

The Historical Background and Nature of the Englishes of Appalachia

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The historical background of the English language in Appalachia and its on-going change reveal a heritage shared across the region in many ways today. Yet at the same time these fundamental realities fully justify the plural designation Appalachian *Englishes*, to indicate its diversity. The overarching label *Appalachian* can be useful to make qualified generalizations in speech and many other things, to suggest commonalities between places that are distant on the map, or to identify affinities that people in mountain states of the eastern United States share. However, in practice local or sub-regional identities rank first and trump the broad one of Appalachian on the ground.¹ Ask me where I'm from, and as a reflex I say, "East Tennessee." While in Abingdon a few years ago, people adamantly told me that they were from "southwest Virginia" (leaving me no doubt where they were from). There are good reasons to believe that localness has long been primary to people, especially those of European extraction whose families have been in the same area of Appalachia for up to three centuries. If this is so, can one talk about "Appalachia" at all?

Yes, but only with care. Appalachia is a place as well as places, people as well as peoples. The more closely one examines the region, the more complex it becomes. The features and usages of its English are shared not only across many states but also often with areas farther afield, such as the Ozarks or even Texas.² Equally is there immense variation—from place to place and from one community of practice to another; for example, compare the English of a group of quilters with that of a group of NASCAR fans. No matter how small the place, there are social differences in the use of English within it and probably always have been and will be. Admonitions to younger people "not to get above their raising" (i.e., their elders) in the way they talk and behave are nothing new, yet they cannot prevent differences between generations from being the most prevalent of all, especially in terms of vocabulary.

This chapter discusses how we can talk about Appalachian Englishes in the realm of history, especially with regard to settlement and migration in the region. Here the eighteenth century is the most crucial time, for the region was gradually populated by Europeans from about 1730 (south central Pennsylvania) to the 1830s (north Georgia).³ If one were to choose a label for relic usages lingering in the region in the late-twentieth century (e.g., *holp* 'helped' or *waiter* 'wedding attendant'), the best one would be "colonial" or "eighteenth century." This colonial heritage may come as a surprise to the many Americans who have heard that "Elizabethan" or

“Shakespearean” English is or was until not long ago spoken somewhere in the mountains and that the region’s linguistic ancestry can be traced back that far—four centuries or more.⁴ However, historians and other researchers have shown that such is the case for language and many other facets of culture. The history of settlement and migration points to the primacy importance of Pennsylvania and the secondary importance of the Lower South. As we will see, arguments that mountain English is Elizabethan falter on several grounds, including an implausible explanation of how it could have gotten to Appalachia.

The foundational migration of Europeans into Appalachia occurred in a widening corridor from central Pennsylvania’s Cumberland Valley westward to Pittsburgh and the Ohio Valley and southwestward into Virginia during the eighteenth century. The storied movements into Virginia, predominantly (but far from exclusively) by Germans and Scotch-Irish (from Ulster)⁵, have been frequently recounted since at least Theodore Roosevelt’s *The Winning of the West* more than a century ago: how many of these settlers followed the Shenandoah River and its forks, traveled along the Great Wagon Road into and through the Valley of Virginia, and how they followed the Great Valley of the Tennessee into North Carolina (i.e., into what would become the state of Tennessee), while others trekked through the Cumberland Gap, into what would become Kentucky.⁶ This narrative of migration and settlement was incorporated by renowned historian Frederick Jackson Turner into his Frontier Thesis, which presented the largest truly American epic to his time.⁷ Players in this drama of “conquering” the frontier included the larger-than-life Daniel Boone and the Overmountain Men, who in lightning fashion descended from the valley of the Holston and Clinch to defeat Loyalist forces at King’s Mountain, South Carolina, on October 7, 1780, an engagement that turned the tide of the Revolutionary War and led to British capitulation the following summer. Such figures and compatriots left behind oral accounts, correspondence, and incipient legends used by later researchers to reconstruct the period. Interestingly, it is due largely to the efforts of one individual that these stories and documents were gathered and preserved for posterity. Lyman Copeland Draper (1815-1891) from upstate New York was the indefatigable librarian who scoured the interior of the country beginning in the 1830s to collect and copy thousands of pages still in private hands and to transcribe reminiscences that would become essential building blocks for later historians.

The backdrop just sketched provides some order to our discussion, but the settling and history of the Appalachian region—and the planting and development of its Englishes—requires a weaving back and forth chronologically as well as time-exposures of specific places. Generalizations about history, language, or anything else are surely desirable, but they must always be assessed for mistaken impressions, assumptions, and gaps. For example, it is a fact that the arduousness of overland travel before the advent of modern roads prevented many in

Appalachia from contact with mainstream society, but describing the region as a whole “isolated” (as many, including linguists, have done) is misleading at best.⁸ Such a description may have some validity for individual communities, but it would involve specific people usually having specific ancestry, specific contact with outsiders, and certain psychological and economic traits. The caveat about judging a community to be isolated based on difficulty of access is nowhere better illustrated than in seemingly less accessible coal-mining areas of Kentucky and West Virginia, where of eastern and central Europeans as well as African Americans settled and then often left in the early twentieth century⁹. It is well known that language has a life of its own and is always subject to change. Given this reality, the purported isolation of localities should logically produce increasing differences in speech rather than uniformity. Ironically, however, many linguists and social scientists have often applied the all-encompassing label “Appalachian” to research conducted in a single small area, thereby considering it typical, whether this is acknowledged or not.¹⁰ Small differences in language (or belief in their existence) are so much a part of local identity that not uncommonly people claim that they can distinguish residents of communities five miles apart by their speech or can tell just by hearing someone talk whether that person is from their own neck of the woods. Such claims involve tiny details of rhythm and intonation that others cannot detect. They may not be demonstrable or testable, but they are nevertheless believed because they are part of what defines localness.

