

The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology

Edited by

C. T. ONIONS, G. W. S. FRIEDRICHSEN
and R. W. BURCHFIELD

The lexicographical labours of the late C. T. Onions began in 1895 when he joined the staff of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. His astringent scholarship is well known from his work as co-editor of the *O.E.D.*, and later of the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*. His *Shakespeare Glossary* is also an indispensable aid. Now he has crowned his work with a new etymological dictionary, based in the first instance on the *O.E.D.* but also embodying recent research. From 1962 until his death in 1965, Dr. Onions was assisted by G. W. S. Friedrichsen, once his collaborator on the *O.E.D.* and a Gothic scholar of international repute, and by R. W. Burchfield who is now editing a new Supplement to *O.E.D.*, and the work has now been brought to completion by these two scholars.

Etymology is briefly defined in this book as 'the origin, formation, and development (of a word)'. Each word is given its pronunciation, its present-day meaning, the date of its first record and the chronology of the development of its sense(s), and its earliest form in written English. The principal Germanic cognates are presented, and the relevant forms from other languages.

This is the fullest and most reliable etymological dictionary of the English language. There are some 24,000 main entries, and with the derivatives, the total number of words treated is more than 38,000. More detailed treatment of the origins of English words is provided than is possible in the necessarily compact etymological entries in the *Shorter Oxford* and *Concise Oxford* dictionaries, or indeed in any other dictionary of the English language except the thirteen-volume *O.E.D.* itself. 1200 pp.

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