

**ENGLISH DIALECT WORDS OF
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AS
SHOWN IN THE "UNIVERSAL
ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY"**

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English Dialect Words of the Eighteenth Century as Shown in The "Universal Etymological Dictionary" by Nathaniel Bailey

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NATHANIEL BAILEY

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EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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"UNIVERSAL ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY"

OF

NATHANIEL BAILEY.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

BY

WILLIAM E. A. AXON, F.R.S.L.



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1883.

INTRODUCTION.

THE present volume aims at giving in a compact and handy form all that there is of value to the student of dialects in the English Dictionary of Nathaniel Bailey. Of all our lexicographers who preceded Dr. Johnson, he was the most popular, and though his work was eventually beaten out of the field, it did not yield without a struggle. There were several editions after the year 1755, the memorable year in which the result of Johnson's labours first appeared, and even as recently as 1802 there was an edition issued at Glasgow. As Bailey's work first appeared in 1721 it had nearly a century of popularity and usefulness. Of the author very little is known, but if it be true that the biography of an author is the history of his books, we are not entirely without materials for a Life of Bailey.

The first edition of the dictionary appeared in 1721, and it may be convenient to give here such particulars as are known of its bibliography.

1721. An Universal Etymological English Dictionary; comprehending the derivations of the generality of words in the English tongue . . . together with a large collection and explication of Words and Phrases used in our ancient Statutes, &c. . . also the Dialects of our different Counties . . . to which is added a Collection of our most common Proverbs, with their Explication and Illustration. . . By N. Bailey, *φιλολόγος*. London, 1721.

- 1724, 8vo. The second edition.
- 1726, 8vo. The third edition.
- 1727, 8vo. First edition of a supplementary volume containing additional words called "Volume II." See 1731.
- 1728, 8vo. The fourth edition.
- 1730, Folio. [The first edition, entitled] "'Dictionarium Britannicum,' or a more Compleat Universal Etymological English Dictionary than any extant, collected by several hands. The Mathematical part by G. Gordon, the Botanical by P. Miller. The whole Revis'd and Improv'd with many thousand Additions by N. Bailey." It was dedicated by Gordon and Bailey to Thomas Earl of Pembroke. It contains a great number of technical terms, but the proverbs, proper names, &c. are omitted. An interleaved copy of this edition was the foundation of Johnson's Dictionary.
- 1731, 8vo. The fifth edition, "with considerable improvements."
- 1731, 8vo. Supplementary vol. entitled 'The Universal Etymological, &c.,' "an additional collection of words not in the first volume." It is marked "Volume II." and has "500 cuts."
- 1731, 8vo. Second edition of Vol. II.
- 1733, 8vo. The sixth edition, "with considerable improvements."
- 1735, 8vo. The seventh edition, "with considerable improvements."
- 1736, Folio. The second edition, "with numerous additions and improvements."
- 1737, 8vo. The eighth edition.
- 1737, 8vo. "The third edition," and the supplement called "Volume II."
- 1740, 8vo. The ninth edition.
- 1742, 8vo. The tenth edition.
- 1745, 8vo. The eleventh edition.
- 1747, 8vo. The thirteenth edition, "with considerable improvements."
1749. The thirteenth edition.
1749. The fourteenth edition.

- 1751, 8vo. Fourteenth edition.
- 1753, 8vo. Fifteenth edition.
- 1755, 8vo. Sixteenth edition. Price 6s.
- 1755, Folio. A new Universal Etymological Dictionary [title as before]. "And now republished with many corrections, additions, and literate improvements by different hands. . .
By Joseph Nicol Scott, M.D."
- 1756, 8vo. Fourth edition of "Volume II."
- 1757, 8vo. Seventeenth edition. Price 6s.
- 1757, 8vo. Seventeenth edition.
- 1759, 8vo. The New Universal English Dictionary. "The fourth edition [of the supplement] carefully corrected by Mr. Buchanan." Possibly the reviser may have been James Buchanan, who published "Lingua Britannica vera Pronunciatio: or a new English Dictionary," 1757, and "An Essay towards establishing a standard for an elegant and uniform pronunciation of English Language." London, 1766.
- 1759, 8vo. The seventeenth edition.
[The Rev. William Mead Jones, the minister of Mill Yard Seventh Day Baptist Chapel, has a copy of this edition with the following memorandum by his predecessor, the Rev. W. H. Black, F.S.A.: "This book belonged to my wife's father (the late William Slater, my predecessor), to whom it was given by his eldest brother John, who had it (I suppose) from his father, John Slater, a contemporary of the Author and fellow-member with him of the Mill Yard Church. The four Slaters above-named died respectively thus: John, 176-; John in 1809; William in 1819; Harriot in 1861.—*W. H. Black.*"]
- 1760, 8vo. Vol. II. The fifth edition corrected and improved. . .
By Mr. Buchanan.
- 1761, 8vo. A German translation, "bey dieser dritten Auflage aber um noch mehr als die halfte vermehret, von Theodor Arnold.
Leipz. und Züllichau."
- 1761, 8vo. Eighteenth edition.
- 1763, 8vo. The twentieth edition.