Another element of local identity is consciousness of local history and topography, both of which are important to linguists tracing how people migrate and language varies and changes. For example, from time to time one finds it stated that people from the east and north, including those following the routes outlined earlier, migrated into or settled the “Appalachian Mountains” or even “migrated down the ridges of Appalachia.” In truth the paths were nearly always valleys. People followed watercourses and constructed farmsteads, forts, stockades, and other buildings usually adjacent to them or to bluffs along them. They built stores, churches, and inns near water and whatever roads existed. However inconstant the tides and navigation might be, rivers and streams often surpassed roads as a means of travel. Settlements formed at the forks of streams and rivers, some of which in time grew into towns and then cities (Knoxville, Pittsburgh). Settlers eyed stable homesteads and the most productive land they could make their own; they knew farms would be poorer and less tenable in higher elevations. Assessment of the land’s fertility led many to skirt eastern Kentucky in favor of the Bluegrass. It prompted a vanguard of Virginians and North Carolinians to found Nashville in 1780, several years before Knoxville. The latter was a more secure and for a time a more substantial settlement, but one with a less fertile hinterland. This tendency was often replicated elsewhere, and the interplay of valley and ridge became what is still a constant. Outside of county seats and other towns, communities in much of the region

were often loose and highly dispersed, bearing scarce resemblance to villages elsewhere in early America. In much of Appalachia, uplands were settled a generation after the bottom lands, as population grew and spread. In the higher or more rural areas of Appalachia, communities were called *settlements* well into the twentieth century. Even so, that term is misleading, because migration and population fluidity have also been constants. It was through southern Appalachia that much of the southern half of the country was populated, ultimately all the way to California.

Although the English language called Appalachian is often believed to be the most distinctively regional variety in America and is often referred to as if it were a single homogeneous entity, the region does not consist of a single dialect. The region's ancestry is quite mixed, and in many ways the English of Appalachia represents a microcosm of American English; its speakers have both preserved forms no longer used in most of the rest of the country and innovated many others. Educator and social researcher John C. Campbell's famous observation in 1921 about Appalachia being "a land ... about which, perhaps, more things are known that are not true than of any part of our country," pertains particularly well to the English spoken there.¹¹

The speech of Appalachia has captivated journalists, travelers, and educators for the better part of two centuries. One early commentator was Anne Royall (1769-1851), the most famous, if not also the most reviled, female journalist to her time (she was tried and convicted of being a "public nuisance" and a "common scold"). About the speech of her Monroe County, Virginia (now West Virginia) neighbors in 1826 she wrote as follows: "Their favorite word of all, is *hate*, by which they mean the word thing; for instance, nothing, 'not a hate—not waun hate will ye's do.' What did you buy at the store, ladies? 'Not a hate—well you hav'nt a thing here to eat.' ... When they would say *pretense*, they say *lettinon*, which is a word of very extensive use among them. It signifies a jest, and is used to express disapprobation and surprise; 'you are just lettinon to rob them spoons—Polly is not mad, she is only lettinon'."¹² From antebellum times until well into the twentieth century the region's speech was known primarily through writers of fiction, such as backwoods humorist George Washington Harris (1814-1869) and prolific novelist Mary Noailles Murfree (1850-1922), who wrote under the name Charles Egbert Craddock. They and countless other writers of popular fiction employed contorted spellings to stress the exoticness of local speech and enhance their portrayals of illiterate, dialect-speaking characters. "Thar's nun ove 'em fas' enuf tu ketch me, nither is thar hosses," Harris has his narrator's Sut Lovingood boast, using a form of English that is almost too difficult to read because of its "eye dialect" (spellings like *ove* and *tu* that represent common pronunciations and are solely for the sake of appearance).¹³ Many such forms were later stamped into public images of hill-country English through the *Barney Google and Snuffy Smith* comic strip, launched in 1919 and still run

in some newspapers today. Its creator Billy DeBeck borrowed heavily from his copy of Harris's book.¹⁴ Since that time countless books, movies, television programs, and tourist-shop caricatures have reinforced the popular, but erroneous, belief that such usages as *plumb* 'completely' (as in "he fell plumb to the bottom") and *right smart* 'good deal' (as in "they lost a right smart in that trade"), among others, are found only in mountain speech. It's not hard to see why misconceptions, myths, and misinformed stereotypes about the region and its speakers abound.

Study of and commentary on mountain speech by educators, scholars, and linguists began in the late nineteenth century and continues to the present day. We can group these efforts into two general categories: those based on an individual's observations, and those based on a survey or project of some kind. Each is valuable in its own way. The observations of an individual (e.g., Josiah Combs of Knott County, Kentucky), made at close hand and over a lifetime, can identify many terms that no survey ever can. Reference works like the *Dictionary of American Regional English* rely heavily on both types.

Individual Accounts

The idea that American English is markedly conservative and preserves forms no longer used in the British Isles has found expression with respect to American English generally and to specific varieties of it. When commentators identify items from geographically or socially more "isolated" speech varieties that are also known from seventeenth-century or earlier English literature, they are apt to label them "Elizabethan" or "Chaucerian." Because that literature (including the King James Bible) was long an integral part of American education, it served as the natural, immediate point of comparison. By the end of the nineteenth century it was commonly held that exported (or transplanted) language as found in a colony often displayed an arrested development when compared to the mother country.¹⁵ The argument that the English of Appalachia is four or more centuries old. Dozens of articles claiming Elizabethan, Shakespearean, or Chaucerian holdovers in the southern mountains have appeared since 1889, when a Vanderbilt University professor cited items in Tennessee speech with identical parallels in Shakespeare (e.g., *handkercher* 'handkerchief', as in *King John* Act IV, Scene I, Line 42: "I knit my handkercher about your brows").¹⁶ William Goodell Frost, president of a small Appalachian college in Kentucky, was most responsible for propagating and establishing the idea that mountain speech and culture were legitimate survivals from older times, and he took issue with the prevailing view that these were degenerations:

The rude language of the mountains is far less a degradation than a survival. The Saxon pronoun

“hit” holds its place almost universally. Strong past tenses, “holp” for helped, “drug” for dragged, and the like, are heard constantly; and the syllabic plural is retained in words in -st and others. The greeting as we ride up to a cabin is “Howdy, strangers. “Light and hitch your beastes.” Quite a vocabulary of Chaucer’s words which have been dropped by polite lips, but which linger in these solitudes, has been made out by some of our students. “Pack” for carry, “gorm” for muss, “feisty” for full of life, impertinent, are examples.¹⁷

Such accounts not only claim Shakespeare and his contemporaries as precedents, but also occasionally reach back to the Old English of a millennium ago (*ax* ‘ask’ and Frost’s *hit* ‘it’, both of which continue to linger in pockets of Appalachia). Initially it was outsiders who labeled the speech of mountaineers as Elizabethan; more recently some in the region have adopted the label, to ascribe status to their speech. The idea has taken on a life of its own and become a hardy myth in American culture, part of a popular view that the southern mountains have remained static in time and that their people have maintained a cultural repository of balladry and other music, story cycles (e.g., Jack tales), dance, quilting, and other traditions. One cannot understate the contribution of research-based studies demonstrating the survival in North America—most often in Appalachia—of practices, lore, and traditions now largely or completely extinct in the British Isles. The work of Cecil Sharp, Olive Dame Campbell, and Maud Karpeles on Child ballads is only the most outstanding example.¹⁸ But problems and inaccuracies easily arise when comparisons are based on poor or non-existent historical documentation or when presumptions are based on superficial similarities—such as connecting Appalachian clog dancing, a twentieth-century development, with Irish step dancing—or when time periods or geographical locations are merged or other details are treated loosely.

Pride, romanticism, and a desire for cultural validation through associating local speech with prestigious writers and King James English are what underlie most claims about speaking Elizabethan or older English. Their proponents are usually interested in perceptions and ideology rather than being overly concerned with issues of documentation. A few years ago Knoxville (TN) Congressman John Duncan, Jr. wrote a defense of his local accent, affirming that “I am proud to be from East Tennessee, and, even though I may be teased, I will just relax and keep speaking ‘authentic Chaucer English’” (but citing no allegedly Chaucerian usages).¹⁹ Being considered a cultural repository has helped inhabitants of the Appalachians to define themselves in an affirmative way. However, advocates seldom quote or reference the sources allegedly used (Frost does not). Rarely do they relate similarities in language to settlement and migration history or attend to issues of time sequencing. Shakespeare and Elizabeth I lived 400 years ago, generations before English speakers came to the mountains, and it is unknown how closely the

English of those speakers approximated the literary English of their day. Almost never are one or more communities in the United States named where such archaic speech can be found. Still, it is important not to dismiss arguments for an Elizabethan character as one heritage of Appalachian speech without seeing how one meets such challenges in making connections. In this regard the work of one scholar stands far above all others and ranks as the definitive version of the Elizabethan case: that of Josiah Combs (1888-1960). His work has been almost entirely neglected, yet he is arguably the scholar who pursued the case most diligently in articles published in 1916 and 1931.²⁰ Perhaps his reputation suffered because he accompanied claims of linguistic inheritance with ones that mountain natives were racially pure: “the Southern mountaineers are the conservators of Old, Early, and Elizabethan English in the New World. These four million mountaineers ... form the body of what is perhaps the purest Old English blood to be found among English-speaking peoples.”²¹ Unlike other commentators, Combs did not make this statement out of blind ideology or prejudice, for he based it on a study of eastern Kentucky surnames.²² Methodologies of evaluating the ancestry of surnames were undeveloped in Combs’ day, but he did not hesitate to declare that all but a fraction of the relevant names were English, apart from a few that began with *Mc-*, which he took to indicate Scottish ancestry. He demonstrated that he was an extraordinary observer of his eastern Kentucky English, that he read English Renaissance literature widely and closely, and that he could cite it in case after case.

About the same time that claims for an Elizabethan heritage arose, one scholar writing about West Virginia speech suggested “a Scottish influence to some extent,” although he cited only one possible piece of evidence: fronting of the vowel in *good* and *school* (making these words sound more like *geed* and *skeel*).²³ The idea received only occasional, inconsistent further mention for three generations thereafter, mustering little evidence and failing to make much headway against the more popular Elizabethan argument. This slow development happened in spite of the fact that research on surnames and traditional ballads was finding connections to Scotland and Ireland and that historians were becoming increasingly aware of the numbers of Scotch-Irish (with ancestry from Ulster, the northern province of Ireland) in certain interior parts of America. Other than Combs’ argument for predominance of English surnames in eastern Kentucky, only one early study in Appalachia sought to compute ancestry using surnames. Using a sample of 228 surnames he had compiled, John C. Campbell estimated that the founding population of Tennessee had been one-third Scotch-Irish, one-third English, one-seventh German, and the remainder composed of other nationalities.²⁴ Research using surnames has limitations and must make assumptions. One of the biggest problems is that many English-looking surnames are disguised names borne by emigrants who appeared to be from England but were not. For example, *Robertson* and *Anderson* were brought to the United States by many Scots and Scotch-

Irish (in some cases these replaced *McRoberts* and *McAndrew* which would be the counterparts that were based on Scottish Gaelic and were originally native to Scotland). By the same token, *Müller*, *Weiss*, *Schmidt*, and other German surnames were brought to America, and often to Appalachia, only to be later altered to the English-looking *Miller*, *White*, and *Smith*. Obviously looking below the surface for hidden ancestry is a skill that genealogists must master; one of them recently recounted to the author how the seemingly Scottish surname *McInturff* was borne by a German family originally named *Machendorf*. Thus, high proportions of surnames assigned to an English background are well-nigh inevitable in such calculations.²⁵

