



## The Word Museum: The Most Remarkable English Words Ever Forgotten

*Jeffrey Kacirk*

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ENTER A GALLERY OF WIT AND WHIMSY

As the largest and most dynamic collection of words ever assembled, the English language continues to expand. But as hundreds of new words are added annually, older ones are sacrificed. Now from the author of *Forgotten English* comes a collection of fascinating archaic words and phrases, providing an enticing glimpse into the past. With beguiling period illustrations, *The Word Museum* offers up the marvelous oddities and peculiar enchantments of old and unusual words.

## **The Word Museum: The Most Remarkable English Words Ever Forgotten Details**

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## From Reader Review The Word Museum: The Most Remarkable English Words Ever Forgotten for online ebook

### Bagtree says

Probably not meant to be read cover-to-cover, but I did anyway. By my rough estimate, the words included are:

50% alcohol  
25% bizarre forms of divination  
12.5% hunting  
12.5% prostitutes  
95% *excellent names for bands*

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### Steven Burgauer says

Entertaining.

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### Mary says

A very interesting book filled with words that have been forgotten. A couple of favorites would be:

Quidnunc (Bill O'Reilly words of the day for those of you who are Fox News Fans) - An inquisitive person, always seeking for news. The Latin words translated simply signify "What now?"

Quockerwodger - a wooden toy figure which, when pulled by a string, jerks its limbs about. The term is used in a slang sense to signify a pseudo-politician, one whose strings are pulled by somebody else. Sound familiar, per chance Spooky Dude's favorite Left wing Progressive Politician?

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### Julia says

It wasn't as interesting as I hoped, mainly because of the repetition of different words used for "drunkards, lazy people, weak people, women, women who have sex, men/women who cheat, etc."

Still, a few of them were very entertaining and I wish we could bring them back:

"flesh tailor" - a surgeon  
"vomitory" - a door of a large building by which the crowd is let out  
"tongue-fence" - debate, discussion, argument  
"soul-case" - the body  
"planet-ruler" - an astrologer; a person who professed to tell fortunes by the aid of the stars

They just sound so much cooler, no?

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## Dan Schwent says

The Word Museum is a collection of words that have gone into disuse. Some of these words are absolutely marvellous. Rather than quote the entire book, I've selected a word for each letter of the alphabet.

**abracadabrant** - marvellous or stunning

**barley-child** - a child born in wedlock but in the first six months of marriage

**chaser** - a ram that has only one testicle

**deosculation** - kissing

**extranean** - an outsider

**flamfoo** - a gaudily dressed female

**gallywow** - a man destitute of power of begetting children

**haggersnash** - a spiteful person

**infradig** - below or beneath one's dignity

**jannocks** - fairness

**kiddliwink** - a small shop

**leachcraft** - the art of medicine or surgery

**mastigophorer** - a fellow worthy of being whipped

**nicknackitarian** - a dealer of curiosities

**ogerhunch** - any frightful or loathsome creature

**papmeat** - milk for babies

**quignogs** - ridiculous notions or conceits

**repurple** - to make purple again

**sand-knocker** - a man who grinds sandstone into grit

**teaty-wad** - a small portion of moist sugar tied up in a rag of linen of the shape and size of a woman's nipple

**umstroke** - the edge of a circle

**vorago** - gulf

**walapang** - to disguise oneself in order to commit theft

**xanthodont** - having yellow teeth

**yesterfang** - that which was taken, captured, or caught on the previous day

**zythepsary** - a brew house

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## Julia says

This is one of those types of books that I enjoy getting lost in since the words are so archaic yet interesting. It makes it seem when you open books like this that even though this is how the world was seen that it must have been thousands of years before your language became what it was from what you are reading.

As a result I noticed that there was a heavy amount of words that described women mostly in the negative. And if it wasn't women it was normally about some illegitimate child or a child with some questionable heritage such as preemies (although technically they could just have had early starting parents also).

At the same time you get a wonderful wedge and selection that captures what some parts of life was like for the ancestors that spoke this type of English. Which is the reason why I am not offended by its blatant discrimination as some other would be.

The author did a great job of finding interesting words and then making a dictionary format for them. As such they are organized in alphabet then given a definition, which sometimes spills into sayings that include the mentioned word. At the end and in italics are some other similar used words that are mostly found in the book although one or two couldn't be found at least by me.

There are a few illustrations, some of which weren't on the same page as the actual word they were captioned for. The illustrations were black-and-white although strangely weird enough that they were a bit creepy to me. One at least had to come from some variation of Aesop and one from the Alice in Wonderland books.

This was definitely one of those books that I did enjoy while those who are into linguistics and/or cultural history would probably enjoy it at least once as well.

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### **Starling Whistler says**

I will forever be grateful to this book for introducing me to the word "dendranthropology".

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### **GoldGato says**

**Jeoparty-trot.** I finally have the name for the half-run my poor legs undertake when I'm dreaming. For that knowledge alone, I truly enjoyed this book. It's full of English words that seemed to have been prevalent in various British villages since medieval times, until the rapid progress of 20th century Americanisms wiped out such eccentric language.

