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DUTCH LOANS IN AMERICAN ENGLISH

Lexicological Notes of a Literary Historian

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As a result of Sir Francis Drake's victories and his circumnavigation of the globe, 'the heroic adventure of the Englishman Drake', as our Komenský puts it,¹ American shores were made safe for colonization by the two Protestant nations, the English and the Dutch. In 1609 Henry Hudson in the service of the Oost-Indische Compagnie explored the mouth of the river where later Nieuw Amsterdam was founded on Manhattan Island. The Pilgrim Fathers landed in New England in 1620. They were soon followed by a number of Dutch families who settled in the neighbouring New Netherlands. On the whole, they lived on friendly terms with the Puritans. It is clear from John Winthrop's diary (September 22, 1642) that the Dutch governor even invited English settlers to Long Island 'by fair offers'.

In Europe peaceful exchange both of fabrics and ideas, mutual help in war and interchange of political as well as religious refugees had characterized Anglo-Dutch relations throughout centuries until the inevitable clash of commercial interests after the Civil War brought about an armed conflict. The Navigation Act of October 9, 1651 was a blow aimed by the rival merchant companies of the City chiefly at the Dutch monopoly of carrying trade. It led to 'De Eerste Engelsche Oorlog' (1652—4). The new hostile attitude is reflected in contemporary literature. In Marvell's satire 'The Character of Holland' the Seven Provinces are compared to a hydra to be strangled by the English Infant Hercules, another Carthage to be overcome by the new Rome. But Cromwell whom he served and glorified and who was later praised by Dryden for his triumph over the Dutch was opposed to the war. After the dismissal of the Parliament that started it he did not hesitate to make peace (July 9, 1654). But the struggle for naval supremacy and colonial possessions was only temporarily postponed by it. It did not protect Holland's American settlements against an English attack for long. Their turn came ten years later. The sudden unprovoked invasion of the New Netherlands in 1664 was in the words of Professor Pollard 'one of the most barefaced instances of the policy of "grab" in the history of the Empire'.² It is, however, a fact that the Dutch territory formed a barrier between New England and the Chesapeake Bay colonies. Now the gap was filled up and both New Amsterdam, the finest harbour on the North American coast, and the present capital were re-named by the British in honour of the Duke of York and Albany, Charles II's brother of sorry fame, under whose auspices the freebooting expedition was undertaken. Soon afterwards the Second Dutch War broke out. In May 1667 Comenius, greatly distressed, sent a moving message to the representatives of the two belligerent nations reminding them that they had lived as brothers through long years united in aims and weapons when 'plotters against freedom'—i.e. the Hapsburgs—threatened to enslave them both.³ He was grieved by the underlying

sordid motives of their rivalry: *mercimoniorum et lucri sibi invicem praeripiendi aemulatio et studium*... In his opinion, no power should usurp the command of the sea. Under the Treaty of Breda which followed in the same year New York was ceded to the English in return for Surinam, which remained a Dutch possession.

As in Canada, the English conquerors were faced with the problem of assimilating another highly civilized people. But while in Quebec the two nationalities never really mingled, in New York the process of peaceful amalgamation into one community was remarkably successful. The Dutch population offered hardly any resistance to anglicization. Common Protestant religion and close linguistic relationship were certainly an important unifying factor. Dutch language was not encouraged by English authorities. In fact, teaching and preaching in Dutch required a special licence.⁴ Dutch customs and traditions were not so easily obliterated. They had blended with the English manners by the time of the American Revolution.

A natural result of daily contact and especially of intermarriage was that a number of colloquial expressions of Dutch origin have entered the English language. Some of them like *boss*, *dope*, *knickerbockers*, *Santa Claus*, *snoop*, *spook* and the phrase *O.K.* have spread all over the English-speaking world. In South Africa, where the English have likewise lived side by side with the early Dutch settlers, out of some 30 Afrikaans words—not counting names of indigenous plants and animals—which occur in Anglo-African literature, only *trek* has obtained a wider application. The rest are words of local reference (*veld*, *kopje* etc.). In the case of doublets like *baas*—*boss*, *stoep*—*stoop*, Afrikaans has kept its original form, while the American words have been modified according to English spelling.

