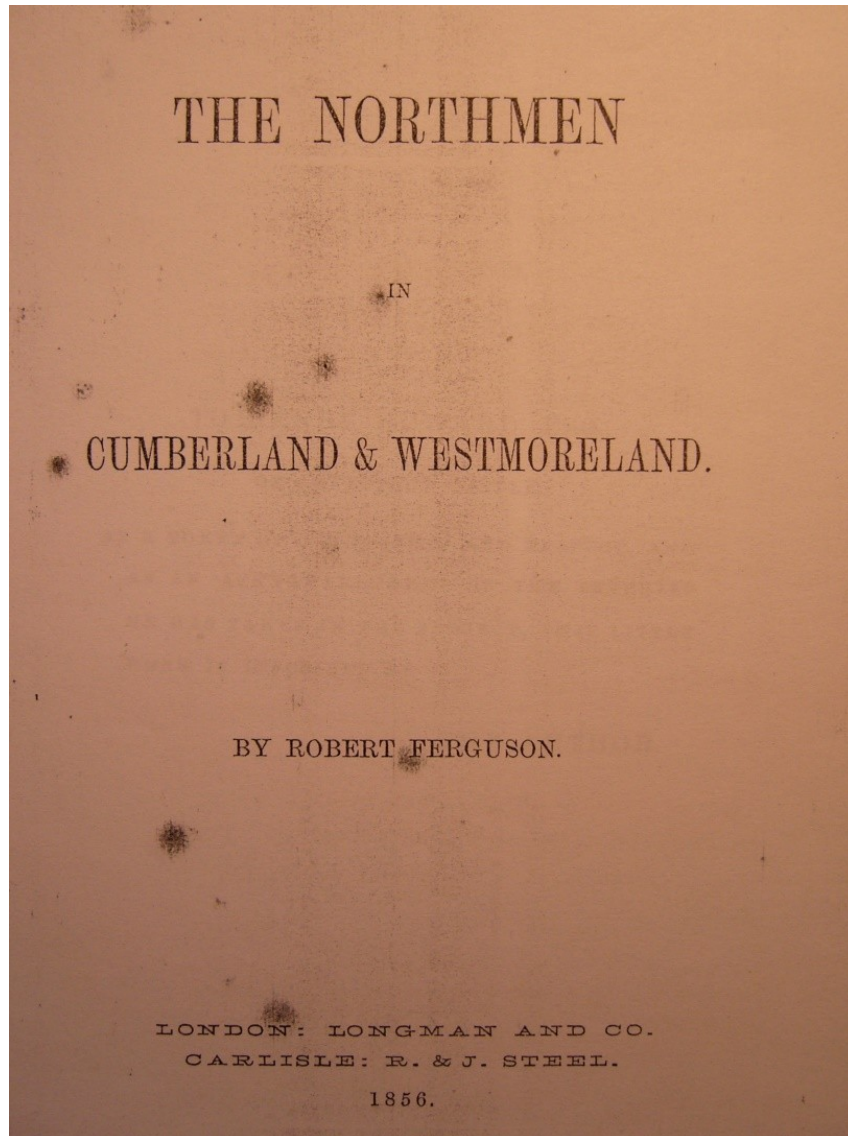
A HUNDRED DANISH WORDS, SELECTED FROM THE VULGAR TONGUE,
OR COMMON LANGUAGE, NORTH OF WATLINGA STRÆT.

Provincial English *.	English.	Danish.
arr	scar	Ar
attercop	spider	Edderkop
awns	beads of corn	Avner
bank	to beat	banke
bairn, bearn	child	Barn
bede	to pray	bede
bid	to invite	byde, indbyde
bide	to stay	bie
big, biggin	to build, building	bygge, Bygning
blend	to mix	blande
boll, or bole	trunk of a tree	Bul (Træ)
brosten	burst	brusten
clammer	to quarrel, grasp	klamres, fast-klamre
claver	to climb	klavre
cluve	hoof	Klov, Hov
dyke, dike	ditch	Dige
elt	to knead	ælte
festing-penny	earnest-money	Fæstepenge
fra	from	fra
frem folks	strangers	Fremmede Folk
full	drunk	fuld, drukken
gainest way	nearest way	Gjenvei
gammon	merriment	Gammen
gants, ganty	to be merry	gantes
gar	to make	gjøre
gar	to hedge	gjerde
glowing (glouring)	staring	gloende
greit, greets	to weep, tears	grøde, Graad
grepen	clasped	greben
grise	young pig	Griis
groats	husked corn	grudtet Korn
hack	to stammer	hakke, stamme
halikeld	holy-well	Helligkilde
hand clout	towel	Haandklæde
handsel	earnest	Handsel
harns, harns-pan	brain, brain pan	Hjerne, Hjerne-skal
heck	hay-rack	Hække (til Hö)
hesp	latch	Haspe (Dör)
hose	stocking	hose
kaam, kem	comb, to comb	Kam, kæmme
kail, kale	cabbage	Kaal
kern-milk	churn-milk	Kjernemelk
kern	to churn	kjerne
kilt	to tuck up	kilte (op)
kitling	young cat	Killing
laid	just frozen	logt (Iis)
mauf, meagh	brother-in-law	Maag, Svoger

* Many of these words are Scotch.