As stated, evidence for a significant linguistic influence from the English-speaking Scotch-Irish was slow to accumulate. Horace Kephart, a student of North Carolina mountain people and their culture, wrote in *Our Southern Highlanders* a century ago: “since the Appalachian people have a marked Scotch-Irish strain, we would expect their speech to show a strong Scotch influence. So far as vocabulary is concerned, there is really little of it. A few words, *caigy* (cadgy), *coggled*, *ferment*, *gin* for *if*, *needcessity*, *trollop*, almost exhaust the list of distinct Scotticisms.”²⁶ Combs asserted that “Scotch and Irish survivals are negligible. They occur here and there, but rarely.”²⁷ A substantial Scotch-Irish component was first argued by Cratis Williams: “Appalachian speech was determined by the predominance of the Scotch-Irish in the settlement of the Mountain region prior to and following the American revolution.”²⁸ However, he and others labored under a lack of sources from the British Isles other than earlier English literature to use for comparison—no dictionaries, grammars, or descriptions of speech in Ulster; no knowledge of eighteenth-century literature written there; and apparently no personal contacts in Ireland to consult. With respect to Scotland the situation was somewhat better, but one could hardly use Robert Burns’s poetry and Sir Walter Scott’s fiction very extensively. Such a handicap meant that almost inevitably U.S. commentators arrived at the conclusion that mountain speech came from England.

Scholarly bridges across the Atlantic needed to be built, and not surprisingly, this was first done from abroad, by those familiar with the contemporary speech of the north of Ireland on the ground. John Braidwood had already identified thirteen Ulster items he believed contributed to the American vocabulary, including *granny* ‘midwife’, *hap* ‘quilt’, and *mooley* ‘hornless cow’.²⁹ Alan Crozier, the most extensive examination of vocabulary to his time, documented the Ulster ancestry of thirty-three items in Pennsylvania, including *piece* ‘distance’, *dornick* ‘small round stone’, *fireboard* ‘mantel’, and *redd up* ‘prepare, tidy up’.³⁰ The Scotch-Irish influence was greatest in western Pennsylvania, he concluded. By far the most extensive consideration of the subject has come in this writer’s *From Ulster to America: The Scotch-Irish Heritage of American English*, which is based on fifteen years of research, primarily using local literature and archival

materials. It

presents in dictionary format nearly 400 terms that can mainly or exclusively be attributed to the Scotch-Irish, with one or more dated citations for each from both sides of the water.³¹

Comparison of Appalachian vocabulary with Ulster and Scottish sources reveals such connections as the following:

airish `chilly, cool',
back `to endorse a document, address a letter',
backset `a setback or reversal (in health)',
bad man `the devil',
barefooted `undiluted (for coffee)',
beal `suppurate, fester',
biddable `obedient, docile',
bonny-clabber `curdled sour milk',
brickle `brittle',
chancy `doubtful, dangerous',
Cohee `resident of western Virginia',
contrary `to oppose, vex, anger',
creel `to twist, wrench, give way',
diamond `town plaza',
discomfit `to inconvenience',
hippin `diaper',
ill `bad-tempered',
let on `to pretend', and
nicker `whinny'.

One of the more intriguing Ulster contributions to American English is *cracker*, for a white southerner, a term now used especially for a resident of rural Georgia or northern Florida.

Survey Accounts: The Linguistic Atlas

The Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada is a systematic survey of pronunciation and traditional vocabulary launched in 1929. Interviews were first conducted in New England and then in the Atlantic states as far south as northeastern Florida in the 1930s. Inspired by the work of historians and geographers, the project collected data using an 800-item survey of vocabulary, pronunciation, and to a limited extent, grammar. Its principal goal was to map individual linguistic features and to show their regional patterns.³² Two larger objectives were to outline dialect regions and to correlate regional terms with settlement and migration in

North America and ultimately to their earlier history in the British Isles.

Because Appalachia encompasses a vast area from the Northeast to the Deep South, the region would seem to be too large to form a distinct territory in terms of respect to traditional culture or in speech. The Linguistic Atlas project findings confirmed this and led to the positing of the “Midland,” a dialect region somewhat smaller than Appalachia stretching westward and southwestward from its cultural and linguistic seed bed of central Pennsylvania, where English was first planted in the region, to the Carolinas (see the map). The Linguistic Atlas’s three-way regional division between the North, the Midland, and the South—may fly in the face of popular conceptions that rely on a simpler North/South dichotomy, but it is consistent with many linguistic patterns and, just as importantly, with the historical development of the country (the North versus South distinction undoubtedly reflects nineteenth-century sectionalism). “There can be no doubting,” according to Hans Kurath, “that the major speech areas of the Eastern states coincide in the main with settlement areas and that the most prominent speech boundaries run along the seams of these settlement areas.”³³ As we will see, these boundaries pertain to features of speech that are uniquely American as well as ones traceable to Europe. Though far from uniform, the Midland region has a number of terms that set it off from both the North and the South. It is subdivided into the North Midland region (encompassing northern West Virginia, northwestern Maryland, and most of Pennsylvania) and the South Midland region (southern West Virginia, western Virginia, and western North and South Carolina). Linguistic Atlas research from the 1950s through the 1970s extended the North Midland boundary across central Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and it extended the South Midland boundary across north Georgia and north Alabama, thus including Kentucky and Tennessee in the South Midland. The upland interior of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia (the South Midland or, as it is known by historians, the Upper South or the backcountry) and the coastal areas of these states (the Lower South) differ broadly in speech and in numerous other ways, such as traditional types of houses and barns, reflecting the fact that much of the interior of Virginia and the Carolinas was settled from the north rather than from the east.³⁴ Although the boundary between the South Midland and the South proper was formed in colonial times, it is also valid for vocabulary that is uniquely American (e.g., South Midland *chigger* versus Lower South *red bug*), as well as for many other phenomena mapped by geographers, such as the birthplaces of country musicians.³⁵