Today *boss* is an everyday word both in America and England. The adoption in colloquial speech of this Dutch word in place of master, employer or principal is typical of the independent spirit of the American common man insisting on social equality. In the same way *servant* which savours of servility has been replaced by *hired man* and *hired girl*. It sounds therefore rather unfair when J. F. Cooper in *The American Democrat* (1838) criticizes the 'subterfuge' of substituting for the word *master* another which has in the original language precisely the same objectionable meaning. (As a matter of fact, in South African fiction Negroes address their masters *baas*.) Sir W. W. Strickland has pointed out in his discussion of foreign words that *boss* is the equivalent of the Yorkshire *gaffer* and he offers a rather far-fetched semantic explanation of its present form: 'It has been corrupted to boss, because the "gaffer" or master is the centre of the concern or in other words the boss of the shield'.⁵ Professor Wrenn thinks that the word came to England from South Africa in the early 19th century.⁶ But the change of *aa* into *o* points to American origin. DAE notes the first literary use of this word by Washington Irving in 1806. This does not mean that it was not current in colloquial use long before.

Stoop, roughly corresponding to the Russian крыльцо (*kryltso*), is a salient feature of Dutch domestic architecture both in Irving's stories of old New York and in the descriptions of Boer farmhouses.

Most of the naturalized Dutch loanwords—together with such local colour expressions as *stadtholder*, *dominie*, *patroon* and *yah*, *mynheer*—appear in Washington Irving's writings;⁷ in fact, he may well be responsible for familiarizing his numerous British readers with at least some of them. They greatly enjoyed the fresh and boisterous wit of his burlesque history of New York, an amusing saga of 'the Dutch dynasty', in which the master of Homeric mock-heroic parody ridiculed the over-solemnity of the early historiographers of the New Netherlands. It was the first,

grotesque manifestation of his genuine interest in history, later revealed in *The Alhambra*, in his *Life of George Washington* and also during his visit to Old Prague. His Dutch fellow-citizens were none too pleased by his *jeu d'esprit* which necessarily appeared to them as a coarse satire upon the exploits of their venerable ancestors. They must have particularly resented his rather tactless remarks on the 'uncouth sound of the Dutch language' which 'has much the same effect on the nerves as the filing of a handsaw'. Ten years later the repentant author made amends for his rollicking satire in a note prefixed to his *Rip van Winkle* and in the pleasing scenes from an affluent Dutch farm in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, where the joke was at the expense of a greedy New England schoolmaster. By conjuring up a picture of a legendary past and making the banks of the Hudson classic ground he did for the early Dutch settlers in his own humorous way what Willa Cather did in our time in her realistic novels for the Czech and Scandinavian pioneers in the prairies of Nebraska: he forged a link with the vanished world which otherwise would have fallen into oblivion. In these stories which appeared in his *Sketch Book*—the most enduring part of his work—he created two picturesque and lifelike characters. Rip's name has become a byword for out-of-dateness while Diedrich Knickerbocker, the pretended author both of his *History* and of the Dutch stories, was identified with New York City. His name is still a nickname of its inhabitants and has ever since been used as a label (e.g. K. Review, K. biscuits). In his *History* Irving gives two bogus etymologies of the surname which is usually explained from *knikkerbakker*, a baker of boys' marbles. Irving's Dutch *nom de plume* was perpetuated as the name of loose-fitting breeches fixed below the knee owing to the popularity of Cruikshank's caricature of that droll Pickwickian figure in broad-bottomed breeches worn by the original settlers of Manhattan. Although *knickerbockers* of the early cyclists have been largely replaced in our time by golfer's plus-fours, the clipped forms *knickers* and *knicks* are commonly used for woman's drawers (bloomers) and for similar baby's undergarment (cf. also *cami-knicks*).