J.J.A. Worsaae, 'A Hundred Danish Words, selected from the Vulgar Tongue, or Common Language, North of Watlinga Stræt'

Robert Ferguson and Thomas Ellwood



J.C. Atkinson and G.S. Streatfeild

A GLOSSARY
OF THE
CLEVELAND DIALECT:

EXPLANATORY, DERIVATIVE, AND CRITICAL.

BY THE

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&c. &c.

London:

JOHN RUSSELL SMITH, SOHO SQUARE.

M.DCCC.LXVIII.

LINCOLNSHIRE AND THE DANES

BY THE REV.

G. S. STREATFEILD, M.A.

VICAR OF STREATHAM COMMON;

LATE VICAR OF HOLY TRINITY, LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE

"Language adheres to the soil, when the lips which spake are resolved in dust."

SIR F. PALGRAVE



LONDON

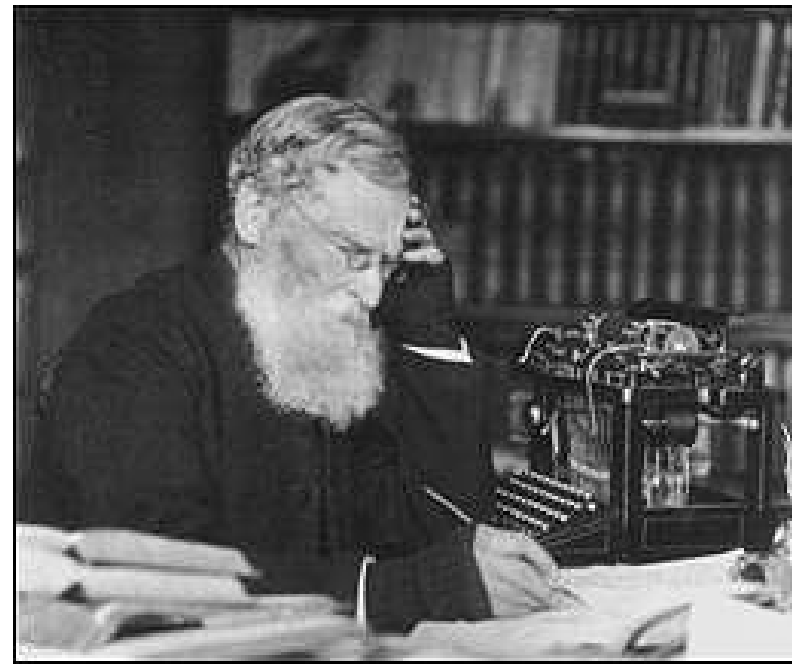
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1884

J.C. Atkinson on local language

‘Every language and dialect of a language, when duly interrogated, must always [...] be able to give in reply much of its own history in connection with its origin, connection, and changes; and it is impossible for anyone fairly familiar with the dialect spoken in Cleveland, and only moderately acquainted with the Scandinavian languages and dialects, or even with any one of them, not to be struck with the curious family likeness obtruded on his notice between no scanty portion of the Cleveland words and those in current use among the Danes, Norwegians and Swedes of our own day.’

J.C. Atkinson, *A Glossary of the Cleveland Dialect* (1868)



Atkinson on *Thingwala*

‘This name alone is so marked that it is difficult to conceive it should never have attracted attention from any local historian or antiquarian before [...] It was, as surely as in these other cases [of *Thingwall* places in the British Isles reviewed by Worsaae], the *hovedthing* or principal political and judicial meeting-place for the district; and it speaks very intelligibly of the extent to which the district was not only under the influence of, but inhabited by, men of Northern or Danish origin, that such a place of meeting should have existed in Cleveland.’

J.C. Atkinson, *Glossary of the Cleveland Dialect*, pp. xii-xiii n.

Hauvey-gauvey, sb. A rude or stupid lout, an awkward clown, slow-witted and slow-handed.

Hauvish, hauving, adj. Simple-witted, half-stupid.

