



# The Origins of English Words: A Discursive Dictionary of Indo-European Roots

By Joseph Twadell Shipley

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There are no direct records of the original Indo-European speech. By comparing the vocabularies of its various descendants, however, it is possible to reconstruct the basic Indo-European roots with considerable confidence. In *The Origins of English Words*, Shipley catalogues these proposed roots and follows the often devious, always fascinating, process by which some of their offshoots have grown. Anecdotal, eclectic, and always enthusiastic, *The Origins of English Words* is a diverting expedition beyond linguistics into literature, history, folklore, anthropology, philosophy, and science.

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### Review

Hats off to Joseph Shipley.

(William Safire *New York Times*)

A dictionary as invaluable to the philologist as it is a wellspring of delight for any inquisitive person.

(*Perihelion*)

A word-loving browser's delight.

(*Atlantic Monthly*)

The title promises a discursive voyage, and Shipley is as good as his word. He's a scholarly, humorous, rambling fellow, and his 636-page itinerary is filled with the excitement of chance encounters with long-lost cousins in distant lands.

(*Newsday*)

Not since the late Frank H. Vizetelly has there been an etymologist of the stature and erudition of Joseph T. Shipley, whose 26 books on various aspects of the English language are not only illuminating but a joy to read. Now, with *The Origins of English Words*, Dr. Shipley has outdone himself.

(*West Coast Review of Books*)

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"A dictionary as invaluable to the philologist as it is a wellspring of delight for any inquisitive person."—*Perihelion*

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### About the Author

**Joseph Twadell Shipley** is the author of the highly acclaimed *In Praise of English* as well as twenty-six

other books, including *The Quest for Literature*, *Dictionary of Word Origins*, and *Dictionary of Early English*. In a long and distinguished career he was president of the New York Drama Critics Circle, was a founder of Yeshiva College, and taught at the City College of New York.

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