Van Ginneken was apparently shocked to find that Dutch borrowings into English were confined to various aspects of domestic life and that abstract terms were missing.⁸ The material nature of the borrowings points to oral transmission. The presence of Dutch culinary terms, including *cook book* (D. *kookboek*) for British cookery book, need not be a sign of lower cultural level. They are a natural consequence of mixed marriages. Among the 'cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives' Irving mentions 'the tender olykoek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller.' *Koek* appears now only as *cookie* or *cookey* (D. dimin. *koekje*). *Cruller* is a cake fried crisp in fat (D. *crullen* = to curl, crisp). At breakfast table your host will bake for you *waffles*, i.e. griddle or girdle-cakes on a *waffle-iron* (cf. D. and Afr. *wafel*, A. Norm. *wafer* and *wafelijzer*). In Cooper's early novel *The Spy* (Chap. XIII), set in Westchester, *cold-slaw* is mentioned among the 'minutiae of a goodly dinner'. This is folk-etymology for *cole-slaw* (D. *koolsla* = cole salad, *sla* being the syncopated form of *salad*, cf. the Northern form kale in *seakale* and *kail*), sliced and dressed cabbage. A visitor to New York is invariably puzzled by the abbreviation *slaw* on the menu. The history of *dope*, as Mencken has observed, 'remains to be worked out.'⁹ DAE traces it to the Dutch *doop* signifying a sauce. Mencken has pointed out that no Dutch dictionary has knowledge of such meaning and that its true significance is baptism. However, in Amsterdam it must have been used for a common dish, perhaps thick soup which like porridge in Scotland or *kyselo* in Bohemia constituted the staple diet of a working man's family (cf.

Multatuli's *Katterburger doop*).¹⁰ From the innocent sense of thick liquid we pass to the sinister verb to *dope*, derived evidently from *doopen*, baptize (corresponding to E. dip). The semantic transition seems clear. In colloquial use *doopen* may mean to water (i.e. fraudulently to dilute milk or wine, cf. Czech *křtít mléko* or German *den Wein taufen*). Any drink may be 'baptized', viz. adulterated with opium or similar narcotic drug or stupefying admixture. Note also *doopsaus*, baptismal water, as a possible link. In newspaper slang an abstract meaning of inside knowledge or secret information has developed. *Cherry-pit* for cherry-stone (D. *kersepit*) or *peach-pit* (D. *perzikpit*) may have come from the kitchen as well as or from the nursery.

Mixed marriages and daily intercourse of Dutch and English speaking children doubtless contributed to the assimilation of such words as *snoop*, *spook* and *Santa Claus*, which evidently belong to the vocabulary of the nursery. The original meaning of *snoepen* corresponds to Czech *mlsati*, German *naschen*. It usually refers to a child helping himself secretly to sweets or jam. It has no exact equivalent in English. But it comes near to *sneak* which also suggests furtive movements and pilfering. The meaning was extended from enjoyment of forbidden things to cover such surreptitious activities as prying into private lives, spying, poking, nosing, prowling, eavesdropping, peeping and listening in secret and even the reporter's stealthy investigation and inspection. Mr Ivor Brown, theatre critic and amateur lexicographer, has expressed the opinion that *snoop* deserves to go on the list of England's necessary imports but that 'it seems only to have visited England'.¹¹ There can be no doubt, however, that this New York word is now firmly settled in British usage. Its unpleasant political connotation has made it indispensable in any description of life in totalitarian states (cf. George Orwell's nightmarish novel)¹². Its present popularity may be partly due to its frequent use in detective fiction. In a single story by Agatha Christie it occurs no less than five times (*snooping about*, *plain snooping*, *don't snoop around*, *we old women always do snoop*, *might be snooping round*). *Spook* (D. *spook*) for ghost or apparition also belongs to this section; *spooky* and *spooking* are synonyms of *eerie* and *spectral* respectively. We gather from W. Irving, who spells it *spuke* (German influence?), that the Dutch residents were fond of ghost stories and children's minds were apparently haunted by them. Though the word is now commonly accepted as a synonym of ghost, it is interesting to note that F. L. Lucas, an accomplished stylist, in his searching analysis of Strindberg shows preference for the title *The Ghost-Sonata*, thus rejecting the American alternative *The Spook Sonata* (cf. Swed. *spök*).¹³ There is a subtle distinction. In Longfellow's romantic poem it is 'spectres pale' that beleaguere Prague. Both our warm-hearted Good King Wenceslas and the allegorical Father Christmas seem to have been ousted as bringers of Christmas gifts by the picturesque New Amsterdam figure of *Santa Claus* (D. *Sinterklaas* = *Sint Heer Nicolaas*, in children's jargon just *Santa* or *Santy* for short). The St. Nicholas cult and especially his feast, the children's holiday, celebrated by the Dutch burghers of his native city on December 6 must have greatly impressed Irving in his childhood. On the pages of his *History* he makes great play with his name as the tutelary saint of New Amsterdam.¹⁴ The first mention of *Santa Claus* has been traced to 1823. He appears in Cooper's *The Pioneers*. (The author was born in New Jersey.)¹⁵ But *Santa Claus* must have been an American nursery favourite much earlier than that. The competition of his festival with Christmas was done away with by shifting it to coincide with Christmas ceremonies and making him play the part of Father Christmas. The benevolent bishop of Asia Minor is represented as a bearded old man in a fur-trimmed red coat and cap going round in a sleigh drawn by white reindeer over the

