

**A DICTIONARY OF THE ISLE OF  
WIGHT DIALECT, AND OF  
PROVINCIALISMS USED IN THE  
ISLAND; WITH ILLUSTRATIVE  
ANECDOTES AND TALES**

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A dictionary of the Isle of Wight dialect, and of provincialisms used in the Island; with illustrative anecdotes and tales by W. H. Long

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**W. H. LONG**

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ANECDOTES AND TALES**



A DICTIONARY  
OF THE  
ISLE OF WIGHT DIALECT,

And of Provincialisms used in the Island;

*WITH ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTES AND TALES;*

TO WHICH IS APPENDED

THE CHRISTMAS BOYS' PLAY,  
AN ISLE OF WIGHT "HOOAM HARVEST,"  
AND  
SONGS SUNG BY THE PEASANTRY;

FORMING

*A Treasury of Insular Manners and Customs  
OF FIFTY YEARS AGO.*

BY W. H. LONG.

*(Subscribers' Edition.)*

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## PREFACE.

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THE following pages aim at giving—besides a Dictionary of the dialect—illustrations of the use of the words, and specimens of the every-day talk and forms of expression current among the peasantry of the Isle of Wight. The list of words could easily have been made more extensive, but many found in other parts of the country as well as in the Island have been purposely omitted; although a number equally as common have been retained, from a desire to make the collection as complete a transcript as possible of the provincial vernacular. The Glossary of Isle of Wight Words edited by Mr. C. R. Smith for the English Dialect Society has been of the greatest service in the compilation of this, (though the larger part of the matter here printed was collected before its appearance in 1881); and considerable assistance has been afforded by the Glossary of Hampshire Words compiled by the Rev. Sir W. H. Cope for the same Society. Akerman's Glossary of Wiltshire Words and Barnes' Glossary of the Dorset Dialect have also been occasionally consulted.

No one knows better than the compiler that a Dictionary like the present must necessarily be more or less incomplete; but he hopes that not many words of importance will be found to have been omitted; and such as it is—he offers the result of his labour to the favourable consideration of his fellow-Islanders, and the Public generally.

W. H. L.



## CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	ix.
DICTIONARY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT DIALECT . . . . .	1
PLAY ACTED BY THE "CHRISTMAS BOYS" . . . . .	99
AN ISLAND "HOGAM HARVEST" . . . . .	109
SONGS SUNG BY THE PEASANTRY . . . . .	125
SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF WORDS . . . . .	168



## INTRODUCTION.

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THE provincial dialects spoken in the southern counties of England, once forming part of the Saxon Kingdom of Wessex, have many general features of resemblance, showing that they all are branches from one parent stock. Many of the provincialisms current in the Isle of Wight are the same as, or very similar to, those found in the adjoining counties of Hampshire, Wilts, and Dorset; but a good proportion seems to be peculiar to the Island; and the dialect of Sussex on the one side, and of Somerset and Devon on the other, are very different from the insular vernacular. The basis of the dialect of the Isle of Wight is purely Anglo-Saxon, and it is remarkable, considering its situation, and intercourse (principally through fishing and smuggling) with the opposite coast of France, that scarcely a word of undoubted French origin seems to have been introduced.

The ever-increasing number of visitors flocking into the Island, and the growing influences of Board Schools, are rapidly sweeping away all vestiges of the native Island speech, while the older inhabitants abstain as much as possible from using it in the presence of strangers; and the rising generation are growing up ignorant of the meaning of words still used by their grandfathers,—some of them far more expressive and comprehensive than their modern substitutes. For instance,—what a combination of common every-day phrases is necessary to explain the influence of dry weather on ripened corn, expressed by an Island labourer in two words—"bret out"; or to give the full meaning he comprises in the single word "snoodle." There is no doubt that by the gradual disappearance of the local dialects, various words and forms of expression are lost, which modern English replaces but imperfectly.

Many of the peculiarities of transposition of letters, and of pronunciation, will be found noted in their places in the