



# **The Oxford History of English Lexicography: Volume I: General-Purpose Dictionaries; Volume II: Specialized Dictionaries**

*A. P. Cowie*

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*A. P. Cowie*

## **The Oxford History of English Lexicography: Volume I: General-Purpose Dictionaries; Volume II: Specialized Dictionaries** A. P. Cowie

These substantial volumes present the fullest account yet published of the lexicography of English from its origins in medieval glosses, through its rapid development in the eighteenth century, to a fully-established high-tech industry that is as reliant as ever on learning and scholarship. The history covers dictionaries of English and its national varieties, including American English, with numerous references to developments in Europe and elsewhere which have influenced the course of English lexicography.

Part one of Volume I explores the early development of glosses and bilingual and multilingual dictionaries and examines their influence on lexicographical methods and ideas. Part two presents a systematic history of monolingual dictionaries of English and includes extensive chapters on Johnson, Webster and his successors in the USA, and the OED. It also contains descriptions of the development of dictionaries of national and regional varieties, and of Old and Middle English, and concludes with an account of the computerization of the OED.

The specialized dictionaries described in Volume II include dictionaries of science, dialects, synonyms, etymology, pronunciation, slang and cant, quotations, phraseology, and personal and place names. This volume also includes an account of the inception and development of dictionaries developed for particular users, especially foreign learners of English.

The Oxford History of English Lexicography unites scholarship with readability. It provides a unique and accessible reference for scholars and professional lexicographers and offers a series of fascinating encounters with the men and women involved over the centuries in the making of works of profound national and linguistic importance.

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