roofs of the houses. He 'rattles down the chimneys'—as Irving puts it—filling children's stockings with presents on Christmas Eve.

The *sleigh* reminds us of some Dutch loanwords denoting various means of transport. A Boston lady, Sarah Kemple Knight, gave a vivid account of New York City in 1704—5. Apart from the *vendues* (D. *vendu*, auction) and lavish hospitality what engaged her special attention was the *sleigh*. 'Their Diversions in the Winter is Riding Sleys about three or four Miles out of Town, where they have Houses of entertainment at a place called the Bowery¹⁶ . . . I believe we mett 50 or 60 slays that day—they fly with great swiftness' etc. These passages from her diaries show beyond any doubt that for the inhabitants of Massachusetts the *sleigh* (D. *slee* contracted from *sledde*) was an unusual sight. The word is now common both in the U.S.A. and Canada. Its compound *bobsleigh* for tobogganing—i.e. *sleighting* down hill or coasting—is familiar to all sportsmen. *Span* (D. *span* = team) means in the U.S.A. and Canada a pair of horses of similar height and colour driven together. It was common in South African English, where a team of horned cattle used to be the chief conveyance. English—as well as Russian—nautical vocabulary has been considerably enriched from Dutch sources.¹⁷ *Scow* (D. *schouw*), a large flat-bottomed boat like pram (D. *praam*, ferry boat, of Slavonic origin) is certainly one of the earliest words borrowed by the Yankees from their neighbours.¹⁸ In Mark Twain's epic of the Mississippi *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* we find a *trading-scow*.

That much-argued-about name is also believed to be of Dutch origin. Irving's fanciful Indian etymology is, of course, a hoax. Thoreau, a student of Indian life, thought that *Yengheese* was Red Men's corruption of *English* (or perhaps *Engelsch*).¹⁹ Professor Potter asserts that it comes 'from the Dutch for Little Jan or John and is an old American Indian nickname for a New England sailor'.²⁰ The most plausible theory would seem to be that *Jantje*, the pet form of *Jan*, was used about the English in the opprobrious sense of contrary, pigheaded fellows (cf. Czech *Janek*, similarly derived from *Jan*). But according to DAE it was originally applied to Dutch pirates. Logeman's ingenious suggestion that it is derived from Jan Kees was quoted with approval by Jespersen and is favoured by Mencken who thinks that it seems likely to stand.²¹

