

“OLIVER!” GLOSSARY

Compiled by Glenn Mehrbach

Page 1 **The Midlands**

The Midlands is a cultural and geographic area roughly spanning central England that broadly corresponds to the early medieval Kingdom of Mercia. It borders South East England, South West England, North West England, Yorkshire and Humber, East of England and Wales. Its largest city is Birmingham, and the region was important in the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Page 1 **Gruel**

Gruel is a type of food consisting of some type of cereal—oat, wheat or rye flour, or rice—boiled in water or milk. It is a thinner version of porridge that may be more often drunk than eaten and may not need to be cooked. Historically, gruel has been a staple of the Western diet, especially for peasants. Gruel is often made from millet, hemp, barley or, in hard times, from chestnut flour or even the less bitter acorns of some oaks.

Page 1 **Cadge**

To ask for or obtain (something to which one is not strictly entitled).

Page 1 **Pease Pudding**

Pease pudding, also known as pease pottage or pease porridge, is a savoury pudding dish made of boiled legumes,[1][2] typically split yellow or Carlin peas, with water, salt, and spices, and often cooked with a bacon or ham joint.

Page 1 **Saveloys**

A saveloy is a type of highly seasoned sausage, usually bright red, normally boiled and frequently available in British fish and chips shops, occasionally also available fried in batter. The word is believed to originate from the Swiss-French cervelas or servelat, ultimately from the Latin cerebrus; originally a pig brain sausage particularly associated with Switzerland.

Page 3 **Mace**

A mace is a blunt weapon, a type of club or virge that uses a heavy head on the end of a handle to deliver powerful blows. A mace typically consists of a strong, heavy, wooden or metal shaft, often reinforced with metal, featuring a head made of stone, copper, bronze, iron, or steel.

Page 3 **Cocked Hat**



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Page 7 Gaol

Jail. Also pronounced like “jail.”

Page 8 Parish

A parish is a church territorial unit constituting a division within a diocese. A parish is under the pastoral care and clerical jurisdiction of a parish priest, who might be assisted by one or more curates, and who operates from a parish church. Historically, a parish often covered the same geographical area as a manor (its association with the parish church remaining paramount).[1] By extension the term parish refers not only to the territorial unit but to the people of its community or congregation as well as to church property within it. In England this church property was technically in ownership of the parish priest ex-officio, vested in him on his institution to that parish.

Page 9 H Insertion

The opposite of H-dropping, called H-insertion or H-adding, sometimes occurs as a hypercorrection in typically H-dropping accents of English. It is commonly noted in literature from late Victorian times to the early 20th century that some lower-class people consistently drop h in words that should have it, while adding h to words that should not have it. An example from the musical *My Fair Lady* is, "In 'Artford, 'Ereford, and 'Ampshire, 'urricanes 'ardly hever 'appen". Another is in C. S. Lewis' *The Magician's Nephew*: "Three cheers for the Hempress of Colney 'Atch". In practice, however, it would appear that h-adding is more of a stylistic prosodic effect, being found on some words receiving particular emphasis, regardless of whether those words are h-initial or vowel-initial in the standard language.

Page 11 (and beyond) Guinea (and other English monetary terms)

Old British Money

Prior to decimalization in 1971 Britain used a system of pounds, shillings and pence. ('*£sd*' or '*LSD*'). The smallest unit of currency was a penny, the plural of which was pence (or pennies). There were 12 pence in a shilling and 20 shillings in a pound. The pound came in the form of a paper bill, called a note, or a gold coin, called a sovereign.

1 farthing (the lowest value coin) = 1/4 penny

A ha'penny (Half penny - a copper coin) = 1/2 penny (pronounced "heipni")

1 penny (a copper coin, and often called a “copper”) = one of the basic units (1d)

Threepence or Thruppenny Bit = 3 pence (pronounced "thrupence")

Sixpence (a silver coin also called a 'tanner') = 6 pence

1 shilling = 12 pence (1s)

1 florin (a silver coin that numismatists regard as one of the most beautiful medieval English coins) = 2 shillings

A half-crown = 2 shillings and 6 pence

1 crown = 5 shillings = 1/4 pound

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1 pound = 20 shillings = 240 pence (£1) (Pound coins were not minted before the 19th century; The slang term for a pound or a number of pounds sterling is 'quid' or 'nicker' and there are other slang terms for various amounts of money. The slang money expression 'quid' seems first to have appeared in late 1600's England, probably derived from the Latin 'quid pro quo' - 'something exchanged for something else'. The term 'nicker' is probably connected to the use of nickel in the minting of coins.)

1 sovereign = a gold coin with a face value of one pound (about .24 ounces of 22 carat gold)

A guinea (first issued on February 6th, 1663) was sometimes used as a unit of account. A guinea was a gold coin, originally made of gold from the Guinea coast of Africa, worth 21 shillings (or one pound and 1 shilling) in old British money. A guinea was considered a more gentlemanly amount than £1. A gentleman paid his tailor in shillings, but his barrister in guineas.

