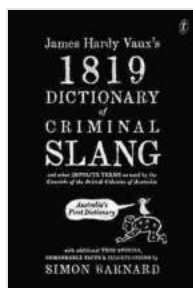


James Hardy Vaux's 1819 Dictionary of Criminal Slang and Other Impolite Terms: A Linguistic Journey into the Underworld

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The world of crime is shrouded in mystery and intrigue, with its own unique language that has evolved over centuries. In 1819, James Hardy Vaux, a former thief and convict, published a groundbreaking dictionary that decoded this hidden lexicon, providing an unprecedented glimpse into the shadowy underworld of rogues, vagabonds, and outlaws.



James Hardy Vaux's 1819 Dictionary of Criminal Slang and Other Impolite Terms as Used by the Convicts of the British Colonies of Australia with Additional ...

Stories, Remarkable Facts and Illustrations by Simon Barnard

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 9152 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 380 pages



The Man Behind the Dictionary:

James Hardy Vaux was born in 1782, the son of a respectable London draper. However, his life took a dramatic turn when he fell into a life of crime at a young age. After being convicted of theft, Vaux was sentenced to transportation to Australia. During his time in the penal colony, he gained firsthand knowledge of the criminal underworld and its独特的语言.

The Birth of the Dictionary:

Upon his return to England, Vaux embarked on a mission to document the criminal slang he had encountered. He spent years collecting terms from fellow criminals, prison guards, and informants. The result was his 1819 Dictionary of Criminal Slang and Other Impolite Terms, a seminal work that would forever shape the understanding of criminal language.

A Window into the Underworld:

Vaux's dictionary is not merely a list of words; it is a window into the hidden world of crime. It reveals the secrets behind thieves' cant, the coded language used to communicate in front of outsiders. It deciphers the jargon of prostitutes, beggars, and highwaymen, providing insights into their lives and activities.

Criminals' Lexicon: Some Notable Terms

From "baggage" (stolen goods) to "bull-finch" (a prostitute), Vaux's dictionary provides a comprehensive overview of criminal slang. Here are a few notable examples:

- **Beak:** A policeman or magistrate

- **Blackleg:** A cheat, swindler, or sports gambler
- **Clyfaker:** A skilled thief

li>**Fibber:** A liar

- **Nimble-fingered gentry:** Pickpockets
- **Quaker:** A professional beggar
- **Spouting crib:** A house from which stolen goods are sold
- **Whistler:** A burglar who signals his accomplices by whistling

Literary and Historical Significance:

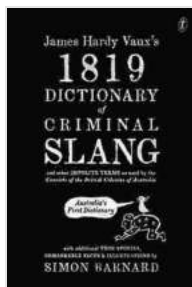
Vaux's dictionary has played a significant role in both文学和历史研究. It has been used by scholars to understand the social and linguistic history of crime, and it has inspired numerous works of fiction and popular culture. Charles Dickens, for example, drew heavily from Vaux's dictionary when creating criminal characters for his novels.

The Legacy of James Hardy Vaux:

James Hardy Vaux's legacy as a chronicler of the criminal underworld is undeniable. His 1819 dictionary remains an invaluable resource for researchers, historians, and anyone fascinated by the hidden world of crime. It is a testament to Vaux's unique insight and his ability to bridge the gap between the criminal underworld and the wider society.

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James Hardy Vaux's 1819 Dictionary of Criminal Slang and Other Impolite Terms is a fascinating and essential work that unveils the hidden language of crime. By exploring this lexicon, we gain a deeper understanding of the underworld, its characters, and its intricate social dynamics. Vaux's dictionary is a timeless treasure that continues to intrigue and inform centuries after its original publication.



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