Dutch colonizers have left visible traces on the New York map. It is easy to identify Dutch topographical elements in the place-names recorded by Irving in his facetious account of Pieter Stuyvesant's expedition against Fort Christina: *Fly-market* (D. *vlei* syncop. from *vallei*, boggy ground),²² *Hell-gate* (D. *gat*, gap, inlet), *Kaatskill* (D. *kil*, channel, stream), *Kinderhoeck* (D. *hoek*, corner, curved spit of land jutting out to sea or into the river). The last named village, birthplace of Irving's friend, President Van Buren, is supposed to have solved the puzzle of the obscure origin of *O.K.*, the most popular Americanism which has gone literally round the world. It is generally interpreted as an illiterate 'phonetic' abbreviation of *all correct*. But it has been demonstrated by A. W. Read that *O. K.* stands for *Old Kinderhook*, used with reference to Martin Van Buren. It appeared in print as a slogan of Lofocos, his radical supporters, who formed a Democratic *O. K.* Club during the presidential campaign of 1840. The problem is to determine the exact connection of a political party war-cry with a synonym of *all right*.²³ At first it was regarded as a vulgar slang term both in England and America. T. S. Eliot described its march to respectability in an address delivered at Washington University, St. Louis, in 1953.²⁴ In 1964 Professor Quirk gave it his blessing by calling it 'a good American adoption'.²⁵ It has, in fact, reached good colloquial status. I would venture a surmise: in times to come this unpretending

colloquialism will rank among world's famous quotations next to Franklin's 'Ca ira'. At 4 a.m. on June 5, 1944 Eisenhower triggering off the greatest naval operation in history, carefully planned to punish Germany and set enslaved Europe free, said simply: 'Okay, let's go.'

NOTES

- ¹ In *Via Lucis* written in London in 1642, printed in Amsterdam and dedicated to the Royal Society in 1668. See J. A. Comenius, *The Way of Light* 172. Translated into English by E. T. Campagnac (Liverpool and London, 1938).
- ² A. F. Pollard, *Factors in Modern History*² 256 (London, 1926). He admits that the conquest of the New Netherlands was 'a turning-point in American history'.
- ³ *Angelus Pacis ad Legatos Pacis Anglos et Belgas Bredam Missus...* Anno MDCLXVII, Mense Maio. Prof. J. Hendrich's polyglot edition (Plzeň, 1926) is the best. The English translation is by W. A. Morison.
- ⁴ Washington Irving makes light of it in his story *Dolph Heiliger* in *Bracebridge Hall* (1822) speaking about the 'tyranny' and 'cruelties' of the English governor Lord Cornbury. According to J. F. Cooper, *The Spy* Chap. II (1821) English manners prevailed by the time of the American Revolution. After the war Dutch was gradually displaced by its rival at school and English was rapidly gaining ground. Irving was born in 1783, two years after the surrender of the British army—composed largely of German mercenaries—at Yorktown. At that time 'there was still a marked separation between the Dutch and the English residents, though the Irvings seem to have been on terms of intimacy with the best of both nationalities'. See C. D. Warner, *Washington Irving* 24 (Boston, 1883).
- ⁵ W. W. Strickland, *How Foreign Words are Welcomed and Transfigured* 3 (New York, 1931). As for *servant*, it seems to have lost its humiliating character by now. In George Ade's Chicago story *Effie Whittlesy* the heroine - a grown-up woman - objects to being called *hired girl* by her friend: 'No, I guess I'm a servant now. I used to be a hired girl when I worked for your ma . . .'
- ⁶ C. L. Wrenn, *The English Language* 71 (London, 1949). Perhaps the original D. form *baas* is meant? The word was known to New Englanders (including Winthrop) as early as the middle of the seventeenth century. It is applied to both sexes as in Dutch.
- ⁷ *Patroon* designated owners of landed estates with manorial privileges. The term disappeared when the system was abolished about the middle of the 19th cent. But we meet it as a gentleman's title still in E. Wharton's fine novel *The Age of Innocence* (1920) depicting New York society in the seventies.
- ⁸ J. Van Ginneken, *Handboek der Nederlandsche Taal* 1: 10. 292 (Nijmegen, 1913).
- ⁹ H. L. Mencken, *The American Language, Supplement* I 189 (New York, 1948). It is true enough that neither K. Ten Bruggenkate's *Engelsch Woordenboek* nor J. Van Gelderen's *Duitsch Woordenboek* have recorded the meaning sauce but if he had consulted J. A. N. Knuttel's big *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* ('s Gravenhage en Leiden, 1916) he would have found on p. 2898 under *doop* 3) what he was looking for: 'Stof waarin men iets doopt, t.w. saus. Thans o.a. nog bij zeelieden.' Irving writes 'doup or gravy'.
- ¹⁰ *Verzamelde Werken van Multatuli* X. 57 (Amsterdam, 1906): ... '*Katterburger doop* — die nu in Amsterdam het voedsel uitmaakt van het gezin des werkmans'.
- ¹¹ I. Brown, *A Word in Your Ear* 123 (London, 1944). The author calls it 'a superb word' for its purpose. In his opinion words beginning with *sn-* betray contempt. See *Just Another Word* 244 (ibid.).
- ¹² G. Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (London, 1949): 'It was the Police Patrol, snooping into people's windows.' A. Christie's *A Murder is Announced* appeared in 1950. Cf. *The Listener*, June 15, 1967, 797: 'Mr Turner, the journalist carpetbagger (another Americanism!) avaricious for the human angle, has snooped around these (i.e. towns) and many more.'
- ¹³ F. L. Lucas, *The Drama of Ibsen and Strindberg* 448 (London, 1962). In German translation *Gespensersonate*. The verb *spook*, to haunt, has also developed the sense of to scare (of animals). See M. M. Matthews *A Dictionary of Americanisms* (Chicago, 1956). *Spooked* = nervous conveys the feeling of an intangible presence. Cf. H. Wentworth and S. B. Flexner, *Dictionary of American Slang* (New York, 1960).

