

**MANUAL OF BRITISH RURAL SPORTS:  
COMPRISING SHOOTING, HUNTING,  
COURSING, FISHING, HAWKING,  
RACING, BOATING, PEDESTRIANISM,  
AND THE VARIOUS RURAL GAMES AND  
AMUSEMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN**

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Manual of British Rural Sports: comprising shooting, hunting, coursing, fishing, hawking, racing, boating, pedestrianism, and the various rural games and amusements of Great Britain by J. H. Walsh

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**J. H. WALSH**

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**BRITISH RURAL SPORTS.**



James Watson, sculp.

For the  
M. W. Allen

LONDON, FREDERICK WARNE & CO.

P R E F A C E  
TO  
T H E F I R S T E D I T I O N .

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For the last twenty years and upwards, it has been the amusement of my leisure hours to master the *arcana* of the several Rural Sports peculiar to Great Britain, or as many of them as came within my reach, in which pursuit I have met with great difficulties, owing chiefly to the want of treatises giving such minute instructions as would serve my purpose; for though some were then in existence, and more have since been published, which professed to go into the details of the special amusements they describe, yet they are too often defective in the very points which they ought to dilate upon, and the author's attempt to make his theme amusing has often rendered the arrangement obscure, or else his want of practice in writing has prevented him from presenting his ideas in an intelligible form. The nature of the inhabitants of these isles is sufficiently prone to the enjoyment of rural sports without any further temptation, and all that the young sportsman wants is a clear description of the habits of the animal he is pursuing, and the proper management of his dogs, or of the peculiar implements of his sport. Having myself been retarded by this deficiency in our sporting literature, I have in the following pages endeavoured to supply it, by giving the result of my experience in the shape of a Manual of British Rural Sports, embracing not only the above-mentioned details, but also a description of everything relating to the various kinds of racing adopted in this country, and of the out-door games and amusements peculiar to it. By some it may be supposed that there are already numerous cyclopædias, &c., relating to these subjects; but I believe I shall only state what is the general opinion when I assert, that there is not one which is really sufficient to enable the young sportsman to teach himself more than one or two departments of rural sports. Neither are there many special treatises which enter fully into the subject of which they profess to treat, for though some are exceedingly interesting as far as they go, yet they seldom embrace the whole of the details, but rather dilate upon some particular department. Among those which are especially useful are the various writings of "Nimrod" and "Scrutator" on *Horses and Hounds*; those of Mr. Scrope and Mr. Colquhoun on *Deer-*

*stalking*; Messrs. Stoddart and "Ephemera" on *Fishing*; and the Author of *The Cricket Field*. Colonel Hawker's book on *Shooting* is now becoming somewhat behind the times, in consequence of the great change in guns and in the management of game preserves since his day; but his remarks on *Pent-shooting* are still as applicable as ever to that sport, of which, however, I do not profess to know much from practical experience, and, therefore, have referred my readers to his book for its details, as also I have done in the case of *Deer-stalking* to Mr. Scrope. In all the other sports to which I have alluded I have myself been fully initiated, not only in their general features, but in all their more secret operations, which the sportsman is often inclined to leave to his gamekeeper or other subordinate; but in the articles on *Fishing* and *Cricket*, the reader will do well to consult the pages of the works above alluded to, where the details of these sports are more fully entered into than the limits of this book will allow. No reference will be found to *Boxing*, *Cock-fighting*, or any other illegal amusement, because whatever difference of opinion there may be as to their advantages or otherwise, there ought to be none on the propriety of obeying the law of the land; and while that orders their discontinuance, no good subjects have any right to indulge in them.

The Illustrations which will be found interspersed through the following pages are most of them designed expressly for this work by Messrs. Wells and Hind, and engraved with great fidelity and skill by the Messrs. Dalziel and Mr. Hodgkin. Of the artistic effect produced by their joint labours, I must leave the public to judge; but of their truth and accuracy as copies of the subjects they profess to embody, I can speak in terms of unqualified approbation.

In order to guard against the charge of wholesale plagiarism, it may be necessary to explain that some of the chapters on the Training of Man have been recently published under another signature.

In the department of Natural History, the nomenclature adopted is that of the British Museum, by which arrangement the reader may at any time refer to that beautiful series of specimens for comparison.

With these few explanations of my object in putting together these pages, I must throw myself upon the indulgence of my readers, and trust that I may have as favourable a reception as on former occasions when I have subscribed myself

STONEHENGE.

October, 1855.



## P R E F A C E

TO

### T H E   S E V E N T H   E D I T I O N .

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*British Rural Sports* first appeared in 1855; since which date six large editions have been disposed of, and the work has been admitted to be now a *desideratum* among English sportsmen. Time has, however, rendered it necessary to introduce a good many alterations in, and additions to, the text; and advantage has been taken of these circumstances to entirely reset the book in larger type, and add many new illustrations. It is hoped that this course will give *British Rural Sports* a new career of usefulness.

Since the original publication shot guns and sporting rifles have been completely remodelled, a new code of laws for the courser's use have been drawn up by a Club instituted for that purpose, the game of croquet has taken every country garden by storm, and horse as well as dog-shows have been instituted from one end of the kingdom to the other. Very little change has taken place in other departments of sport, with the exception of angling, in which a new law relating to salmon fisheries has been passed, and in game preserving, wherein the act for the prevention of poaching at night has almost put an end to the brutal conflicts between the poachers and the keepers which were formerly so common. All these changes and novelties have been, I believe, embodied in the present edition, with the addition of the pedigrees of the most celebrated horses which have appeared since 1855 to the tables first published by myself in the form now so generally adopted, so as to bring the *Manual of British Rural Sports* up to the level of the present day. The addition of a faithful series of portraits of the various breeds of British Dogs will, I trust, be acceptable to the reader, and remunerate the spirited publisher for his outlay in that department. At the time when the first edition appeared, I was unable, for want of knowledge, to describe all the different dogs known in the United Kingdom, but the institution of shows has brought together good specimens of each and all, and Mr. Wells has, I think, caught their characteristics with great fidelity.

STONEHENGE.

London, Jan. 1867.



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