Here is how the founder of the Linguistic Atlas portrayed the process of forming the Midland:

This far-flung Midland area, settled largely by Pennsylvanians and by their descendants in the Southern uplands, constitutes a separate speech area which is distinct from the Northern areathe New England settlement areaand from the Southern area. Its northern boundaries run in a

westwardly direction through the northern counties of Pennsylvania, its southern boundary in a southwestwardly direction through the Blue Ridge and through the Carolina piedmont. The South Midland, to be sure, exhibits a considerable infusion of Southern vocabulary and pronunciations ... After 1720 large flocks of Ulster Scots and Palatine Germans arrived on Delaware Bay and spread out into the back country of Philadelphia and then westward to the Alleghenies and the Ohio Valley, and then southward through western Maryland and Virginia to the Carolinas ... The influence of the English-speaking Ulster Scots upon the speech of certain sections of Pennsylvania and of the southern upland cannot be doubted, but it is surprisingly intangible. The Dutch and the Germans, who spoke their own language for many generations and passed through a stage of bilingualism before they gave up their native language, have left a much more tangible impress upon the English of their areas of concentration.³⁶

Because it aimed to identify speech patterns that were closest to the settlement period, the Linguistic Atlas project concentrated on surveying older, rural individuals whose language had been less influenced by travel, formal education, and urban life. In West Virginia, for example, thirty of the 111 interviewees were in their seventies, and thirteen were in their eighties. When it conducted its interviews in the Atlantic states in the 1930s, the Linguistic Atlas found twenty items of vocabulary or grammar used predominantly in the Midland. In keeping with its interests in traditional vocabulary, most of these pertain to the household and farm life:

bawl (of a calf),
blinds 'roller shades',
green bean,
grist of corn 'load of corn',
hay mow 'barn loft',
hull 'to shell (beans or peas)',
lamp oil 'kerosene',
lead horse, 'left-hand horse of a team',
(arm)load 'armful',
(little) piece 'short distance',
poke 'paper bag',
saw buck 'saw horse',
skillet, 'frying pan',
snake feeder 'dragonfly',
sook 'call to cows',
spouting/spouts 'gutters',
sugar tree 'sugar maple',

(quarter) till (the hour),
want (to get) *off*, and
you'ns 'you (plural)'.³⁷

The Linguistic Atlas found six terms used predominantly in the South Midland:

clabber milk 'curdled sour milk',
fire board 'mantel',
jacket 'vest',
milk gap 'enclosure for milking cows',
ridy-horse 'see-saw', and
sugar orchard 'grove of sugar maples'.³⁸

North Midland terms included the following:

jag 'part-load of corn',
piece 'snack',
run 'small stream',
side meat 'pork from the side of a hog', and
smearcase 'cottage cheese'.³⁹

Terms concentrated in western Pennsylvania included these:

carbon oil 'kerosene',
closet 'outhouse',
cruds 'curdled milk',
doodle 'haycock', and *grinnie* 'chipmunk'.

Mapping terms can be fascinating, but it provides only one way to look at variations in speech. Maps of speech present simplified, two-dimensional snapshots of complex, dynamic processes, and they have limitations:

- 1) Speakers often know (if not use) multiple terms for the same thing; for example, in western Pennsylvania users of *grinnie* usually know *chipmunk*;
- 2) A speaker may use terms that have the same meaning in different situations and styles, such as when talking to strangers or workmates versus talking with family members or members of a close peer group;
- 3) There are normally social differences in usage in any geographical area, based on social standing, level of educational attainment, and so on;
- 4) All languages change constantly, and most individual elements do as well;
- 5) Many words and usages are in the process of diffusing geographically, moving along networks usually centered in urban areas or dispersing through media influences, regardless of whether their users move along with them. These qualifications do not nullify the findings of

geographically based research, but they do constrain the generalizations that can be made. In fact, the Linguistic Atlas was aware of these limitations and sought to take some of them into account.

Nonetheless, we can learn much about the history of American English, both for individual terms and for general patterns, from geographical research. Consider terms for a small stream. This is usually called a *branch* in the South and South Midland. This term, unknown in Britain, was documented early as John Smith's *General History of Virginia* (1624). Also found early in North Carolina and Georgia, it later spread into the South Midland as far as Kentucky, where it remains common. Its counterpart in the North Midland is *run*, traceable to Scotland and found throughout West Virginia, northern Virginia (note Bull Run of Civil War fame), Maryland, and most of Pennsylvania. The distribution of *run* suggests that it entered the colonies through the Chesapeake Bay. *Creek*, used throughout the South and Midland, came from England, where it originally referred to a tidal stream: in the Atlantic colonies it later spread inland to refer usually to a somewhat larger watercourse than a *branch* or a *run*. In the South Midland *creek* rhymes with *Greek*, but in the North Midland it rhymes with *brick*. Atlas surveys, in combination with other research, have shown how other terms have spread into the South Midland from the Lower South, such as *peckerwood* 'rural white person' and *redworm* 'earthworm'.