- ¹⁴ St. Nicholas—the prototype of Bonhomme Noël and Knecht Ruprecht—is ‘schutspatroom’ of Amsterdam and patron saint of schoolchildren, of sailors, merchants, poor scholars and travellers and in Shakespeare even of highwaymen. Cf. our commentary to Shakespeare’s *Histories* 1.803 (Prague, 1964). He is alluded to in the Knickerbocker stories—which include *The Money Diggers* in *Tales of a Traveller* (1824)—to indicate Dutch local patriotism. In the History he is invoked on every occasion: marching soldiers chant his hymn carrying his image, which also decorates their ships; the Dutch pray to him, swear by him and even irreverently by his pipe, P. Stuyvesant’s tobacco box bears his portrait etc.
- ¹⁵ The process of absorbing the inhabitants of Dutch extraction was much slower in New Jersey than in the metropolis. At the beginning of this century that gifted linguist and Slavonic scholar J. Dyneley Prince found some 200 elderly descendants of the original settlers who still spoke Dutch. Negroes, too, spoke a sort of Dutch patois. Cf. Van Ginneken, op. cit., note.⁸
- ¹⁶ Bowery, i.e. *bouwerij* = farm, originally the country seat of Governor Stuyvesant, after becoming a resort of pleasure parties like Vauxhall in old London, acquired unpleasant associations of rowdiness (*B. boy* = young hooligan). Am. *bob* = a runner of a sleigh.
- ¹⁷ Holland’s former maritime supremacy is reflected both in English and Russian naval terminology. The comic effect of Chekhov’s play *The Wedding* is partly based on the uncouthness of sailor’s lingo. Examples: *topsail* (топсель), *trysail* (трисель), *squall* (шквал), *boom* (boom — in compounds), *skipper* (шкипер) etc. S. C. Gardiner derives the latter loanword originally (1566) from Low German but admits that it may have been borrowed later from Dutch. See *German Loanwords in Russian* 1550—1690 (Oxford, 1965)—a valuable study, though it disregards the Czech influence on White Russian (Skoryna’s Bible was partly printed in Prague 1517—19) and leans, perhaps, too much on Vasmer (pistol!).
- ¹⁸ *Scow* is apparently the only English shipping term of Dutch colonial origin. For *pram* see O. Vočadlo, ‘The Slavonic Element in English’, *Časopis pro moderní filologii* 26. 95 (Prague, 1939). Note³⁶ mentions *yankee*. (On the Hussite origin of *pistol* cf. note²⁴.)
- ¹⁹ H. D. Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (Sunday): ‘...these are the New West Saxons whom the Red Men call not Angle-ish or English, but Yengheese and so at last they are known for Yankees’.
- ²⁰ S. Potter, *Our Language* 175 (London, 1950).
- ²¹ *Suppl. I.* 192. H. Logeman, ‘The Etymology of Yankee’, *Studies in English Philology in honor of Frederick Klaeber* 403—13 (Minneapolis, 1929). O. Jespersen, *Growth and Structure of the English Language* 172 (Leipzig, 1930). Cf. H. Davis, ‘On the origin of Yankee Doodle’, *American Speech*, April 1938, 93—6. The hypothesis is that it is derived from *Jan Kees* (a dialectal form of *Kaas*), an alleged nickname of the Dutch who were not only able distillers of Van Winkle’s excellent *Hollands*, but are especially famous as cheese-makers. Nevertheless, apart from the smelly *Limburger* there is only *smearcase* which according to Mencken may have been borrowed from the American Dutch (*Suppl. I.