

**A GLOSSARY OF THE
PROVINCIALISMS IN USE
IN THE COUNTY OF
SUSSEX**

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WILLIAM DURRANT COOPER

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BY
WILLIAM DURRANT COOPER, F.S.A.

"Jurat hæc obsoleta servari, aliquando profutura."—WACHTER.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first Edition of this GLOSSARY, which was printed in 1834, for private circulation, has been for some time exhausted; and as a continued demand exists for such works, I have ventured to submit a new Edition to the public.

It will be seen that several errors in the first Edition have been corrected; that many words and several fresh illustrations have been added; and that I have fully availed myself of the works of Mr. Kemble and Dr. Léo; of the general Dictionaries of Provincial Words, edited by Mr. Halliwell and Mr. Holloway, and of the Collections of the Sussex Archaeological Society.

Those who would study the pure vernacular of Sussex will find it complete in 'Tom Cladpole's Journey to Lunnun.'

W. D. C.

81, GUILDFORD STREET, RUSSELL SQUARE;
21st Feb. 1858.



Figure 1. The relationship between the number of species (S) and the number of individuals (N) for 10 different species. The x-axis is the number of individuals, the y-axis is the number of species, and the z-axis is the species index.

A GLOSSARY OF THE PROVINCIALISMS OF SUSSEX.

THERE are two dialects used in Sussex—the Eastern and the Western. The former bears a close resemblance to the dialect of the weald of Kent, while the latter is nearly allied to the phrasology of Hants, Dorset, and other Western counties.

Dr. Latham, in his 'English Language' (p. 559), does not notice this difference. He states that the *differentie* between the dialects of *Kent* and the dialects of *Sussex*, *Essex*, &c., have yet to be worked out: but he says also, that "the characteristics of Sussex are involved in those of Kent—thus, if Kent be simply Saxon, the two counties have the same ethnological relation; whilst, if Kent be Frisian or Jute (?), Sussex may be either like or unlike;" whilst Hants he describes as "*theoretically* Saxon, rather than Angle, and West Saxon (Wessex) rather than South, East, or Middle Saxon. The Jute elements, in either the Hants or Isle of Wight dialects, hitherto undiscovered; probably non-existent." A recent writer, Mr. D. Mackintosh, declares that he found in Chichester a regular colony of Jutes, and also along the coast opposite the Isle of Wight, as well as along the coast of Kent, and he has formed his opinion from the

physiognomy of the people. "The profile, excepting the point of the nose, is an exact semicircle; and, supposing one leg of a compass were to be placed a little above the ear, the other leg would describe the contour of the skull; viewed sidewise, it is likewise an exact semicircle." According to Beda, Kent was first peopled by Jutes; and other Anglo-Saxon traditions "point to a close connection between Kent and Northumberland: the latter county, according to these traditions, was peopled from Kent, and for a long time received its rulers and dukes from that kingdom."¹ Dr. Latham, however, in his 'Ethnology of the British Islands,' follows out closely his argument that the Jute element is questionable, and does not adopt Beda as a perfect authority upon the point. Among the fishermen of Hastings, who are evidently a distinct race from the generality of the townsmen, there appear to be marks of a descent from the Frisians or Danes; there is a close resemblance between them and the men of Yarmouth, in the neighbourhood of which there are traces of the Danes, particularly in the termination "*by*" in the names of places (which termination does not exist in Sussex), and in the pronunciation of the Hastings fishermen.

Both the Sussex dialects possess a striking affinity to the Saxon. In both many words of pure Saxon origin, such as *bly*, *stade*, *skade*, &c., little known

¹ Kemble, Phil. Trans., No. 35.

in other places, are in frequent use and well understood; whilst others, such as *cope*, *crocke*, *rath*, *shaw*, &c., known indeed in the English language, but elsewhere seldom used, are constantly employed. Throughout the county the Saxon plural is not unfrequently used, especially in words ending in *st*, as *blast*, *post*, *ghost*, &c., the plurals of which are made *blastes*, *postes*, *ghostes*. In words ending in *asp*, as *hasp*, *clasp*, *wasp*, &c., the two last letters are transposed in the pronunciation—an *e* final is added, and they are pronounced *hapse*,¹ *clapse*,² *wapse*,³ &c. Instead of the word *neck* the people usually pronounce it *nick*; again, for "throat, they say *throtte*;⁴ for choak,⁵ *chock*."⁶ Indeed, the Sussex pronunciation of many words derived from the Saxon is superior to that generally received; thus *earth*, from *eard* (Sax.), to plough, (in Anglo-Saxon books written *e-orth*), is still correctly pronounced as a word of two syllables, *e-arth*. Barn is universally called *bearn*, the exact Anglo-Saxon *bærn*. Gate is called, like the Anglo-Saxon, *ge-at*. House is pronounced like the Saxon *huss*. Oil is correctly called *œt*; and the elder retains its Saxon name of *ellar*. Again, laths are correctly

¹ *Hasps* (Sax.)² *Ghaspæ* (Teut.)³ *Wæps* (Sax.)⁴ *Throt* (Sax.)⁵ *Ceocean* (Sax.)

⁶ 'A Collection of English Words not generally used, &c., by John Ray, F.R.S.,' written at the instance of and dedicated to 'Peter Courthope, of Danny, in Sussex, Esq.;' and printed by 'H. Bruges, for Thos. Burrell, at the Golden Ball, under St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet-street.'