

**A GRAMMAR OF THE
DIALECT OF
WINDHILL, IN THE WEST
RIDING OF YORKSHIRE**

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A grammar of the dialect of Windhill, in the West Riding of Yorkshire by Joseph Wright

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JOSEPH WRIGHT

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from the Author.
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A Grammar
OF THE
DIALECT OF WINDHILL,
IN THE
WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE.

*Illustrated by a Series of Dialect Specimens, phonetically rendered;
with a Glossarial Index of the Words used in the
Grammar and Specimens.*

BY
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'Nur das Beispiel führt zum Licht;
Vieles Reden thut es nicht.'

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To My Mother



PREFACE

My chief object in writing the following Grammar has been to furnish specialists in English philology with an accurate account of the Phonology and Accidence of one of the most interesting of the Yorkshire dialects. And in order to make the work as useful as possible to this class of scholars, I have taken special care to include in the Phonology fairly complete lists of the words which are in common use in the dialect and also exist in the literary language. This method of treatment has sometimes involved me in great difficulties; because in the case of words which seem to have had an abnormal development I could not always decide with certainty whether the seeming irregularities had arisen within the dialect itself, or whether the words in question had been introduced from the literary language at various periods, or were merely borrowings from some neighbouring dialect. These are difficulties which every writer of a scientific dialect grammar has to contend with. But it would manifestly have been dishonest on my part to have omitted any word or form which did not seem to have had a regular development. The result is that the grammar contains dozens of words the vocalism of which I have not been able to

explain satisfactorily, but I have nevertheless registered them in separate paragraphs, as being in common use in the dialect and of equal importance to the English philologist. Out of a great many such examples I will only mention a few here: *nuez* (OE. *nosu*) *nose*, *bied* (OE. *beard*) *beard*, *ut* (OE. *hāt*) *hot*, *friet* (OE. *fretan*) *to fret*, for which we should expect in the dialect *noiz* (§§ 105, 109), *bād* (§§ 61, 68), *net* (§§ 122, 126), *freit* (§§ 82, 87). On the other hand, the present grammar will, I trust, help to throw some light upon Old English vowel quantities, besides showing how dialects still keep apart many vowel sounds which have fallen together in the literary language. Of the latter I will only mention a few examples, although a great many may be found in the grammar:—*jād* (OE. *geard*) *yard*, *jied* (OE. *gerd*) *yard, three feet*. *wāk* (OE. *weorc*) *work*, *wēk* (OE. *wyrcan*) *to work*. *meil* (OE. *melu*) *meal, flour*, *mīel* (OE. *māil*) *meal, repast*. *reit* (OE. *reocht*, *rōht*) *right*, *rait* (OE. *writan*) *to write*, *rit* (OE. *wyrhta*) *wright*.

In the treatment of the native element contained in the grammar I have generally started out from Old English, which in some respects presents fewer difficulties to the writer of a modern dialect grammar than Middle English with its numerous dialects. Had I, however, been a specialist in this period of our mother tongue, I should probably have been able to settle many minor points which remain unsolved in the present grammar. But still, in spite of my shortcomings in this respect, I hope that the book will be a welcome contribution to English philology.

In the treatment of the French element in the dialect I found, after trying many experiments, that the only

satisfactory plan was to start out from the present pronunciation of literary English. The words have come into the dialect at various periods and through various channels, and it is accordingly almost impossible to treat them historically. I have therefore contented myself with registering the present dialectical pronunciation of the French element, and for this purpose I have adopted, as the standard of literary English pronunciation, the sound-system in Sweet's *Primer of Spoken English*, which is fairly typical of the Southern pronunciation of educated people. A comparison of the development of the French and English elements in the dialect is interesting from many points of view. I will only draw attention to §§ 61, 203 and §§ 58, 202; but many other paragraphs will be found equally interesting both to English and French philologists. Any one, who is not thoroughly acquainted with the dialect, may possibly think that I have introduced into this part of the grammar many words which are not in common use; but such is not the case. I have been particularly careful in this respect. I will only mention one instance out of many where I may seem to have erred: *raiet akt riot act*, which is one of the commonest expressions in the dialect, a regular household phrase. What mother has not said to her naughty child hundreds of times, *if tē duz ſat e'gien al rīd ſī traiet akt en reit en oel?*

In the chapter on the consonants the chief interest naturally lies in the gutturals. In this part of the grammar I have tried to give complete lists of the words which differ in their development from literary English, I mean such words as: *fik fitch*, *roik to reach*, *brig bridge*, *flig fledge*, *duof dough*, etc.

It was originally my intention not to give any specimens of the dialect in this volume, but to reserve them for a second which was to contain a complete glossary of such dialect words as are not in use in the Modern literary language, together with extensive specimens of the dialect. With this end in view I have been collecting materials for a great number of years, but various circumstances prevent me from entertaining the hope of being able to publish them for some years to come. I have therefore decided to give a few specimens in the present volume, trusting that they may be found useful to those readers who may wish to make themselves familiar with the dialect. To anyone who takes the trouble to read them I venture to say that they will be found both amusing and instructive.

The Index, which has been a laborious piece of work, contains all the words occurring in the grammar.

As a guarantee for the general accuracy of the material contained in the book, I need only state that I spoke the dialect pure and simple until I was practically grown up.

In conclusion I have the pleasant task of expressing my most cordial thanks to three friends—Professor Napier, Professor Holthausen, and the Rev. A. L. Mayhew—who have given me much valuable help in the work.

JOSEPH WRIGHT.

OXFORD,
January 1893.