

# basic dictionary essex dialect

The object behind the production of this dictionary is to record the rich and varied dialect which is now sadly dying out within the county of Essex.

- **AFEARED..** Afraid, frightened, scared.
- **AGIN ..** Against, very common, in such as, "I ain't agin it".
- **AILS ..** Beards of barley, or beared wheat. You would have a tool such as a "Barley-ailer".
- **ASHEN ..** Made of ash wood.
- **BALD ..** White faced, mainly in animals, such as in pub names "Baldfaced Stag".
- **BANGE ..** To rain finely, or to drizzle, as in "That banges a bit outside".
- **BARM ..** To smear, or defile with mud, or other substances, as in "His clothes are all barmed o' mud".
- **BEEVERS ..** A meal taken at around 11am.
- **BLADES ..** Leaves, such as mangold or tomato leaves,
- **BREW ..** Edge, or brow of field ditch which stands opposite to that on which the hedge stands, the field side of a ditch.
- **BURNING FIRE ..** A field fire lit to burn twitch or other weeds, pronounced, "bu'n n'-foire".
- **BUSH ..** A thorn or prickle off a thorn bush.
- **BUSKINS ..** Leather leggings or trousers.
- **CATER-CORNER ..** A path which crosses a field diagonally, from corner to corner , as in "I be us'in that o' cater-corner in yon field".
- **CAVIES (KAVIES) ..** To keep a look out, as in, "You keep cavies".
- **CLAMP ..** A large heap of anything, ie; potatoes, dung, etc.
- **CLUNG ..** Wet earth, large lumps of freshy turned earth.
- **COP ..** To hit or strike, as, "I copped he over his head".
- **COPWICK ..** A cobweb, from 'coppe' a spider and 'webb' a net.
- **CLENT ..** Cleaned, as in "I ain't clent 'em it", (I haven't cleaned them yet).
- **CULCH ..** Rubbish, mainly 'hard' rubbish, such as broken bricks, tiles, etc.
- **DAG ..** Dew, in such as, "It be' a right ol' heavy dag" .

- **DO & DON'T** .. Used to admonish or to threaten, as in "Don't go near that pond, do you'll fall in" or "Get out o' my way, don't I'll larn y' manners".
- **DODMAN** .. A slow moving horse, also a snail, sometimes as in, "He be a dodman" meaning a slow and lazy man.
- **DOOL** .. Narrow strip of more or less wasteland beside the road or beside a field, also a pathway across a field. Can also be a thin plank, our expression 'A great deal' , comes from the corruption of the original old English word, dal, from which dool is descended.
- **DOW** .. A dove or pigeon, reference can be made to "Dow Wood" in Lindsell, which is also known as "Dove Wood".
- **DREENIN' WET** .. Very wet, dripping wet, soaking, mainly linked with wet clothes, but also to describe the weather conditions outside.
- **DRAFT** .. A drawing or picture, sometimes a photograph, anything illustrated .
- **EAZLES** .. Embers or ashes, of a fire.
- **ELLUM** .. Anything to do with the Elm tree.
- **FARE** .. To seem or to appear to do something, as in "He fared as if he'd fight".
- **FAVOUR** .. To resemble personally, as in "He don't favour his father".
- **FILD** .. Field.
- **FIT** .. To take part in a fight, or to refer to a past fight, as, "They fit one another".
- **FATTEN** .. Feet, foot-prints or foot-marks, also to 'go fatten' (Walking) .
- **FLECK** .. Fur, wool or hair of rabbits or hares.
- **FLEE** ..To skin a dead animal, also to steal from somebody.
- **FOWERS** .. A meal taken in the fields, or anywhere outside at around 4pm, can also mean 4.
- **FLEET** .. Shallow stream or ditch, reed fringed ditches on coastal marshes are known as fleets.
- **FRAME** .. To get ready to do something, as in, "He framed hisself to jump".
- **FUDDER** .. Further, as in, "Its a bit fudder".
- **GALLUS** .. Great, big, huge, as in. 'A gallus old cat' .
- **GON** .. Gave or given, as in, "He gon it to she".
- **GRIP** .. A small open ditch across a field ..
- **HAMMER** .. The solution to any problem, as in, "I can't get hammer on it", or, "Yes. I do get the hammer of it".