Haver, sb. (pr. havver). Oats.

O. N. *bafr* (pl. *bafrar*), *bafri*; N. *havre*, *bagre*, *hærre*; O. Sw. *bagri* (*bafra* in acc. sing.); Sw. D. *bagrä*, *bagrö*; Sw. *bafre*; Dan. *havre*; O. Germ. *habaro*, *haber*, *babro*; Germ. *bafer*, *haber*; O. Sax. *havoro*; Dut. *haver*; Wall. *bafar*.

Haver-meal, sb. Oatmeal.

Haw-buck, sb. An ignorant country clown, an uninformed lout.

Hay-bauks, sb. Loose sticks or poles, of oak commonly, laid side by side, with spaces between, above the stalls or standings in the cow- or ox-house (**Ows-'us**), on which is laid the hay for the present use of the beasts below.

Hays, sb. Enclosure fences, often doing duty as boundaries, in which sense the word exists in several local names.

O. N. *bagi*; O. Sw. *bagb*; N. *bagje*, *baga*; Sw. D. *bag*, *bage*, *baga*, *have*; Dan. *have*; M. Germ. *bae*, *bege*; A. S. *bag*; Germ. *bag*; M. Fris. *bâg*, *bage*. But our word is probably more directly due to the Norman form, *baia*, or *baia*. 'When the Danish and Saxo-Norman monarchs organised hunts on a large scale, the system of netting was found inefficient, and a combination of materials, in which nets were subservient to hazels and underwood, was formed, whereby a larger number of beasts of a dangerous character could be entrapped. These hedges, which the Saxons were probably taught by the Normans to construct, received the Norman appellation of *Haia*.' *A. Sax. Home*, p. 365. See Du Cange in v. *Haia*, Spelman's Gloss.

Hazel, v. a. (pr. hezzle). To beat, chastise, especially with a stick.

Thre gives the word *bassla*, which signifies to mark out, or enclose a space for a duel, with hazel rods, and quotes,—' *En er menn kvomu in þann stað, er völlrin var baslaðr, þá voru þar settar up besli stengr allt til utmerkja þar er sá staðr var, er orrostan skyldi vera.*' when the men came to that place where the lists were *hazelled*, there were set up there hazel rods in order to mark out where the combat was to be. This is another deriv. use of the vb. *hazel*; and possibly even, obvious as the derivation of our word seems, there may be in it a reference to the good hard blows which would be interchanged in the *Voll baslaðr*.

‘as with a person who is colour-blind’

‘It was with them as with a person who is colour-blind. They were not in a position to see what there was to be seen from, so to say, the imperfect development of a faculty [...] The Danish invasions, maraudings, desolatings, certainly, were facts to them. But the subsequent Danish occupancy, colonization, supremacy; the Danish sponsorship for nearly five-sixths of the existing place-names of the district, and for almost as much of the language of the country-folk as it was spoken in their day – in short, the fact of the Danelagh and the meaning of the Danelagh [...] – all these matters were not realised as facts by them.’

J.C. Atkinson, *A Handbook for Ancient Whitby and its Abbey* (1882)

SLBI



Mentha longifolia (L) Huss

Nat. Order *Labiatae*
 Name *Mentha sylvestris* L.
 Locality *Kenilworth, Hereford*
 Date *Sept. 1858*
 Coll. *Dr. J. S. Streetfield*

EX HERB.
DULWICH COLLEGE

SLBI



Oenanthe croatica

*From ditches below Kenilworth
 W. side station
 South Wilts
 August 1858*

Nat. Order *Umbelliferae*
 Name *Oenanthe croatica* L.
 Locality *Water; Rye, Leigh Bridge
 n. Chisford, Devon.
 Date July 1906*
 Coll. Rev. G. L. Streetfield

EX HERB.
DULWICH COLLEGE

Streatfeild on the place-name *Vangarth*

‘*Hvön*, gen. *hvannar*, is a plant known to botanists as *Angelica archangelica*, which grows abundantly in Northern Europe and was formerly held in much esteem for flavouring ale. For this purpose the plant was cultivated, and an angelica garden was called *hvanngarðr*. This particular species of angelica [...] has no claim to be considered a native of Britain. We may, therefore, perhaps, be allowed to picture these beer-loving colonists sending to the mother country for the seeds of a much esteemed herb [...] and if our modern Vangarth represents the *hvanngarðr* of ancient Scandinavia, it would be a convincing proof that our Danish forefathers had no idea of allowing their beer to lose in flavour, because they had crossed the Northern sea.’