**Ramfeezeled...** 'I am absolutely ramfeezeled at work. They're giving me too many accounts to handle.'

**Knevel...** 'His knevel is so manly. I wonder if he brushes and waxes it each day?'

**Wrine...** 'She must be using Botox. That wrine is suddenly gone.'

I had great fun with all of the words, though a great lot of them seem to have originated in Gloucester. And that's my summation of Gloucester.

Book Season = Year Round (dazzle the professor in your life)

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### **Anna says**

Never take a drink of *all sorts*.

I admit it. I gave this book a 5-star rating because of the coolness factor, and because I'm a word geek.

Here are a few of the words that have been forgotten over the centuries:

*Adam's ale:* Water. From the supposition that Adam had nothing but water to drink.

*all sorts*: A slang term designating the drippings of glasses in saloons, collected and sold at half-price to drinkers who are not overly particular.

*cat-Latin*: Incoherent or idle talk.

*maffle*: To stammer; to stutter.

*upknocking*: The employment of the *knocker up*, who went house to house in the early morning hours of the nineteenth century to awaken his working-class clients before the advent of affordable alarm clocks.

Like the author, I had never thought about life pre-alarm clocks before reading this entry.

More than just a old-world dictionary, this book is a fascinating glimpse into life pre-20th century.

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### **dejah\_thoris says**

If you love collecting rare English words like I do then this is the book for you! I wrote down at least 60 new words that I'm going to try to bring back and I learned many more. WARNING: The book is basically a dictionary, so if reading words and their definitions even sounds boring, don't bother trying it. Each definition is a nice little etymological history within itself, so if you do love words there's LOTS to learn even if you choose a slower method of absorption, like reading a page or a section a day.

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### **Steven says**

I love books about words and their history. This book carries the fine balance of those two likable elements.

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### **Joanna says**

If you love words, especially fun-sounding, old, weirdly-specific words, then this is a book right up your alley. From literally every form of strange divination (using a rooster, using mice, etc.) to the phrase that means to cough and fart at the same time, The Word Museum will puzzle you while making you laugh. You might find yourself even attempting to resurrect some of the more fun words (be mine, cowfyne?).

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### **Jason Koivu says**

Glory of glories! A book about dead words! HUZZAH!

Some English words are no longer used. Jeffrey Kacirk poured through old dictionaries and found some gems. Let's go already!!! --->>>

**Roozles**: Wretchedness of mind; the "miserables".

**Quanked:** Overpowered by fatigue.

**Spermologer:** A picker-up of trivia, of current news; a gossip-monger; what we today would call a columnist.

**Beblubbered:** Swollen.

**Puke-stock:** "Wilt thou rob this...puke-stock [knave]?" *1 Henry IV* Here, puke-stock probably means dark-coloured, perhaps equivalent to puce. That it describes the material of the stocking or hose is less likely.

A few of the words have died, but been reborn...or maybe I mean reincarnated. Have a look...

**Spooning:** Spooning, in rowing, is dipping the oars so little in the water as merely to skim the surface.

**All sorts:** A slang term designating the drippings of glasses in saloons, collected and sold at half-price to drinkers who are not overly particular.

Some words could use a more detailed or clearer definition:

**Special-bastard:** A child born of parents before marriage, the parties afterwards intermarrying.

**Spoops:** At Harvard College, a weak, silly fellow, or one who is disliked on account of his foolish actions is called spoops, or spoopsy.

**Biggening:** Uprising of women. SEE *Crying-cheese*.

All righty...

**Crying-cheese:** Cheese given to neighbors and visitors on the occasion of the birth of a child.

...and that helped clear up biggening how?

Whereas some words mean just what you suspect (E.G. **Egg-wife-trott:** An easy jog, such a speed as farmers' wives carry their eggs to the market.), others do NOT (E.G. **Babyshed:** Deceived by childish tales. [I was sure it meant a place where babies were kept.]

*The Word Museum* is...scrumtrulescent! A must-read for wordies!

**Rating Note:** This is a ridiculous 5 stars. This book is not perfect. It's not even great. But it's just right for me, because I like words.

Here's a crusty old video I just re-uploaded for this review. It's of me reading and reenacting some of the

words within this book. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08jR5g...>

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### **Tony says**

THE WORD MUSEUM. (2000). Jeffrey Kacirk. \*\*\*\*.

I'm a push-over for books about words – language in general – and this one offers lots of queer words that have somehow disappeared from our English language. The author has made forays into well-out-of-print dictionaries to find words that used to be but no longer are. He has provided definitions and cited sources. This is not a book you use to curl up in front of your fireplace with, but one that you keep handy to skim through at the odd moment. It's also a good source of factoids to use to confound your friends – although I'm sure that none of them would agree to let you use it as a reference in Scrabble. It's interesting and fun. What more do you want? Recommended.

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### **Margaret says**

Didn't enjoy.

As I knew many of the words as they are STILL IN USE IN MY VOCABULARY I found it hard to consider the words "forgotten".

I think the book would have benefited from more research, more explanation of word derivation, and detailed reasoning as to why the words were chosen. Would have made for a longer book and probably a more interesting one.

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