

From Antiquarianism to Philology: Joseph Hunter's Hallamshire Glossary (1829)

Joan C. Beal

Introduction

Joseph Hunter (1783-1861) is described in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as an “antiquary and record scholar” (Crook 1). As an antiquary, he is best known for his two monumental works of local history and topography: *Hallamshire* (1819)¹ and *South Yorkshire* (1828-1831), but he also published a dialect dictionary, the *Hallamshire Glossary* (1829), which provided one of the earliest accounts of an urban dialect of English. In this essay, following a brief biography of Hunter and a discussion of his topographical works, I examine the *Hallamshire Glossary* to demonstrate how Hunter bridges antiquarianism and philology.

Biography

Joseph Hunter was born in 1783 in Sheffield, a town which had long been famous for the production of cutlery. Early evidence for this is provided by Chaucer, who described the miller in the *Reeve's Tale* as carrying a “Sheffield thwitel [knife]” (Robinson 56). Hunter's father was a cutler and Joseph also served an apprenticeship as a cutler but did not pursue this craft. In 1805 he enrolled at the New College, a Presbyterian institution in York, and in 1809 he became the minister of Trim Street Chapel in Bath. Hunter was actively involved in the intellectual life of

Bath as a leading member of the Bath Literary and Scientific Institution. He was also a member of Sir Richard Colt's Stourhead Circle, a group of "gentlemen scholars from Somerset and Wiltshire" (Crook 1). Hunter continued to visit Sheffield and the surrounding area to conduct topographical research and also travelled to London and Oxford to consult documents in the British Museum and Bodleian Library. Following the publication of *South Yorkshire*, Hunter was appointed sub-commissioner of public records in London in 1833. Here, he became vice-president of the Society of Antiquaries and, according to Crook, "read many papers to the society" (2). Hunter died in 1861 and was buried in the grounds of Ecclesfield Parish Church in Sheffield. Records of the sale of his library in December 1861 provide an insight into the breadth of Hunter's interests, which ranged through "American history and biography; biography, genealogical history, heraldry, and kindred subjects; glossarial, dialectic, and lingual works; record publications; Shakespeare's writings; Shakespeare criticism and biography" (Widdowson and Smith 1a). It is a measure of the regard in which he is still held in Sheffield that the city's Hunter Archaeological Society, founded in 1912, is named after him.

Antiquities and Topography

In his preface to *Hallamshire*, Hunter uses the terms *topography*, *topographer* and *antiquities*, *antiquary*, with reference to the kind of study involved in the compilation of such a volume and its practitioners. He begins by stating that his work "owes little to the labours of any former topographer" (*Hallamshire* vii), implying that he considers himself a topographer and *Hallamshire* a work of topography. He then goes on to state that, while many parts of Yorkshire "have had their history and antiquities ably illustrated [...] no survey of any of the many districts into which that large county may for topographical purposes be so conveniently distributed" has included "the territory to which this volume relates" (vii). The *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) defines *topography* as "the

science or practice of describing a particular place, city, town, manor, parish, or tract of land; the accurate and detailed delineation and description of any locality" (*OED* s.v. topography). *Antiquity* has various senses, but those closest to that used by Hunter are **2a** "a custom, practice, or precedent recorded in, or preserved from an earlier era: a piece of recorded history, esp. from ancient times or the distant past; now usually in *plural*"; and **2b** "an object, building, or work of art from the ancient past; an ancient monument, etc. (now chiefly in *plural*)" (*OED* s.v. antiquity). The difference between *topography* and *antiquities* seems to be the focus of the former on a specific place, but many works on antiquities confine themselves to a specific area: one of the citations for **2a** is the title of W. Borlase's (1754) *Observations on the Antiquities of the County of Cornwall*. Hunter writes of the "history and antiquities" of Yorkshire and states that he would have welcomed the "friendly light afforded by a learned and judicious antiquary" on the "Ante-Norman history" of Hallamshire (*Hallamshire* vii). So *antiquities* and the work of the *antiquarian* focus on the distant past, in Hunter's view before the eleventh century, and *history* is concerned with more recent times, but both come within the purview of the *topographer* when they refer to a specific place.