G.S. Streatfeild, *Lincolnshire and the Danes* (1884), pp. 150-51

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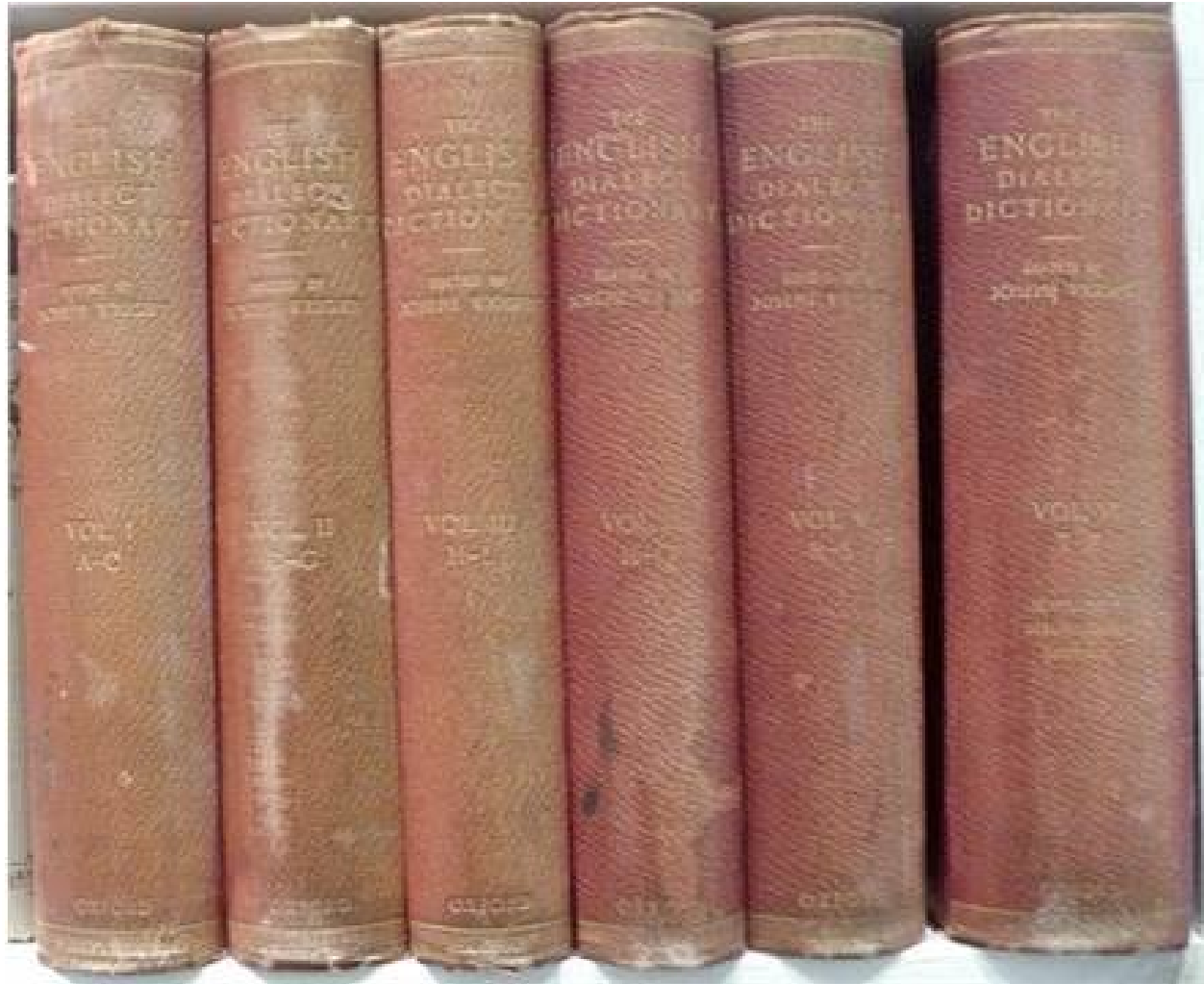
The amateur vs the professional

‘From English works upon this subject I have derived but little assistance. The works which deal directly with the Scand. origin of dialect words are none of them by professed scholars [...] The value of such works as those of Atkinson, Streatfeild and Ellwood appears to be much impaired by the undue influence of the glamour of the Viking Age upon the minds of the authors, which has led them to refer to Scand. originals many genuine English words. I have attempted to clear my mind of any such bias [...]’

Arnold Wall, ‘A Contribution towards the Study of the Scandinavian Element in the English Dialects’, *Anglia* 20 (1898), 45-135



Joseph Wright (ed.), *English Dialect Dictionary* (6 vols, 1898-1905)





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LONDON
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