

# Jack and the Fire Dragon

## Glossary of Terms, An Explanation



“Mountain speech is old speech. It derives not from ignorance but from isolation. Many words that have been preserved here are words that were commonly used in the English language when settlers came to this country from the British Isles.

Shakespeare and Chaucer and a multitude of other writers preserve such usages in literature. Mountain people came to this country in an era when most people in Europe and Britain were preliterate.

All of us have become accustomed to the new words coined by science, politicians, economists and the media. Mountain speech may sound quaint in today’s modern homogenized world. It is, in fact, a treasure and a heritage that belongs to all English-speaking people.”

Quoted from *Mountain Jack Tales* as told and illustrated by Gail E. Haley

### Glossary of Terms, Definitions

In the story, the following terms are printed in bold. Below they are listed by chapter in the order they appear. You will find other interesting, perhaps unfamiliar words and phrases. To figure out their meanings, use context clues and then ask someone older who may have used or heard the words and phrases.

#### Chapter One

**right many** – a number of

**a-prosperin’** – doing well, prospering

**springhouse** – a small house built of wood or stone at the source of or over a creek, the running water kept food cool and served as a refrigerator

**aims to** – intends

**biddies** – baby chickens covered in down

**brewin’** – going to happen

**might nigh** – almost

**shower bucket** – bucket with holes in the bottom hung high enough to serve as a shower

**mess of** – enough to make a serving for each member of the family

**green breeches** – cooked up green beans, dried and strung to preserve

**young-uns** – young ones

**bangin’ and a clatterin’** – noises that bang and clatter

**you’uns** – you ones

**sledge** – a wagon with runners not wheels

**crosscut saw** – long saw, four to six feet long, with two handles meant to be operated by two people to cut down very large trees

**pokes** – bags or sacks

**Ya’ll** – you all, two or more

**new ground** – virgin forest, never cleared

#### Chapter Two

**mind after** – take care of

**Hit’ll** – It will (used for emphasis)

**Where ye be off to?** – Where are you going?

**poke bonnet** – bonnet that has a brim stiffened with flattened paper pokes or bags

**coot** – crazy man or woman

**Wheeyooo!** – exclamation expressing awe or amazement

**thought on them** – mulled them over, considered them

#### Chapter Three

**right cozy** – comfortable and warm

**hoppin’ John** – black-eyed peas and rice with some big slices of ham and wild ramps

**wild ramps** – wild green onions

**creasy greens** – wild cress

**clean out of** – completely out of

**pone of** – cake of

**sopped up** – soaked up

# *Jack and the Fire Dragon*

## Terms continued



### Chapter Four

**hushpuppies** – ball of corn bread dough fried in deep fat, supposedly fed to dogs to keep them from crying for food

**morel mushrooms** – mushrooms that grow porous and hollow, safe to eat and a great delicacy

**Dutch oven** – skillet with feet, used in a fireplace or over an open campfire

**Thankee** – thank you

**scuttle** – bucket with oblong tip used for carrying and pouring coal, woodscraps or ashes

**hidey hole** – hideaway or secret hiding place

### Chapter Five

**feller** – fellow

**right happy** – very happy

**started right into** – started immediately

### Chapter Six

**might nigh** – almost

**ravaging** – tearing up or causing a lot of damage

### Chapter Seven

**sight fearsome** – looked terrifying or scary

**fire of battle** – term used to describe an almost trance-like state of a warrior determined to win

**haint** – haunt

### Chapter Eight

**Well, law me** – exclamation of surprise

**shivaree** – mountain name for a party held to celebrate a wedding, normally included dancing, singing and naughty tricks played on the bride and groom