The *OED* entry for *topography* has not been fully updated and entries in online dictionaries suggest that the term is used in a narrower sense today, in which it relates to the physical features of a place. Merriam-Webster defines it as "the art or practice of graphic delineation in detail usually on maps or charts of natural and man-made features of a place or region especially in a way to show their relative positions or elevation" (*Merriam-Webster* s.v. topography). Hunter's work certainly does not accord with this definition: *Hallamshire* contains not a single map and the charts included are genealogical, and while each volume of *South Yorkshire* has a map at the beginning, the main focus is on genealogy. In Hunter's time, the boundaries between antiquities and topography were much fuzzier than they are today. *Hallamshire* and *South Yorkshire* are works of topography because they

focus on very specific places, but much of the content is concerned with history and genealogy rather than geography. In the preface to *Hallamshire* Hunter admits that there is “much that will appear of interest only to those who have some natural connection with the persons or places described” but goes on to state that “topography that descends not to these minutiae is wanting of its very nerves and sinews” (*Hallamshire*: viii).

Hunter became interested in topography at an early age: he writes in the preface to *Hallamshire* that the “collection of materials for this work was begun at a very early period” of his life and that it was “among the amusements of childhood, and the chief pleasures of his youth” (*Hallamshire* viii). Potter tells us that his “detailed church notes made in 1801-1802 at the age of 18-19 still survive as British Museum Add. Ms. 24466” (vi). This may strike the modern reader as a strange hobby for a young boy, but Hunter himself acknowledged that the study of topography had fallen out of fashion by the early nineteenth century. The preface to *South Yorkshire* begins with an apologia for this subject: “It can hardly be denied that, through some cause or other, topography has fallen among us into some degree of disrepute. But who will venture to say that it does not lend a useful light to inquirers in almost every department of our national literature?” (Hunter *South Yorkshire* sig. b1). Hunter goes on to suggest that one reason for the “disrepute in which topography is held by some cultivated minds” may be because it “is almost confined to England” and therefore is disdained by those who consider “nothing valuable which is not sanctioned by the example of the classical ages” (sig. b1). This echoes a remark made by Richard Gough in the preface to his *Anecdotes of British Topography* (1768):

It is the glory of this age and nation to penetrate the wilds of Europe, and the deserts of Asia and Africa, for the remains of Grecian, Roman and earlier architectures, while no artist offers himself a candidate for fame in preserving those of our forefathers in their own country.
(xx-xxi)

Gough (1735-1809) was Director of the Society of Antiquities from 1771 to 1797, and Hunter mentions "Gough's manuscripts at the Bodleian" (Preface: sig. d3), so Hunter may well have known of the passage cited above. Sweet argues against the then-received view that the study of antiquaries was in decline in the later eighteenth century, providing an account of Gough's work as evidence. She does, however, discuss the negative attitudes to antiquaries and antiquarianism fostered by Horace Walpole, who described Gough as being "apt, as antiquaries are, to be impatient to tell the world all he knows, which unluckily is much more than the world is at all impatient of hearing" (Walpole to Cole, 14 May 1782, cited in Sweet 183). Hunter was well acquainted with Walpole's writings: in a study of the reading journal compiled by Hunter when he was a young man in Sheffield, Colclough notes his "growing enthusiasm" for this author (36). For Hunter, the importance of topography and the reason why he considered it superior to history, lies in its concentration on specific places:

There are the materials from which we gain our best acquaintance with the history of the arts which support or embellish life; there are treasured up the remains of fading superstitions, lost usages, peculiarities of manners and of dialect, which serve to illustrate the origin and progress of nations, or of political institutions which are still flourishing. The topographical writer, better acquainted than the general historian, can be with the scene of memorable events, will ordinarily be found describing those events with a more minute accuracy: better acquainted also with the domestic history and private circumstances of eminent persons, he sees relations and dependencies which escape the more general observer, while they have had considerable effect in determining the public conduct. (*South Yorkshire* Preface sig. b2)

Or, as he later puts it more poetically, "topography calls up the spirits of the past generations. We see them gliding among the trees planted by

them. We see them in their proper apparel, and with all the rank and port which belonged to them” (sig. b2).