Many other small groups of synonymous vocabulary have distinctive geographical patterns, some of which conform to the areas outlined earlier; others display startling exceptions, showing that items may have quite different lives of their own. One example is the existence of three terms for a noisy mock wedding-night celebration, usually held at the home of the newlyweds: *belling* (chiefly in German settlement areas of western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan); *serenade* (chiefly in the Atlantic states, including eastern Appalachia); and *shivaree* (from the French *charivari*, found chiefly in western Appalachia and westward. The boundary between *serenade* and *shivaree* the latter two terms runs along the Tennessee-North Carolina border in a fashion unlike any other words yet researched.³⁴⁰

Survey Account II: *Dictionary of American Regional English*

Another essential resource for studying patterns of regional English in the U.S. is the five-volume *Dictionary of American Regional English (DARE)* a pre-eminent work of American lexicography and an unrivaled, permanent index to the country's diverse cultures and varieties of English.⁴¹ Like the *Oxford English Dictionary* and other historical dictionaries, *DARE* dates every citation, so in most cases the reader can obtain a capsule view of the occurrence of a word's forms and senses. *DARE* is set apart from other dictionaries by its meticulous banks of lengthy citations. The dictionary is equally an encyclopedia of the country's regional life, natural history, and much more. *DARE* is a product of raw material of many kinds, including written literature

(fiction, scientific reports, travel accounts, diaries, and so on), glossaries and wordlists compiled by linguists and other observers, and Linguistic Atlas data, among many other sources. Every citation in the dictionary is given a regional or sub-regional label (e.g., those from James Still's writings are given the label eKY, for eastern Kentucky). Two other features are especially noteworthy. For one, in the late 1960s the dictionary project surveyed over a thousand communities across the country, using a 2,000-item questionnaire, seeking terminology for all aspects of the country's life. These responses enabled mapping of thousands of terms, including many of those collected for the Linguistic Atlas. Using these 3 million responses, along with its other citations, *DARE* editors have assigned labels to many terms or their specific forms, variants, and senses. For purposes of this labeling, the Midland encompasses a territory stretching as far west as Missouri, and Appalachia includes all of West Virginia and parts of nine other states from central Pennsylvania to northern Alabama. *DARE* labels 389 items Appalachian, including *everwho* 'whoever', *bad to* 'having an undesirable tendency to', as in "he was bad to drink", and *baking powders*. Though it uses qualifiers like *chiefly*, *especially*, or *formerly* and bases the labels on twentieth-century evidence alone, *DARE* is a remarkable tool for exploring the English of the United States or that of its many regions, large and small. The dictionary labels and maps individual pieces of language; unlike the Linguistic Atlas, it does not seek to map broad regions. This emphasis takes nothing away from the many uses to which the dictionary can be put to study the regional diversity of American English and the historical development of countless words.

Such exploration is greatly facilitated by the indexes to *DARE* labels.⁴² These list 121 items labeled from Kentucky (e.g., *coffee sack* 'burlap bag', *hobby* 'small, hand-shaped corn cake', *hogback* 'independent political candidate', *stir-off* 'neighborhood party to make molasses'); 111 from North Carolina (e.g., *baseborn* 'illegitimate [of a child]', *boomer* 'diminutive red squirrel', *house plunder* 'house furniture', *sochan* 'an edible wild green'); forty-four from Tennessee (e.g., *dry-land fish* 'edible morel', *fee grabber* 'law-enforcement officer', *hunk* 'country bumpkin' and *johnny walkers* 'makeshift stilts') and 48 from West Virginia (e.g., *ackempucky* 'jelly-like food', *filth* 'underbrush, weeds', *jim around* 'do odd jobs', and *ribey* 'scrawny'). Such compilations confirm the fact that much of the country's English has been local or sub-regional in nature. Of the 389 items whose distribution is labeled Appalachians, 294 (75.6 percent) are further specified as sAppalachians, indicating their concentration in the southern half of the region. The samples above hardly begin to suggest the many ways to taste the fruits of a dictionary project now nearly complete after half a century in the making.

The comprehensive research conducted by the Linguistic Atlas and by *DARE* enables one to consider two general, related questions of historical interest: 1) How much of the vocabulary found in the Midland and Appalachia can be traced to other languages or to specific settlement

groups, parts of the British Isles, or elsewhere in Europe?; and 2) How much of it is new or “made in America” or even “made in Appalachia”? Despite the fact that for the United States, the English of Appalachia is most often cited as preserving older forms, commentary on its antecedents remained anecdotal—with no detailed attempt to determine its regional sources abroad (i.e., to test the Elizabethan and Scotch-Irish hypotheses)—before the 1980s.⁴³

With Pennsylvania’s population being one-third German-speaking at the time of the American Revolution, it is not surprising that most items labeled “Pennsylvania” by the Linguistic Atlas or *DARE* come from German. These include simple borrowings like *belsnickel* ‘Santa Claus’ and *ferhoodle* ‘to ruin, spoil’, as well as loan translations like *sawbuck*, *smearcase*, and possibly *snake feeder*. Other terms of German derivation include *panhas* ‘dish of meat scraps’, *snits* ‘quartered dried apples’ and *sweeny* ‘atrophy of a horse’s shoulder muscles’. Since English and German are related languages, it is not surprising that they have forms sharing the same basic meaning and thus that English-looking terms and constructions have been reinforced by German ones. Two of these are especially pertinent to Appalachia: *leave* ‘let’ (as in “leave him go”) and *want* + preposition (as *want in* ‘want to go/come in’), with an elliptical infinitive. Both of these usages are documented in Scotland and Ulster, so they and no doubt others have a blended ancestry.⁴⁴

Besides those derived from German, very few words identified as Appalachian have a historical derivation other than from the British Isles. Cherokee to place names (especially of rivers) in six states of southern Appalachia, but that language the source of only a handful of vocabulary, mostly for flora and fauna, in the English of western North Carolina, including *catoosa bass*, *cullowee* ‘an edible wild green’, *sochan* ‘an edible wild green’, and *talala bird* ‘a woodpecker’. Contrary to occasional popular belief, no evidence has been produced of a Celtic language ever being spoken in Appalachia. It is possible that some early Scotch-Irish settlers were bilingual, knowing either Irish or Scottish Gaelic, but this has yet to be confirmed. It is clear that the Scotch-Irish brought some words with them that originated from Celtic languages, such as *clabber*, but these are extremely few.⁴⁵ Many Scotch-Irish knew Scots, however, a close relative to English that is best known through the writings of Robert Burns. In the generation after the American Revolution, newspapers in western Pennsylvania featured poetry on local political topics written in Ulster Scots, especially the poems of David Bruce, who wrote under the name “The Scots-Irishman.”⁴⁶ As an identifiable language variety, Scots apparently survived the emigrant generation, but it is unclear to what extent it was a community language or merely a conscious poetic idiom.

