

Language of the 16th Century

Elizabethans loved the language. It was both their entertainment and their weapon. A quick wit was highly prized. Everyone from the lowliest peasant to the loftiest nobleman played with words. Elizabethans would never say in two words what could be said in six or seven.

Social standing and proper etiquette were very important during the Renaissance era. You could tell a lot about people's social standing by how they addressed one another.

Titles	King and Queen	My Liege or Your Majesty
	Prince or Princess	Your Highness
	Members of the Royal Court	Your Grace
	To Show Respect	M'Lord or M'Lady
	Craftsman	Master or Mistress Artisan
	Mature Man or Woman	Sir or Madam
	Equal birth or social standing	Gentleman or Gentlewoman
	Young boy or girl	Lad or Lass

Renaissance language was very specific. People did not use the all-purpose greeting of "Hello" or "Hi." There were different greetings depending on the time of day. Also, etiquette might call for one to ask permission before leaving. One could also express feelings or regards for another by leaving them with a blessing or good wishes.

Greetings	Good morning	Good morrow
	Afternoon greeting or parting	Good day
	Good evening	Good eve or eventide
	Good-bye	I bid you adieu
	Good-bye (I wish you well)	Fare thee well
	With your permission	By your leave
	A blessing	God save thee

The following are some insults and compliments that you might have heard in Renaissance England.

Insults	You're thick-skulled or stupid	Thou knotty-pated fool
	You're a coward	Thou art lily-livered
	You do not ever want so see this person again	Direct thy feet where thou and I henceforth may never meet
Compliments	You look pretty today	Thou art most beauteous this day
	Your voice is beautiful	Thy voice is sweeter than that of an angel
	You are dazzlingly beautiful	Thy beauty eclipses the sun

Here are some other words and phrases which might prove useful throughout your day in the village of Scarborough:

Helpful Words	Bathrooms	Privies
	Exclamation of astonishment	Huzzah
	Amazing	Wonderous
	Perhaps	Perchance
	Please	Prithee
	Come here	Come thee hither
	Truthfully	By my troth
	I'm sorry	I'm vexed
	Where are you going?	Wither goest thou?
	Where are you from?	From whence hail ye?
	What is your name?	What be thy name?
	What is the matter?	What ails thee?
	What did you say?	What sayest thou?
	What time is it?	How stands the hour?
	It is noon	'Tis midday
	You are late	Thou art behind the hour