In the preface to *South Yorkshire* Hunter provides an account of his methods. He begins by claiming that he has conducted “a personal survey of every place mentioned in it, and every object described in it” and that he has inspected every location and taken notes, so that there is a record of everything. Hunter goes on to acknowledge the “intelligent inhabitants of the several villages” who provided him with information. He also cites the historical records consulted, from the Domesday Book through land surveys of Henry VIII’s reign to pipe rolls and charters, which he examined in libraries, museums, and private collections all acknowledged here. This comprehensive account of his sources distances Hunter from those earlier topographical writers who “possessed no other quality but plodding industry” and those “whose volumes consist only of the pilfered stores of some ingenious or pains-taking predecessor” (*South Yorkshire* Preface sig. b1). In claiming first-hand knowledge of the places concerned and providing sources for all written documents consulted, Hunter establishes himself as a serious scholar. Potter notes that *Hallamshire* “has been the foundation of every history of Sheffield since compiled and will long continue to be used” (vi) and, while admitting that its “merits” are “unequal,” he recognizes that *South Yorkshire* is “a great repository of information about an important corner of a great county” (xi).

Dialect

In his preface to *South Yorkshire*, Hunter includes among the materials of topography “remains of fading superstitions, lost usages, peculiarities of manners and of dialect” (x). This suggests that his interest in place went beyond the material and genealogical information that dominates both *South Yorkshire* and *Hallamshire* and that he considered the intangible culture of language and beliefs as equally important. In the introduction to the *Hallamshire Glossary*, Hunter explains that the collection of words that makes up the *Glossary* was originally intended for

inclusion in *Hallamshire*, but that "a chapter on this subject appeared too little in harmony with the other contents, and the prevailing character of the work" (xxi).

Hunter's research for *Hallamshire* brought him into contact with documents from earlier periods, so he was well acquainted with older forms of English, but the record of the sale of his library shows that he also had a strong interest in dialect. Widdowson and Smith note this in their introduction to the 1983 facsimile of the *Glossary*:

The catalogue of Hunter's library shows him to have been well versed in language study, from Old English up to the most recent works published in his lifetime. Among the works on dialect listed which were published before the *Hallamshire Glossary* in 1829 are Anderson's *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect* (1823), Brockett's *Glossary of North Country Words* (1829), Carr, *The Dialect of Craven* (1828), Jennings, *West of England Dialects* (1825), Moor, *Suffolk Words and Phrases* (1823), Wheeler, *The Westmoreland Dialect* (1802) and Wilbraham, *Cheshire Glossary* (1826). (2a)

Hunter mentions most of these works in his introduction, as well as earlier collections of dialect words such as Ray's *Collection of English Words, not Generally Used* (1674), Grose's *Provincial Glossary* (1787), and Jamieson's *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1808). He also mentions in a footnote Pickering's *Vocabulary or Collection of Words and Phrases which have been supposed to be peculiar to the United States of America* (1816), noting that "many of their supposed neologisms are English archaisms" (*Hallamshire Glossary* xix). With regard to Yorkshire, Hunter also lists more obscure sources: a letter from the Yorkshire antiquary Ralph Thoresby to John Ray; "a Yorkshire Glossary added to one of the poetical tracts of George Meriton" (presumably the *Yorkshire Dialogue* [1684]); a list of words included in Watson's history of Halifax; and a "list of antient words used in the mountainous districts of the West Riding" sent to the Society of Antiquaries by a Dr. Willan. The contributions from Watson and Willan mentioned here demonstrate that Hunter was not the only one to consider

dialect as coming within the purview of the antiquarian or topographer. Watson's *History and Antiquities of the Parish of Halifax* (1775) includes a chapter entitled "Remarks on the Dialect of Halifax Parish" consisting of a set of "rules for pronunciation" (529-30) and a "Vocabulary of Uncommon Words used in Halifax Parish" (531-548). Hunter attaches as appendices to the *Hallamshire Glossary* Thoresby's letter to Ray and Watson's "Remarks."