- 1764, 8vo. The twentieth edition.
- 1764, Folio. This, with Dr. Scott's additions, is described by Lowndes as the best edition.
- 1766, 8vo. The one-and-twentieth edition.
- 1770, 8vo. Twentieth edition.
- 1770, 8vo. The two-and-twentieth edition "with improvements."
- 1772, Folio. Revised and corrected by J. N. Scott, M.D.
- 1773, 8vo. The three-and-twentieth edition.
- 1775, 8vo. The fifth edition [of the supplement].
1776. Twenty-fourth edition.
- 1782, 8vo. The four-and-twentieth edition carefully enlarged and corrected by Edward Harwood, D.D. Price 7s.
- 1783, 8vo. A new edition, being the twenty-fifth.
- 1790, 8vo. German translation by Arnold. Neue verbessert und vermehrt von Anton Ernst Klausung, P.P. Sechste Auflage. Leipz. und Züllichau.
- 1790, 8vo. Twenty-fifth edition.
- 1792, 8vo. German translation, ed. Klausung, 8 Auf. Leipzig.
1802. Thirtieth edition, printed at Glasgow.
- 1810, 8vo. German translation. "Gänzlich umgearbeitet von D. Johann Anton Fahrenkrüger. Elfte, verbesserte und vermehrte, Auflage. 2 Theile, Leipzig und Jena, 1810.

"The dedications to the dictionary," says Mr. J. E. Bailey, "are as confusing as the editions themselves, until all the variations are collected." These are given in 'Notes and Queries,' Fifth series, III. 510.

These bibliographical details are largely derived from 'Notes and Queries,' and especially from two long and carefully-written contributions by Mr. J. E. Bailey. (See 'Notes and Queries,' 5th Series, i. 448, 514; ii. 156, 258, 514; iii. 175, 298, 509; iv. 276; vii. 447; viii. 52.)

In the first edition there is an advertisement of N. Bailey:—

"Youth Boarded and taught the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, in a Method more Easy and Expeditions than is common; also other School-Learning by the *Author* of this *Dictionary*, to be heard of at *Mr. Batley's*, Bookseller, at the sign of the *Dove* in *Paternoster Row*, &c."

This advertisement would appear to claim for the lexicographer an acquaintance with the sacred tongue, but the following communication from Dr. A. Neubauer would seem to show that he was not a very profound Hebraist:—

“My attention was lately drawn to a Rabbinical quotation in Bailey’s ‘Etymological English Dictionary,’ which I find is not only full of mistakes, but has very little connexion with the saying referred to. Bailey’s article is the following: ‘Give him a Rowland for his Oliver.—This proverb *in terminis* is modern, and owes its rise to the Cavaliers in the time of the civil wars in England, who by way of rebuff gave the antimonarchical party a General Monk for their Oliver Cromwell; but as to the matter of it, it seems to proceed from the ancient *Lex Talionis*, or law of retaliation, an eye for an eye;.....but Christians ought to be of a better spirit, maugre the private revenge either of hard words or rude actions, as say the Hebrews,

אם אמר לך דוד אהיך ודודך לא
והדיש ורץ שתד לך פרימבו.

I simply give the correct reading of the saying without mentioning Bailey’s mistakes in it, and without discussing the various readings of it both in editions and in manuscripts. The translation of it is the following: ‘If one says to thee that thy ears are those of an ass, do not care for it [or according to another reading, do not believe it]; if two [say so], prepare for thyself [or according to another reading, make for thyself] a bridle;’ *i. e.*, public opinion is always right. How Bailey, who gives no translation of the Rabbinical saying, was misled, I cannot say.” (‘Athenæum,’ No. 2778, Jan. 22nd, 1881.)

It is hardly necessary to say that Bailey’s explanation of the “rise” of the proverb is wrong. The old phrase refers to the Roland and Oliver of the twelve peers, though the circumstances of the Civil War may have led to its revival.

It is probable that Bailey’s inclusion of proverbs added to the popular favour with which his dictionary was regarded. From this and some other sources were taken the material of the little volume