Page 12 **Vixenish**

A spiteful or quarrelsome woman.

Page 15 **Toddy**

A drink made of alcoholic liquor with hot water, sugar, and sometimes spices.

Page 22 **Transported to Australayia**

Britain chose Australia as the site of a penal colony, and in 1787, the First Fleet of eleven convict ships set sail for Botany Bay, arriving on 20 January 1788 to found Sydney, New South Wales, the first European settlement on the continent. Other penal colonies were later established in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) in 1803 and Queensland in 1824, while Western Australia, founded in 1829 as a free colony, received convicts from 1850. Victoria and South Australia remained free colonies. Penal transportation to Australia peaked in the 1830s and dropped off significantly the following decade. The last convict ship arrived in Western Australia on 10 January 1868.

Page 22 **Gibbet**

A gallows

Page 23 **Beadle**

A ceremonial officer of a church, college, or similar institution.

Page 26 **Toff**

In British English slang, a toff is a derogatory stereotype for someone with an aristocratic background or belonging to the landed gentry, particularly someone who exudes an air of superiority

Page 26-27 **Beak - Magistrate**

A civil officer or lay judge who administers the law, especially one who conducts a court that deals with minor offenses and holds preliminary hearings for more serious ones.

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Page 27 **Flash Mate**

NOT SURE. Probably someone who has become a friend very quickly.

Page 27 **not arf**

It's a contraction of "Not half!", itself an abbreviation of "And that's not the half of it!", meaning "You bet!", "Absolutely!", or "You've got that that right!".

Page 28 **charity gentleman**

NOT SURE. Probably someone who takes people in and takes care of them with no expectation of reward.

Page 28 **me old china**

Cockney rhyming slang when referring to a mate, as in plate, china plate, mate... get it?

Page 44 **Plummy and slam.**

"Plummy and slam" was used as a password. British underworld slang meaning "All right"

Page 45 **Cor!**

Cor : a British expressions of surprise. "Cor blimey" is a corruption of "God Blind Me".

Page 45 **'Ark at him!**

Hark at you. The nearest equivalent I can think of is "Check you out!"

Page 47 **FLOUNCES**

Flounce : a strip of decorative, usually gathered or pleated material attached by one edge, as on a garment or curtain.

Page 47 **FURBELOWS**

A gathered strip or pleated border of a skirt or petticoat.

Page 50 **Petticoat**

A woman's light, loose undergarment hanging from the shoulders or the waist, worn under a skirt or dress.

Page 52 **Timbuktu**

A city in the West African nation of Mali, known for its extreme inaccessibility. Now it is used to mean any extremely distant and inaccessible location.

Page 56 **Bow Street Runners**

London's first professional police force, founded in 1749 by the author Henry Fielding and originally numbered just eight

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Some other pre-decimalisation United Kingdom coins or denominations became commonly known by colloquial and slang terms, perhaps the most well known being "bob" for a shilling.

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London Bridge

"New" London Bridge (1831–1967)



By the end of the 18th century, it was apparent that the old London Bridge — by then over 600 years old — needed to be replaced. It was narrow and decrepit, and blocked river traffic. In 1799, a competition for designs to replace the old bridge was held. Entrants included Thomas Telford, whose proposal of a single iron arch spanning 600 feet (180 m) was rejected as unfeasible and impractical. John Rennie won the competition with a more conventional design of five stone arches. It was built 100 feet (30 m) west (upstream) of the original site by Jolliffe and Banks of Merstham, Surrey, under the supervision of Rennie's

son. Work began in 1824 and the foundation stone was laid, in the southern coffer dam, on 15 June 1825. The old bridge continued in use while the new bridge was being built, and was demolished after the latter opened in 1831. New approach roads had to be built, which cost three times as much as the bridge itself. The total costs, around £2.5 million (£205 million in 2015) were shared by the British Government and the Corporation of London.

Rennie's bridge was 928 feet (283 m) long and 49 feet (15 m) wide, constructed from Haytor granite. The official opening took place on 1 August 1831; King William IV and Queen Adelaide attended a banquet in a pavilion erected on the bridge.

In 1896 the bridge was the busiest point in London, and one of its most congested; 8,000 pedestrians and 900 vehicles crossed every hour. It was widened by 13 feet (4.0 m), using granite corbels. Subsequent surveys showed that the bridge was sinking an inch (about 2.5 cm) every eight years, and by 1924 the east side had sunk some three to four inches (about 9 cm) lower than the west side. The bridge would have to be removed and replaced.

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Hussar

A Hussar (/hə'zɑ:r/ hə-ZAR, /hʊ'zɑ:r/[1]) was a member of any one of several types of light cavalry used during the 18th and 19th centuries, beginning in Central Europe.