* 198). However, the respective entries in DAE, as my helpful colleague Professor J. Vachek reminded me some time ago, point rather to the Pennsylvania Dutch (Germans). This opinion is shared by Prof. Marckwardt (see *A Common Language* 65; cf. here note 25). Dutch expressions for cottage cheese or curds according to the Dutch dictionaries at hand are: *potkaas*, *kaaswongel*, *melkklonter*, *hangop*, or simply *gestremte melk*. But the phrase *smeren zachte kaas on het brood* makes such a compound quite possible in American Dutch.
- ²² *Vles* is familiar to readers of D. Lessing’s African stories. Other topographical terms common to American and Afrikaans are *kloof* (= ravine) and *bush* (D. *bosch* = wood). The spelling of *creek* was probably influenced by D. *kreek* (Chaucer has *cryke*).
- ²³ A. W. Read, ‘The Evidence on O. K.’, *Saturday Review of Literature*, July 19, 1941, 3—11. (New York). The transference of meaning is likely to remain a riddle. The discussion has gone on and further fanciful etymologies have been summed up by Mencken, *Suppl.* 275—6. (I have not been able to follow the controversy after 1948.)
- ²⁴ T. S. Eliot, *To Criticize the Critic* 48 (London, 1965).
- ²⁵ A. H. Marckwardt and R. Quirk, *A Common Language* 53 (London, 1964). This is an account of broadcast conversations on the two varieties of English. Incidentally, the views expressed as to their reciprocal intelligibility seem, at first sight, rather optimistic. I remember Sir Flinders Petrie telling me he was unable to follow the paper of an American fellow-egyptologist delivered at an international congress and about the same time—early twenties—a lady novelist complaining that she was finding it increasingly difficult to write her books in such a way as to make them acceptable on both sides of the Atlantic. Moreover, S. Lewis’ *Babbitt* (1922) had to be provided with a glossary for the benefit of English readers. However, the modern media of

mass communication—as in the case of Czech and Slovak which are used promiscuously on Prague radio and TV programmes—are likely to heal the rift.

- ²⁶ A. J. P. Taylor, *English History 1914 — 1945* p. 581 (London, 1965). Taylor's vivid, flippant, half-journalistic narrative is of interest to students of modern English style. He is particularly informative on the two German wars but his presentation of events around Munich is rather misleading.

RESUMÉ

Holandské výpůjčky v americké angličtině

Z Nového Amsterdamu pochází řada holandských výrazů, z nichž většina na rozdíl od jihoafrických byla převzata i Brity. Některé výrazy se na americké půdě — nikoli na africké — zcela poangličtily: *baas* — *boss*. O zdomácnění holandských slov má zásluhu i literatura, zejména humorista W. Irving. Do americké angličtiny vnikly běžné termíny patrně ve smíšených domácnostech a stykem dětí. U *Yankee* se přijímá Logemanovo vysvětlení, u záhadného *O.K.* se nabízí výklad, že vzniklo z politického hesla podle holandského rodiště presidenta van Burena.