

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.
ENGLISH WORDS WITH NATIVE
ROOTS AND WITH GREEK, LATIN,
OR ROMANCE SUFFIXES. A
DISSERTATION**

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The University of Chicago. English Words with Native Roots and with Greek, Latin, Or Romance Suffixes. a Dissertation by George A. Nicholson

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GEORGE A. NICHOLSON

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A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS
AND LITERATURE IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(DEPARTMENT OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE)

BY

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTORY

The following study concerns itself with an interesting by-phase of English linguistic history. My primary aim is to present the material in conveniently classified form. The discussion of the phenomena so presented is not exhaustive. On the contrary, it is merely introductory and suggestive.

Practically every writer on the history of the English language has mentioned the fact that English, vastly more than any other tongue, has added foreign suffixes to native words. Even the authors of grammars for secondary schools comment on this. I have not found, however, an adequate collection of the material in respect either to a full word-list or to an approximately complete enumeration of the suffixes involved. The usual procedure is to mention from eight to twenty suffixes with not more than seventy illustrative words. Manifestly the subject is worthy of a fuller treatment than it has received.

Hybrid words, objects of puristic scorn, hold an important place in spoken and written language today. Literally hundreds of them which as yet have not been corralled in the lexicons are used constantly in conversation, in the newspapers, and in magazines. I noticed not less than seventy-five during the months I was preparing this dissertation. A bootblack is a "shineologist"; a heavy baseball batter is a "sluggist"; a newspaper column reserved for violent crime is the "murderology" section; the pronunciation of New Yorkers is "New Yorkese"; every man locally important enough to promulgate an individual doctrine or cult has his thoughts described by an *-ism* attached to his name, while his adherents bear his name plus an *-ist* or an *-ite*. Once the attention is called to this matter one is astonished at the absolute freedom with which the man in the street no less than his sophisticated fellow in the newspaper office attaches any suffix whatever to any word, slang or erudite, which he happens to use at the moment. Practically all of this is unconscious. Few who thus coin words realize that they are

doing so. Analogy guides them—sometimes rightly, sometimes into curious combinations.

This process, more noticeable now than ever, because few, even of those who write the better-class matter, are able to separate their vocabulary into its native, its adopted Germanic, its Romance, its Latin, and its Greek elements, has a long and rather consistent history. Beginning in the thirteenth century, the hybridizing movement has always held its own or made advancement except during the overcorrect eighteenth century. Many of its products have been of little service. They lie buried in the lexicons, bearing such epitaphs as "rare," "obsolete," "nonce word," "humorous," "fantastic." Many others, however, carry an important part of the burden of human communication. "Shipment," "settlement," "betterment," "freightage," "murderous," "starvation," the large list in *-able*, and literally hundreds of others illustrate well the usefulness of the hybrid form.

I am not an attorney for the hybrid word. My subject does not require me to defend this useful though much-maligned agent. However, as a matter of personal interest, I noted the authors of many of the quotations in the *New English Dictionary*, and inasmuch as the use of hybrids is still an occasional subject of controversy, I am justified, I think, in offering the following list of hybrids which have been employed by writers of high rank. The list is not quite complete, even for the examples which chance to be cited in the dictionary, nor does it include the rather large class of hybrids formed by a proper name plus a foreign suffix.

Wyclif: holet; niggard; breakeress, choosereess, leaperess, neighbouress, singeress, sinneress, slayeress, teacheress, thralless; coersery (barter), husbandry; onement; believable, loveable, over-trowable, sellable.

Chaucer: dotard; goddess, herdess, huntress; squeamous; dotage; goldsmithery, husbandry; eggment (incitement).

Shakespeare: droplet; wafture; murderous; sluggardize; fishify; stowage, waftage; husbandry, knavery, stitchery; fitment, fleshment, merriment, rabblement.

Ben Jonson: mannet; punquette; sinewize; snottery; matchable.

Sidney: murderous; womanize.

Nashe: doltage; clownery, slabbery, snudgery; dreariment, dribblement, enfoldment, fosterment, merriment; nittify.