This list of earlier works on dialect, and on Yorkshire dialect more specifically, demonstrates that Hunter was more than a dilettante in this field. His knowledge of earlier English is demonstrated in his discussion of words used by Milton, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Hunter notes that the works of Shakespeare and Spenser require "much philological illustration" and "a dictionary of his own" respectively (*Glossary* viii) and cites a line of Milton in which the poet "has been supposed to have introduced a ludicrous image in his description of the six days' work of creation" (x). The line concerned is "The grassy clods now calved" (*Paradise Lost* VII.463). Hunter argues that this use of the word *calved* is an archaism "but fortunately for the credit of the poet and the pleasure of the reader it has been preserved by the peasantry of the midland counties, who speak of the earth *caving* when one portion of it separates from the rest, pronouncing the *a* long, precisely as in the line of Milton" (*Glossary* xi).² Hunter appends a footnote to this example, giving an example from a newspaper, and suggested etymologies from Brockett's *Glossary of North Country Words* and Jamieson's *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* before going on to suggest that it "appears, in fact, to be one of the most antient of words, appearing in the oriental language in the form of Caph, hollowness, as of the hand" (xi). This last etymology is fanciful, but Hunter's account of this word demonstrates his scholarly approach, and his interest in philology.

Hunter also provides examples of usage from Shakespeare, Drayton, Dryden, and Cary's translation of Dante, to reinforce his argument that "custom" has capriciously banned such words from Standard English. He

goes on to argue that it is in dialect that these otherwise obsolescent terms are preserved:

The empire of custom, or fashion, for that is but another word for the same thing, is however of limited extent. There are portions of society to whom her edicts do not descend; or who, having little to lose, do not hesitate to rebel. The rustic and the mechanic will speak as his father spoke before him, and may be heard therefore using words unknown to the educated classes of society, or words still well known, to express ideas from which in other circles they have long been disjoined. [...] Those persons, therefore, who are intent on gaining acquaintance with the history and structure of our language, will not disdain the assistance which is afforded them by those humble ranks of society. (xiii-xiv)

Hunter considers the study of dialect to be important because of the light it sheds on linguistic history. He argues that "more effectual service" can be "rendered to English philology by collectors of words and obsolete senses gathered in more limited districts" rather than the more extensive collections of Ray and Grose (xix). He describes the *Glossary* as a "dictionary of archaical words" (xxi) and discusses the difference between archaisms and slang/vulgarisms. In the latter category he includes *scholard*, *overplush*, and *properictor*, words with which he "will not soil the paper," while he considers *fore-elders*, *nesh*, *lig* and *ax* ("ask") "once words in as good repute as any in our language" (xxii). However, he goes on to admit that the difference between archaism and vulgarism is not always easy to determine:

I had long thought that *coylle* for *coal* was a mere vulgarism till I met with it in an abbey-lease of the reign of Henry VII; that the word *egg*, the verb, was mere slang, till I found it in good use in a Chronicle of the reign of Henry VI; and that the word *like*, which may often be heard as an expletive, was the mere effect of awkwardness

and embarrassment, till I found it in good use in many writers before the age of James I. (xxii)

Hunter's interest in language is apparent here: while consulting records for his topographical works, he noticed words and usages that he was familiar with from colloquial Sheffield usage, and found that they had a respectable pedigree. So, while dialect words can provide insight into the usage of earlier Standard English authors, examination of early texts can also provide justification for the inclusion of colloquial words in his "dictionary of archaical words."

Hunter's interest in local words that he considered archaic is not surprising given his background in antiquarianism. However, his motivation for collecting these words goes beyond mere curiosity. Like many dialectologists of the nineteenth century (and later), Hunter observes the rapid erosion of local dialect and considers it a matter of urgency to record these words before they disappear. I have noted elsewhere (Beal, *Heritage* 168), that "threnodies" concerning the imminent death of local dialect can be found from the prefaces of nineteenth-century dialect dictionaries, through the publications of the mid-twentieth century Survey of English Dialects, to twenty-first-century comments about Multicultural London English displacing Cockney. In every case, the concern about dialect death is prompted by awareness of changes in society. The dialectologists of the late nineteenth century blame universal education and the railways. Scholars working on the Survey of English Dialects also cite "the broadening of national education and the improvement in transport" (Ellis 12) as well as the upheaval brought about by the two world wars. Most recently, immigration and the subsequent diversity in large cities in the United Kingdom have led to reports in the press that, for instance, "'Jafaican' is pushing Cockney out of its East End heartland" (Kerswill 441). Hunter's remarks in the introduction to the *Hallamshire Glossary* are an early example of the typical nineteenth-century concerns. Hunter notes that words recorded by the earlier collectors Ray and Thoresby are no longer current:

Changes in language take place more rapidly than is generally supposed. Let Thoresby's list of Yorkshire words be compared with a list that may be formed now from any portion of the county, and how many will be found to have disappeared in the century since it was constructed? Ray names only six words of which he says that they may be heard at Sheffield and in its neighbourhood. Not one of them now remains. (xxv)

Like the later dialectologists, Hunter sees the expansion of education as one of the factors involved in this "process of extinction." Universal elementary education was not introduced until 1870, but Hunter refers to an earlier expansion of education, that of the "National and Lancastrian schools," founded in 1811 and 1808 respectively, which he suggests "must work a great alteration in the language of those who still patronize the devoted words" (xxvi). Unlike later dialectologists, Hunter also blames the mores of the previous century for the potential loss of words. He notes that archaic words are preserved in the Bible and that many such words, if not preserved in reading of the Bible, "could not have stood their ground in the mincing and Chesterfieldian age from which we are happily emerging" (xxv). *Chesterfieldian* is defined in the *OED* as "relating to, or characteristic of, the fourth Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773), a writer on manners and etiquette" (*OED* s.v. *Chesterfieldian*). Hunter is here distancing himself from eighteenth-century politeness and prescriptivism. Elsewhere, he refers to "the poets who have lived since the revival of true poesy in England" having "recalled some other words which were almost, if not altogether, under the ban of custom" (*Glossary* xii). Here we see Hunter aligning himself with the Romantic poets of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as against those of the Augustan age. As an antiquarian, Hunter is very much a man of his time: he is nostalgic for the past, but not the recent past. This can also be seen in his acquaintance with the then relatively new science of philology.

Philology

In the “descriptive catalogue” of Hunter’s works that follows the memoir published first in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* and later printed for private circulation, his son Sylvester J. Hunter writes, with reference to the *Hallamshire Glossary*, of Joseph Hunter’s interest in philology:

Mr Hunter throughout his life devoted much attention to philological studies. His tastes were formed before the science of comparative philology had begun to command the attention of all who incline to pursue investigations of this kind, and he was content with the humble task of tracing out the antiquity and exact signification of the words composing the English language, with the assistance of only occasional illustrations from the tongues of foreign nations. (18-19)

This implies that there had been a shift in the focus of philology between the publication of the *Hallamshire Glossary* in 1819 and Hunter’s death in 1861. This is confirmed by Momma, who writes that “modern philology finally began to attract attention in Britain towards the end of the 1820s” (95). The *OED* gives the earliest definition of *philology* as “love of learning and literature; the branch of knowledge that deals with the historical, linguistic, interpretive, and critical aspects of literature; literary or classical scholarship” (*OED* s.v. philology). It goes on to state that this definition is “now chiefly U.S.” The sense in which Momma uses the word in the citation above is that given as number 3 in the *OED*: “The branch of knowledge that deals with the structure, historical development, and relationships of languages or language families; the historical study of the phonology and morphology of languages; historical linguistics” (*OED* s.v. philology). In his introduction to the *Hallamshire Glossary*, Hunter uses the terms *philology*, *philologist*, and *philological*. He refers to the works of Shakespeare and Milton as requiring “philological illustration” (viii, xi), meaning that the language of these authors has become archaic by Hunter’s time and requires commentary. The word *philology* is used when he asks whether “more effectual service is not rendered to English

philology" by the collection of words from specific districts rather than the nation as a whole (xix). Hunter uses the term *philologist* when making the point that the language of the lower classes is worthy of attention. It is worth citing this passage in full because it gives the context for Hunter's use of *philologist*:

Those persons, therefore, who are intent on gaining acquaintance with the history and structure of our language, will not disdain the assistance which is afforded them by those humble ranks of society, nor will they turn from it because they are sometimes offended by a word which none would wish to rescue from oblivion. But the value of the words and senses preserved in these ranks of society is not felt only by the professed philologist. (xiv, my emphasis)

In this excerpt, the italicized words refer to the same people: the "professed philologist" is someone with an interest in "the history and structure of our language." This is the clearest indication that Hunter defines philology and its derivatives in a sense closer to the *OED*'s sense 3. His references to "philological inquiry" could be read in the older (sense 1) sense, given that they refer to literature, but here too the emphasis is on language: Milton and Shakespeare require "philological illustration" not as commentary on the literary style but on the language, which has become archaic. The reference to "English philology" being better served by glossaries of local dialects, likewise places philology as a branch of linguistic study. So, while it is true that comparative philology had not taken root in Britain at the time when Hunter was compiling the *Glossary*, he does demonstrate an interest in, and knowledge of, philology.