Since the 1980s, researchers have compared Appalachian features with regional ones in twentieth-century Britain. Michael Ellis compared thirty-two vocabulary items from east

Tennessee to those from parts of England and found that eight corresponded to northern England and five to the English Midlands; all but one of the remaining terms showed no correspondence. Of seventy-six pronunciations compared, twenty-eight showed a greater similarity with southern England or the west Midlands and only four with northern England.⁴⁷ Although he found several specific correspondences (e.g., the Appalachian *waspers* ‘wasps’ to the English west Midlands), the overall pattern was thus mixed. Ellis demonstrated that Appalachian English has connections with more than one region of England. Edgar Schneider compared Appalachian vocabulary to both England and Scotland, using a modern-day glossary and the *English Dialect Dictionary*.⁴⁸ He found the strongest correlation with Yorkshire and Northumbria in northern England and secondarily with Lincolnshire and the central and west Midlands, concluding that “the North of England and Scotland are the most important donor varieties for the Appalachian vocabulary.”⁴⁹

These scholars have demonstrated that, for vocabulary and pronunciation (assuming little change in British regional speech since the eighteenth century), we must expand the varieties of English contributing to the English of Appalachia to include those of the north and west of England. Many of these items could have come from such regions either directly or indirectly through Ulster. The consensus of research to date is that in pronunciation the English of Appalachia reflects primarily a heritage from England. Further study will undoubtedly continue to find that many traditional pronunciations in Appalachia were once widely current in eighteenth-century England, including among educated speakers (e.g., *join* pronounced as *jine*, *oblige* as *obleege*). At the same time few items or pronunciation traceable to Scotland or Ulster will likely be found; ones identified by the Linguistic Atlas in Pennsylvania (e.g., *drouth* ‘drought’, rhyming with *tooth*) do not occur farther south). The Appalachian vowel system is, like elsewhere in America, based on that of Southern England, with the same number and types of distinctions between vowels, except for a few minor details. However different in rhythm and intonation the speech of early Scotch-Irish settlers might have been (and these characteristics made them clearly identifiable in Pennsylvania), like others they and their descendants adopted their vowels from neighbors of English ancestry.

Emigrants from Ulster found themselves in all mainland colonies, with significant numbers landing at Chesapeake ports and at, as it was then called, Charles Town, South Carolina. However, by far the largest proportion debarked at Delaware Valley ports and spread inland.⁵⁰ Many ultimately settled in parts of Appalachia, and a great many more of their children and grandchildren did so. By many accounts, these descendants were the predominant white settlers in the backcountry from central Pennsylvania south to Georgia after about 1730.

When it comes to connections with the Old World, the Scotch-Irish element is the strongest, for grammar and, to some extent, for vocabulary. Many vocabulary items were cited

earlier. Six of the twenty items the Linguistic Atlas identified as Midland are traceable at least in part to Ulster: *hull, piece, poke, (quarter) till, want (to get) off, and you'ns*.⁵¹ The reasons for this significant proportion may be debated, but the generalization is soundly based on a wealth of empirical evidence. Following are some features of traditional English in Appalachia having a primarily Scotch-Irish ancestry:

- 1) Personal pronoun *hit* 'it'.
- 2) Addition of *all* after pronouns to indicate inclusion (*what all, who all, and so on*).
- 3) Addition of suffix *-s* to verbs (and use of linking verb *is*) with plural noun subjects (but not with pronoun subjects): "people *knows*" versus "they *know*"; "people *is*" versus "they *are*."
- 4) Use of *they* 'there' to introduce clauses: "They's a problem with Bessie."
- 5) Formation of nouns and pronouns with the addition of 'un (from *one*), producing *young'un, big'un, you'uns, and so on*. The last term has become almost a trademark of western Pennsylvania speech in recent years, especially in Pittsburgh, where it is usually spelled *yinz* or *yunz*. It remains in use farther south, as in east Tennessee, where it competes with *you all* and *y'all*. The first known use of *you'uns* dates from 1810, when Margaret Van Horn Dwight wrote from Ohio: "Youns is a word I have heard used several times, but what it means I don't know, they use it so strangely,"
- 6) Use of *need*, followed by a verb past participle, as in "That boy needs *taught* a lesson."⁵²
- 7) Use of subordinate conjunction *whenever* 'at the time that', as in "*Whenever* I was young, people didn't do that."
- 8) Use of *all the* 'the only', as in "That was all the way we could go to school."

Some well-known features of grammar in Appalachia have little if any trace of a Scotch-Irish heritage. The following ones come ultimately from England.⁵³

- 1) Use of *a-* as a prefix on verb present participles: *a-goin', a-comin'*.
- 2) Formation of possessive pronouns with the suffix *-n*: *hern, hisn, yourn* (as in 'a book of *yourn*').
- 3) Use of verbs whose principal parts are made regular by adding *-ed*: *blowed, drawed, heared, seed, and so on*.
- 4) Use of personal dative pronouns, as in "I bought *me* a dog."

