



A Comprehensive Catalog of Webster's Dictionaries

Isamu Hayakawa

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This is an abridged version of my book, *The Genealogy of Webster's Dictionaries*, which is written in Japanese and thus difficult to access for non-Japanese speakers. Although the present volume is abridged, omitting some explanations of individual Webster's dictionaries, the lexicographical information is the same. I describe each of the approximately eighty Webster's dictionaries, which have made substantial contributions to the cultivation of the American mind for two centuries. Noah Webster published his first small dictionary in 1806 and his unabridged dictionary in 1828. Since then, a great variety of Webster's dictionaries including abridged and international editions have been issued and widely used by Americans. Two main groups of the dictionaries can be identified and traced within the genealogy of Webster's dictionaries, hereafter referred to as "Websters." The first group includes dictionaries entitled *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, which can be subcategorized into unabridged and abridged versions. Here I refer to this group as the A group of Websters. These dictionaries, particularly the unabridged versions, are the primary publications and led to the international Websters. The other group is categorized as D. These have the title *A Dictionary of the English Language* and are mostly desk or pocket dictionaries compiled on the basis of the A group Websters. In this book, I provide a comprehensive list of Websters. Beyond a simple list, however, I also examine the genealogy of the dictionaries, a far more complex matter not easily grasped in a single view. For example, as many as eighty Websters have been published, establishing a tradition of Webster's dictionaries in the United States. This book has two purposes. The first is to trace the chronological history of Webster's dictionaries, including not only the unabridged but also the abridged and small-sized versions, constituting the great tradition of Websterian dictionaries. The second purpose is to classify the dictionaries systematically for researchers studying the archaeological lexicography of American dictionaries. Each entry contains the following lexicographical information on the dictionary: • main title with publication date, • name(s) of compiler(s) or author(s), • title printed on the spine ('Spine Title' in this catalog), • total number of pages, • size of the volume, • bookbinding, • page layout, whether double or triple column in a page, • total number of entry words, • pictorial illustrations and plates, • portrait of Webster, • description of title page, • location of publication and name of publisher, • macrostructure of front section, main body of the dictionary and appendices, and • copyright date, registration and edition(s).
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