Sylvester Hunter is right in stating that Joseph Hunter rarely provides correlates from languages other than English. Just as his topographical focus is confined to Hallamshire and South Yorkshire, so his main interest in compiling the glossary is on tracing the history of local words within English. He often provides the Old English equivalent in Gothic script and marked "A.S.," as in his entry for *addle*: "to earn, A.S. **eadlian**" (*Glossary*

1). Elsewhere, he provides citations from earlier texts, either documents that he has read in the course of his antiquarian research, or literary sources. Both are used in the entry for *again* meaning “against”:

AGEEAN, against. The old form is preserved. “Al be that it is *again* his kind”—*Chaucer*; “Againe kyndely reason” occurs in a Petition to Parliament on the Rolls of Henry VI; and in a manuscript Chronicle of England written in that reign, “Whan King Edward had sent Maister Walter Stapulton his tresorere unto London for to keep the cite unto him *a yein* Quene Isabel his wiff, and *a yein* Edward his sone,” &c. (2)

Hunter does provide a few instances of comparisons with other languages: for *arren* meaning “spider,” he notes “The Latin, French, Italian and Spanish, have all this word with slight variation” (5), while for *clap bene*, an action of clapping the hands as a prayer or blessing, he notes “Bene in the A.S. is prayer. Mr Brockett, who has heard this expression farther north, has remarked a correspondency in both parts of the compound with the Islandic *klappa*, to clap, and *bæn*, prayer” (23). Mr. Brockett is John Trotter Brockett, whose *Glossary of North Country Words* was published in the same year as the *Hallamshire Glossary*. So, while not providing etymologies of all the words in the *Glossary*, Hunter makes use of all the resources to hand, including those recently published, to provide historical or comparative context where he can.

Bridging antiquarianism/topography and philology

The section above has demonstrated that Hunter was familiar with philology in the sense of the historical study of language, and that he considered works such as the *Hallamshire Glossary* to be potentially useful to philologists. While not entirely ignorant of correlates in other languages, his primary focus was on tracing the history of the words within English. He often provides the Old English (A.S.) equivalent of the headword, as in the case of *addle* cited above, or simply states “This is pure Saxon,” as he does with *lig* “to lie.” In other cases, as we saw with

ageean, Hunter provides proof of the words' antiquity and former wider currency by citing instances in historical documents or literature. Here we see Hunter both as antiquarian and philologist, using his knowledge of antiquity to build histories of the words in his glossary. I noted above that Hunter considered dialect to be within the scope of topography. It is evident from some of the entries in the *Hallamshire Glossary* that Hunter also considered topographical information relevant to the study of dialect. Several entries deal with local superstitions and customs, one example being *barghast*:

All who have attempted to explain this name of a spectre, agree that the syllable which is combined with the word *ghast*, or *ghost*, has allusion to towns, or at least to buildings of some kind. And the Barghast is certainly not met with in the woods or in retired places, but in places of public concourse. The use of the Barghast now is to alarm naughty children into order and obedience, though there may still be a few children of a larger growth who think that in the winter nights this spectre may be seen at the corners of streets or near half-broken walls, with his long teeth and saucer eyes, the only features by which he is distinguished. I know not that he is discriminated by any attributes from his equally terrific brother, the Boggard.
(9-10)

The majority of this entry, which is clearly tongue in cheek, goes beyond etymology and definition to explain local beliefs about the barghast.

Several entries provide terms used in the industries of Sheffield. One example of this is *bull week*, defined as "the week before Christmas, in which the work-people at Sheffield in the iron manufactures push their strength to the utmost, allowing themselves scarcely any rest, and earning twice as much as in an ordinary week to prepare for the rest and enjoyment of Christmas" (16-17). Another, taken from the cutlery industry in which Hunter served an apprenticeship, is *assidue*, "brass rolled or beaten very thin, used in the cutlery manufacture of Hallamshire to heighten, by its

brilliant gold colour, the beauty of the transparent horn sometimes used in the manufacture of knives” (6). This is more a technical than a dialect word, but Hunter notes that “it is little known elsewhere.”

