

Essex Record Office

Essex Record Office (ERO) in Chelmsford has 9.25 kilometres of shelving (approximately 16 miles). Some documents are over 1,000 years old.

Essex Dialect

The records of dialect are very few in comparison to literary records. Dialect speech can be very individual as it is influenced by the character of the speaker. Listed below are some Essex dialect words and phrases. Choose the most accurate meaning.

1	arsey-varsey	confused upside down /
2	bulls noon	dawn midnight /
3	bungalow	a home a hut in India of low quality /
4	caddle	a mess/muddle / a container
5	doxy	a horse a young servant girl /
6	gollies	feet hands /
7	treacle	to wade through mud to polish /
8	quilt	to soften to thrash someone /
Can you suggest a meaning for these phrases?		
9	That's giv'n apples where there's an orchard.	Giving to someone who has enough
10	'he scared the master to rights and he got the receipt for it.'	To pay the penalty

Words Used by Slave Owners and Slaves.

Many people from Essex and East Anglia travelled to America to make their fortune and became involved in the slave trade.

When slaves were captured they abandoned their own language and adopted the words and phrases used by their owners. Many words originated in Essex and were written down in the Uncle Remus stories that slaves recounted to each other when they were together at the end of the day.

What do you think these words mean?

1	argafy	argue
2	disremember	forget
3	fear'd	afraid
4	sparer grass	asparagus
5	git	get
6	hoss	horse
7	mess	a dish of food
8	huff	hoof
9	fudder	furthest
10	Larn	learn

The information was obtained from dialect dictionaries available at Essex Record Office.