

A NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES.

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WISE—WORLING

BY

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WORM—WYZEN

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PREFATORY NOTE.

In this section of the Dictionary there are 1,522 Main words, 650 Special Combinations explained under these, 1,216 Obvious Combinations, and 1,100 Subordinate entries of obsolete or variant forms; in all 4,488 entries. Of the Main words 660 are marked † as obsolete.

Comparison with Johnson's and some recent Dictionaries gives the following results:—

	Johnson.	Cassell's 'Encyclopædic' and Suppl.	'Century Dict. and Suppl.	Here.
Words recorded	298	1,174	1,472	4,488
Words illustrated by quotations	258	454	617	3,490
Number of quotations	1,263	986	2,066	29,077

In the corresponding portion of Richardson the quotations number 1,188.

Of the words treated here in the portion outside WR- the most important and most numerous are of Old English origin; the chief of these are: *wise* sb.¹, *wise* adj., *wish* vb., *wit* sb., *wit* vb.¹ (from which come, by different analogical movements, *wis* vb.¹, *wist* vb., *wot* vb., as well as *weet* vb.¹), *with* (covering nearly 10 pages) and its important derivatives *withal*, *within*, and *without* (filling another 5 pages), *with*, *withy*, *witness*, *wizen*, *woad*, *woe* (with a remarkable history as interjection, adverb, noun, and adjective), *wold*, *wolf*, *woman*, *womb*, *won* (to dwell), *wonder*, *wone* sb.¹ (dwelling), *woo*, *wood*, *woof*, *wool*, *word*, *work*, *world*, *worm*, *worry* vb., *worse* and *worst*, *worship* sb., *wort*, *worth* sb.¹, *worth* adj. (and † *wurthe*), *worth* vb.¹, *wough* sb.¹, sb.², and adj., *wound*, † *wulder*, † *wye*¹ (warrior, man). Of this list several have Indo-European relations of various degrees, viz. *wit* sb. and vb.¹, *withy*, *wizen*, *woe*, *wold*, *wolf*, *wood* sb., *wood* adj., *wool*, *work*, *worm*, and *wort*; others are purely Germanic formations, as *wish*, *won* vb., *world*, *worry*, *worse* and *worst*, *worth* sb.¹, adj., and vb.¹; a few are peculiarly English, viz. *woman*, *woo* vb., and *worship* sb. Some early Middle English coinages deserve special mention on account of their subsequent importance: *wish* sb., *withal*, *witness* vb., *woeful*, *worship* vb., and *worthy* adj. Interesting dialectal survivals of Old or Middle English words are seen in *woubit*, *oobit* (hairy caterpillar) and *wough* (wall). Loanwords from Scandinavian are not numerous; the most important are *witnessman*, *witter* sb.¹ and adj.¹, *witterly*, *wone* sb.¹ and sb.², *wothe*. Borrowings from Low Dutch are still fewer: *wissel*, *wither shins*, *woold*, and possibly *woodwall*. The only considerable adoption from Anglo-French is † *wyver*, whence *wyvern*. A fairly numerous list of words is contributed by non-European languages, among them being *wivi*², *wombat*, *wonga-wonga*, *woodchuck* (and *woodshock*), *woolsaw*, *woon*, *woorali*, *wootz*, † *worral*, *wow-wow*, *wurley*; *wishtonwish* and *wistiti* are originally onomatopœic. Russia supplies *Wogul* (more properly *Vogul*), and Poland *witichoura*; *woodoo* is Turkish. Derivation from proper names is illustrated by † *Witham*, *withamite*, *Witney*, *wittichenite*, *Woodbury*, *woollastonite*, *Woolwich*, *Worcester*, *Worcestershire*, *Wormian*, *Woulfe*, *wulfenite*, *wurizite*, *Wyandotte*, *Wycliffian*, *Wycliffite*, etc., *Wykehamist*, and, best known of all, *worsted*. Interesting and difficult problems of etymological origin abound, and are exemplified in the following articles among others: *wiseacre*, *wistful*, *witch* sb.¹, *wither* vb.¹, *withers*, *within* and *without*, *witticism*, *witwall* with *woodwall*, *wizard*, *woe-begone*, *wolfram*, *wone* sb.² and sb.³, *wont* sb., *workaday*, *wormwood*, *worile*, *wyliecoat*, *wype*.

Special historical or antiquarian interest attaches to *wish* sb.³, *wist* sb., *witan* and *witenagemot*, *witereden*, *wiðernam*, *woman's* or *women's rights* and *new woman*, *wong*, *woodcut* (earlier *wooden cut*), *woodkern*, *wooden horse*, *shoe*, *spoon*, and *walls*, *woodwose* (*woodhouse*), *woolsack*, *workhouse*, *working class*, *working-man*, and *worth* sb.² The specifically United States use of *woods* in combination is to be remarked in *woodscraft* and *woodsman*, as well as in the less well known *woods-camp*, *woods-smell*, and the like; other Americanisms worth notice are *witness-stand*, *woozy*, *worky*, *the worst kind*, and (originally) *for all one is worth*. Among notable Scotticisms are *wiselike*, *workloom* (*wark-*), *worricow*, and *woup*.

The words beginning with the combination *WR-* form a special group which is almost entirely of Germanic, and largely of native English, origin. Except in certain dialects, the *w* is now silent in the words which are still current; a large proportion of those formerly in use have either become obsolete or are retained only in dialects, and sometimes barely survive even in these. Among those which go back to Old English the more important are the nouns *wrack* sb.¹, *wrath*, *wreath*, *wren*, *wretch*, *wright*, *wrist*, *writ*, the adjective *wroth*, and the verbs *wreak*, *wrench*, *wrest*, *wrestle*, *wring*, *write*, *writhe*, *wry*. Among those which first appear in Middle English are *wrack* sb.², *wreck*, *wrench* sb.², *wringer*, *wrinkle*, *writing*, the adjs. *wrathful*, *wretched*, *wrinkled*, *wrong*, *wrongful*, and the verbs *wrack*, *wrangle*, *wrap* (of obscure origin), *wreck*, *wriggle*, *wrong*. Among the sixteenth-century additions are *wrangle* sb., *wrangler*, *wrealhe* vb., *wrinkle* vb., *wry* adj. and adv.; similar formations on earlier stems continue to be added in the later period, as *wrappage*, *wralhy* (U.S.), *wreckage*, *wrecker*, *wristlet*, *writable*.

A limited number of the Middle English words appear to have been adopted from Middle Dutch or Middle Low German, and of these only *wrangle* and *wriggle* have obtained a place in the ordinary English vocabulary. The one important adoption from Old Norse is *wrong*. Among those of which the origin is obscure the most notable is the Scottish *wraith*. The sole non-Germanic word of any importance is the Cornish *wrasse*.

The interest of the *wr-* words is mainly linguistic, but items of a historical or legal nature occur under *WRANGLER* 10, *WRECK* sb.¹ 1, *WRECK-FREE* a., *WRIT* sb. 3, *WRITER* 2, *WRITING* vbl. sb. 8 b, *WRONG* sb. 9 c, *WRONG-DOER* 2.