Milton: thunderous; witticism; freightage, hucksterage, stowage; goosey, pettyfogger, wagonry; enthralment, jabberment.

Spenser: dreariment, gazement, needment, rabblement, wariment.

De Foe: settlement; eatable, shapeable; higgery, thievery, tinnery.

Goldsmith: murderous; timeist.

Addison: stowage; whimsical; witticism.

Dryden: laughable; dastardize; whiggism; niggard.

Pope: ringlet; thunderous; flirtation; talkative, writeative.

H. Walpole: muddify; writeability; laddess.

Richardson: dastardize; doggess, fellowess, keeperess; flusteration, flutteration, mutteration, titteration.

Scott: gullible, quenchable, wearable; merriment, settlement; thirlage; guildry, oldwomanry, sculduddery, trashery; springlet; norlandism; whimsical; harpess, punstress, thaness; gumption; laggard, lubbard; nacket.

Fanny Burney: writeable; oddment, sunderment; grubbery; uglify; fellowess, gamestress; frettation, fussation.

Wordsworth: enthralment, needment; witchery; songstress.

Southey: mynheerify, quizzify; get-at-able, humbuggable, kissable, likable, smuggleable; roguery, weedery; nightingaleize; dovelet, featherlet, kneelet; murderess; eatability, likability.

Coleridge: cloudlet; frightenable, worshipable; embitterment, embreastment; claptrappery, greenery, leggery, moonery, parrotry, roguery; friendism, nothingism; shallowist; deathify; cloudage, houseage; punlet, toadlet; saleability, worshipability.

Lamb: fishet, hornet (a small horn); girlery; sniggify; foldure; coxcombes; hangability.

Keats: graspable; enthralment; thunderous; leafet.

Dickens: washable; embowerment, settlement; dodgery, growlery, henpeckery, roguery, snuggery; speechify; no-go-ism; fistic; coxcombical; meltability.

Thackeray: gullible; grapery, raggery; middleageism; fistify, tipsify; turfite; neighbouress, rideress, teetotaleress, writeress.

George Eliot: kickable; disheartenment, wonderment; wavelet; thunderous; snobbism.

Irving: nookery, snuggery, waggery; drainage, ferriage.

Poe: popgunnery, rigmarolery, rookery; punnage, stowage; dunderheadism; rigmarolic.

Tennyson: cloudlet, rillet; learnable, unutterable; goddess.

Mrs. Browning: thunderous; singable; dimplement.

Browning: gossipry, greenery, thievery; graspable; crumblement; wrappage; rillet.

Landor: eatable; witticism.

Lowell: settlement; wrappage; pufflet; freshmanic; darnation.

Carlyle: doable, drownable, forgetable, frightable, guessable, hateable, hireable, learnable, liftable, nameable, patchable, ploughable, quenchable, reapable, scratchable, shapeable, spellable, thinkable; dabblement, dazzlement, dizenment, mumblement, ravelment, settlement, tattlement; cloudery, cobwebbery, croakery, doggery, goosery, grazery, oldwifery, owlery, swinery, sloppery, swindlery, tagraggery, thievery, whiffery; nothingize; drownage, floodage, proppage, wrappage, wreckage; drudgical, gigmanical; oozelet, queenlet, squeaklet; plunderous; dapperism, donothingism, drudgism, flunkeyism, gigmanism, loselism, quacksalverism, scoundrelism, owlism; gigmanic; drinkeress, giganess, gunneress, knavess, playeress; quizzability.

Ruskin: cleanable, cleaveable, gatherable, ringable, shakeable, shapeable, sayable, teachable; puzzlement; landscapist; leafage; coxcombry.

Disraeli: readable; settlement; errandy; greenhornism, selfism; knightess.

George Meredith: fallallery; freightage; leaflet; rillet.

Stevenson: doable, fordable, nameable; tipsify; islandry; playability.

Chaucer and Wyclif among early writers; Shakespere, Nashe, and Milton in the middle period; and Richardson, Scott, Fanny Burney, Southey, Coleridge, Lamb, Dickens, Ruskin, and Carlyle among modern writers are thus shown to be among the chief users of hybrid words.