- **HARVEYS** .. The haws on a hawthorn hedge.
- **HAULM** .. The dead stalks or straw of peas, beans, potatoes, etc. On the marshes you get 'Hallum Walls' fences made of reeds, or straw.
- **HAZLE** .. Dry, as in clothes, or in reference to earth before rain.
- **HINDER** .. Yonder, in that direction, as in, "Hinder she be's", (She's over yonder - she's over there).
- **HOPPIT** .. A small meadow, near a house, taken from the term 'hope', a small enclosure of land. Common in other parts of England, as in 'St.Marys Hope', a place name.
- **HOUSEN** .. Houses, as in, 'Hinder housen be' t' hoppit', now we are getting away from a simple dialect and are almost in the realms of another language.
- **HULVE** .. A small drain or water way beneath a road or footpath, as in 'That hulve is full o' culch'.
- **HULL** .. To throw away, as in, "That 'ere tatter ain't no good, hull 't away".
- **IT** .. Yet, as in, "I ain't done't it".
- **INGONS** .. Onions.
- **INGS** .. Meadow, old English word for a meadow, as in, 'saltings', the salt meadows of our coasts.
- **IVERY** .. Ivy, often used as a house name, "Ivery Cottage".
- **JOURNEY WORK** .. A days work, from the old french word 'journee', also as in **JOURNEY MAN**, a man employed and paid per day.
- **KEEPING-ROOM** .. Living-room, taken as most of a families possessions are kept in that room, or at least they where during the period when the term was common.
- **KILTER** .. To repair or to put into working order, as in, "He kiltered it up".
- **LARGESS** .. A tip, gratuity or bounty, sometimes as a tip given freely, but mostly a tip which was been solicited.
- **LATARD** .. Late, normally with reference to crops, as in, "A latard field of barley", but also to people, as in , "Y' be latared wi' y' ho'ing".
- **LEAPS** .. Boards placed across a barn door to stop animals escaping. They would have to 'leap' to escape, also given as anything which stops some things passage.
- **LIEVE** .. Gladly, willing, as in, "I would as lieve go there as stay here".
- **MARNT** .. May not, as in, "Y' marnt do that".
- **MEECE** .. Mice, the plural of mouse.
- **MILDREW** .. A dull, misty or overcast day, as in, "That be a mildrew sort'a morning".

- **MOO'S** .. Mostly, as in, "I moo's like it warm".
- **NUTTRY** .. The hazel bush.
- **OAKEN** .. An oak tree.
- **OLLUST** .. Always, as in, "I ollust come".
- **ONBEKNOWN** .. Unknown, as in, "Onbeknown to her husband".
- **ONSEENSED** .. Stunned, as in, "I was onseensed".
- **OWD** .. Old, often a term used to show affection, as in "Dear owd pal".
- **PAIGLE** .. The common cowslip, also the oxlip.
- **PENSIONER** .. Any wounded animal or bird, but mainly wild duck or geese, coming from the word 'pinioner' or 'pinioned', a winged bird.
- **PERISHED** .. Chilled, as in, "I'm perished o' cowl", (I'm chilled with the cold).
- **PIGHTLE** .. The same as 'hoppit', but often used for a hoppit on which animals are kept, mainly pigs.
- **POACH** .. To work up the surface of the ground in wet weather, so as to foam puddles, as with reference to muddy paths being, 'all poached up'.
- **POLLYWAGS** .. Tadpoles.
- **PUGGLE** .. To poke or stip with a stick, as in, "Puggle him out" or as meaning 'to stir the fire'.
- **PUMMY** .. A soft pulpy mass of any kind. A cyder making term, a relic from the time cyder was made in Essex.
- **RAKES** .. The ruts made by the wheels of a cart in a muddy lane, as in. 'cart-rakes'.
- **RANNY- MOUSE** .. A shrew.
- **RASSLE (ROZZEL)** .. To stir a fire, mostly an oven or stove, the pole used to rake out the embers was called a 'rassling-pole'.
- **REDDY** .. To get rid of, as in, "Lets get reddy on 't".
- **RELEET** .. A place were roads cross. From the word 'leet', a meeting, sometimes referred to as 'eleet' a two way crossing, but mostly as 'releet' a three way crossing.
- **ROON** .. To gather mushrooms, I have seen a sign which reads "No Rooning on these Marshes".
- **SAIR** .. Rotten, mainly a branch of a tree too rotten to bear its own weight, or as in, "That apples sair".
- **SCORT** .. To prop-up or support anything, as in, "Tha'll wall needs scorting".
- **SEAL** .. Time of day or season of year, from the old English 'seol'.