We can see from these and many more examples in the *Hallamshire Glossary* that Hunter’s interest in dialect grew out of his experience of antiquarianism and topography. His focus was on the local, and dialect was one aspect of this, but his knowledge of the history of English and his concern about the erosion of dialect anticipated the later work of the English Dialect Society (founded in 1873). In the next section, I will conclude by considering the legacy of the *Hallamshire Glossary* in the field of dialectology.

Conclusion: a pioneer of urban dialectology?

In their introduction to the 1983 facsimile of the *Hallamshire Glossary*, Widdowson and Smith note that, while Hunter’s “standing in historical, antiquarian and archaeological studies” is high, “his important contribution to the study of dialect has received comparatively little attention” (2a). This is true as far as twentieth-century scholarship is concerned, but Hunter’s *Glossary* was highly influential in terms of its contribution to the dialectology of the later nineteenth century. Halliwell’s *Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words* (1847) includes a number of citations from the *Hallamshire Glossary*, not all of which are acknowledged. Halliwell’s entry for *bull week* gives almost verbatim the definition provided by Hunter, but provides no reference to him or the glossary, whereas the entry for *byerlaws* provides a page reference for the latter.³ The English Dialect Society published a more substantial glossary of Sheffield dialect (Addy), which made extensive use of Hunter’s *Glossary*. Addy discusses Hunter’s work in the introduction to this later glossary and acknowledges its contribution to his own: “what has been done with Hunter’s work has been to incorporate such dialectal or obsolete words as were not contained in my own collection, or could not be ascertained by me to be now in use” (xiii). In turn, Joseph Wright excerpted the

Hallamshire Glossary in compiling his *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898-1905). Here, Hunter's glossary is listed as one of five named sources for the dialects of West Yorkshire⁴ (WYks4). In a chapter investigating Hunter's contribution to the *English Dialect Dictionary*), I have noted that Wright includes 144 out of the 154 words in the A to C sections of Hunter's *Glossary*, and suggested that Addy, who was embedded in the *English Dialect Dictionary* project as a voluntary reader, a correspondent, and the author of another of the cited sources for West Yorkshire, "may have been instrumental, either directly or indirectly, in influencing Wright to excerpt Hunter's *Hallamshire Glossary* so thoroughly" (Beal, *Contribution* 46).

Hunter's *Glossary* has also been influential in more indirect ways. It is a very early example of an account of an urban dialect and so drew attention to the idea of an industrial town such as Sheffield having a distinct form of language with ancient roots. It was followed by two other accounts of the Sheffield dialect by Bywater and Addy respectively. It is perhaps no coincidence that the *Survey of English Dialects*, which set out explicitly to record rural speech, included Sheffield as one of only four cities in its list of survey locations.⁵ Widdowson and Smith are fully justified in claiming that Hunter was a "pioneer" whose "perspicacity [...] deserves both the attention and the acclaim of the modern reader and researcher" (Widdowson and Smith: 2a, 5a).

University of Sheffield

Notes

¹ Hallamshire is the ancient name for an area which covers most of the present-day City of Sheffield. Hunter's *Hallamshire* was financed by subscription and printed for the author in London.

² The *OED* cites this line from Milton as a transferred meaning of *calve* in the sense of 'to give birth.' There is a separate entry for *calve* meaning "to fall in as an undermined bank or side of a cutting" (*OED* sv. *calve*). This second entry is marked as dialectal and a note states

that it is “the vernacular form in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Norfolk and adjacent parts of Suffolk, Cambridge, Leicester, Derby and Yorkshire.” Hunter may well have confused the two verbs here, especially as the dialectal form is followed by “in” and so corresponds to Standard English *cave in*. Whether Hunter was right or not is immaterial to the point I am making here, that he looked for correspondences between archaic words in literature and those still in use in dialects.

³ Thanks to Ingrid Tieken Boon van Ostade for drawing my attention to the citation from Halliwell in the *OED* and to both Ingrid and Carol Percy for their constructive and helpful comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

⁴ Sheffield was part of West Riding until 1974, when it became part of the new county of South Yorkshire. Potter points out that this metropolitan county is “curiously co-terminous” with the area covered by Hunter’s *South Yorkshire*” (v).

⁵ The others were Leeds, London, and York. Sheffield gained city status in 1893, so was still a town when Hunter’s *Glossary* was compiled.

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