An interesting study could be made by examining carefully the works of the Romantic writers for a complete list of their hybrids. This usage may well prove to be one of the striking evidences of the romantic sense of freedom in language.

There is, perhaps, little reason why one should search into the causes of this hybridizing movement. The primary cause was the presence of a large number of Latin, Romance, and later of Greek loan-words which speedily were assimilated to the language so thoroughly that few of the general mass of the people could classify accurately their own vocabulary. Yet two steps in the earlier stages of the movement deserve notice, and perhaps a third should be mentioned. They are: first, the passage of Saxon words into the Latin and later the Anglo-French of the law codes; second, the presence of a considerable number of Romance loan-words which were of Teutonic origin and no doubt existed, in many cases at least, in their native form in the common speech, and, third, the fact that the earlier writers were bilingual or trilingual and so, in the absence of any puristic conception of word formation, they would tend to attach any of the suffixes with which they were familiar to any given word.

The following are some of the words which passed from Old English through legal Latin or Anglo-French: ordalian, ordalium, aldermanate, aldermanry, saumbury, sokemanry, outlawry, allodiary, bondage, hidage, faldage, towage, thaneage, pricket, and hoggaster.

The following are some of the Romance loan-words, adopted before 1600, which are of Teutonic origin:

Thirteenth century: cottage, lastage; lechery, robbery; cruet; scabbard; hastive; franchise; burgess.

Fourteenth century: abetment, atiffement; forage, gainage, lodemanage; baudry, buttery, guilery, harbergery; banneret, gablet, hamlet, locket; gonfanon, marchion, rewardon; mallard, reynard; furrure; marshalcy; lecherous; hastity; regardant.

Fifteenth century: arrayment; alnage; gainery, ravery; helmet, gauntlet; flancard, galbart, halbert; braggance; bordure; marchionate, minionate; hountous (shameful); graveress; hastity; guardian.

Sixteenth century: allotment, foragement, franchisement, lodgement, rebutment; abordage, bankage, burgage, equippage; eschan-

sonery, arquebusery, lottery, marquetry; brownetta; emblazure, furniture, garniture; gallantise; gaberdine; guardant.

In addition to the foregoing categories, one should list, perhaps, the usage of early dictionaries. While this usage was not in a strict sense a cause of the movement, it undoubtedly facilitated its progress. The following words are among those which appeared in early lexicons:

In the *Prompt. Parv.* (about 1440): fellowable, gropeable; housewifery; hangment; ferriage; gleimous; dullard, dastard, gozzard, niggard, scabbard, scallard, snivelard.

In the *Cath. Angli.* 1483: biteable, bowable, buyable, cleanseable, eatable, fillable, hearable, overcomeable, playable, seekable, sendable, teachable, tellable; chapmanry, fleshhewery, glovery, lemanry, midwifery.

In *Cotgr.* 1611: drainable, drinkable, fishable, fitable, forgiveable, handleable, hateable, healable, hopeable, husbandable, impoundable, leaseable, lendable, lettable, liveable, loseable, matchable, parchable, quenchable, riddable, rideable, rootable, sailable, sellable; forestallment; doggery, firkey; inkhornize; draggage, heriotage, hoopage, meadowage, saltage, sunnage; dotterelism, scoundrelism; fisheress, huckstress; snecket (a small neckband).

PROGRESS OF THE HYBRIDIZING MOVEMENT

The progress of the hybridizing movement may be indicated in various ways.

I present first a numerical table showing the number of words from Old English roots used in each century with the leading hybrid-

NUMBER OF WORDS RECORDED

CENTURIES

Suffix	Thirteenth	Fourteenth	Fifteenth	Sixteenth	Seventeenth	Eighteenth	Nineteenth
-ary	1	2	9	15	22	18	57
-age	1	11	15	15	33	13	42
-ess (fem.)	12	3	7	13	4	26	26
-ment	4	5	20	33	10	35	35
-able	8	32	30	70	7	82	82
-ous			8	12	6	3	7
-let				6	9	7	68
-ly				3	14	9	15
-ize				6	5	3	9
-ism				2	3	8	65
-iv				3	9	1	20