- **SEED-LIP** .. A seed basket.
- **SHERES** .. Shires, all counties not adjacent to Essex, with the people coming from them known as 'shere-man', and in the view of Essex folk, fools.
- **SHIP** .. Sheep, a shepherd will speak of, "Them 'ere owd ship".
- **SHET-KNOIFE** .. Shut-knife, or pocket knife.
- **SHOUNT** .. To shine or polish anything, but mostly boots, as in, "Them boots is' shount".
- **SIMPSON** .. The common groundsel.
- **SIN & SON** .. Seen, as in, "I ain't sen't it" or "I son 't yusterday".
- **SLEEPER** .. The dormouse.
- **SLUD** .. Mud, filth, sludge, as in, "Y' get ot' em' sluddy buskins".
- **SNARTH** .. Long curved handle of a scythe.
- **SPOLT** .. Spoiled, anything rotten or useless, as in, "Y' fowers is spolt".
- **SPUR-GATE** .. A narrow gateway through which a man on horseback may pass, but not any kind of wheeled vehicle. A 'SPURRE-WAY', a right of way for horse traffic.
- **SNEW** .. Snow.
- **SPRING** .. A small growing wood, copse or grove, 'not' a spring of water.
- **STARNCHEER** .. A large example of any animal, be it rat or cattle, as in, "An owd' starncher cat", and sometimes unpolitely to people "Him's wiv b' an owd' starncher".
- **STREW** .. To destroy, as in. "Somebody has strew it" or "That owd sow has strew all its straw".
- **STRY** .. Rough, hard, severe, as in, "Y' stry on y' owd dog".
- **STUB** .. To dig up roots of trees, and the roots themselves, to clear rough ground.
- **TEMPUST** .. A thunderstorm.
- **THACK** .. Thatch.
- **THRIFT** .. A wood, as Canfield Thrift, Marks Thrift, etc.
- **TIMORSOME** .. Frightened, as in, "He be timorsome o' bulls".
- **TID** .. Very small, as in "The ranny-mouse be tid", also as **OVEN-TID**, small faggots for burning on the stove.
- **TYE** .. A village, hamlet or open space where two, or more, roads meet, without actually crossing.

- **T'YEAR .. This year, also T'WEEK this week.**
- **VENTUREMOUS .. Bold.**
- **WANTS (WANTZ) .. A meeting place, a place to start a journey.**
- **WASH .. A road in a watercourse, a 'water-lane', as Leaden Wash, Mundon Wash, etc.**
- **WASTE .. To get through a task, as in, "We're wasting it fast".**
- **WOIPER .. A viper.**
- **WONDRIN .. Surprising, as in, "He's wondrin tall".**
- **WE'S .. Our or ours, as in, "He's drunk we's beer".**
- **YOURN .. Yours, as in "That's yourn", also "Yourn wife" or "Yourn home", etc ..**

**I have not listed certain 'words' such as, 'Y for YOU, 'T for IT as I feel these explain themselves. I trust you have found this listing of interest and may be able to undertake your own research on the subject.**

copyright JOHN MEYER. 1998.