As already shown, every linguistic feature has a life of its own. We can never presume that their geographical distribution corresponds with that of any another, whether on the basis of ancestry or otherwise. However, if one were to ask where the Scotch-Irish influence is strongest today, a very good candidate would be western Pennsylvania. A booklet on Pittsburgh speech released some years ago included the following terms of Scotch-Irish ancestry: *anymore* 'nowadays', *hap*

'quilt', *leave* 'let', *lenth* 'length', *neby* 'nosey', *need* (followed by a past participle), *redd up* 'tidy up', *slippy* 'slippery', *wait on* 'wait for', *want* plus a preposition, and *yunz* 'you (plural)'.⁵⁴

It may seem that we have left the Elizabethan hypothesis well behind, and in effect this is true. Researchers scrutinizing the English of Appalachia have had difficulty confirming past claims by amateur observers who often lacked historical dictionaries to consult. The 1899 statement by William Goodell Frost cited earlier identifies seven terms he claimed were centuries old, but four of these were first cited by the *Oxford English Dictionary* in only the nineteenth century and thus can hardly be considered very old, much less Elizabethan.

Answering the question of how much of the distinctive English of Appalachia is new (versus the proportion that can be traced to other languages and to various settlement groups) is quite easy. Of the sixteen terms listed earlier that *DARE* labels as being from Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia (four from each state), only one (*baseborn*) is not an Americanism. A scan of the 389 terms *DARE* labels Appalachian finds that the overwhelming majority are obviously modern. Explaining why and how terms become regional, even in the age of unprecedented movement of people and contact with national varieties of English, is beyond the scope of this essay. That task awaits future investigators, for whom the Linguistic Atlas, *DARE*, and other resources have laid an immense baseline. Suffice it to say that most of the distinctive vocabulary in Appalachia is recently minted, showing the creativity of modern American culture and that of the people Appalachia as well.

The Linguistic Atlas and *DARE* have added immensely to our understanding of American English, but for all their merit, they lack time depth period. Speakers surveyed by the Linguistic Atlas, though often elderly, were not born before about 1850, and for Appalachia *DARE* had few pre-1875 works to consult other than stories by backwoods humorists such as George Washington Harris, cited earlier.⁵⁵ Reconstructing the roots of English in Appalachia is an arduous, long-term undertaking made very difficult by the dearth of documents written by settlers that provide evidence of their speech patterns. This limitation does not compromise existing conclusions so much as it reminds researchers to keep seeking early evidence. For purpose of illustration, we can consider two substantial sources produced by settlers that exemplify usages from two or more centuries ago. One is *Documentary History of Dunmore's War 1774*, a collection of letters pertaining to the defense of settlements along the Holston and Clinch Rivers, in what is now southwestern Virginia and southern West Virginia, against the Shawnee and Cherokee, indigenous tribes whose lands were being entered or threatened.⁵⁶ Therein are found the following items:

a-: "He was informed, before he left Holston, that there was 2 or 3 Indians there a hunting" (41). [*DARE* label: throughout the U.S. but especially frequent Midland, Southwest, less frequent

South, New England]; inherited from England.

against ‘by the time that’: “I have requested of Capt. Crockett & Doack one half of their Men to meet against next Tuesday or sooner at the Town House” (58). [*DARE* label: chiefly Midland]; from Scotland and Ulster.

is (verb, used with a plural subject): “Please give me instructions how the Forts is to be provided with Provisions especially Flour” (136). [*DARE* label: chiefly South, South Midland]; from Scotland and Ulster. By the same token, the suffix *-s* occurs on a verb with a plural subject: “These men tells me they are fresh Signs of Indians Seen Every Morning” (99).

cove (noun): “This day I leave this neighborhood to go towards the Rye Coves” (3). [*DARE* label: especially South Midland]. *Cove* originally referred to an inlet of the sea in England and in early America, but by the late eighteenth century it applied to an inland topographical feature.

liked to ‘nearly’: “The Indians had like to done Andersons Job, having struck into the stockade a few Inches from his Head” (244). [*DARE* label: chiefly South, South Midland]; inherited from England.

shoot (noun) ‘shot’: “I think every Man have ½ doz shoots a piece” (227). [*DARE* label: especially South Midland]; inherited from England.

they ‘there’: “These men tells me they are fresh Signs of Indians Seen Every Morning about the plantation” (99). [*DARE* label: scattered, but chiefly South, South Midland]; inherited from Scotland and Ulster.

There is also an interesting term found in Joseph Doddridge’s *Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars*, a recollection of life in late eighteenth-century northwestern Virginia:⁵⁷

infare ‘wedding dinner, usually at the home of the groom’s parents’: “On returning for the infare, the order of procession and the race for black Betty was the same as before. The feasting and dancing often lasted several days, at the end of which the whole company was so exhausted with loss of sleep that several days’ rest was requisite to fit them to return to their ordinary labors” (104). [*DARE* label: chiefly South, South Midland]; inherited from Scotland and Ulster.

This chapter has shown that detailing the history of English in Appalachia is a complex but fascinating activity. The constancy of language change means that we cannot expect to find an

easy or straightforward answer to the questions of its origins. Nor is there one ideal place or area that for speech best represents the region as a whole. Appalachia is a region settled at different periods in different places under different circumstances, and this more than anything else is the key to understanding the designation Appalachian *Englishes*.

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1. This observation is true however the region is defined—whether one accepts the official thirteen-state Appalachia of the Appalachian Regional Commission or the smaller compass adopted in this book.
2. Hans Kurath, *Word Geography of the Eastern United States* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1949), 27.
3. The latter date coincides with the removal of the Cherokee to Indian Territory in 1838.
4. Ted Ledford, “Colonial Survivals in Appalachian Speech,” in Rudy Abramson and Jean Haskell, eds., *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006).
5. Here “Ulster” refers to the historical nine-county province of Ireland, not the modern-day province of Northern Ireland. The term *Scotch-Irish* is often misunderstood, sometimes debated, and occasionally controversial. For a summary of pertinent issues, see Michael Montgomery, “*Scotch-Irish or Scots-Irish: What's in the Name?*” *Tennessee Ancestors* 20 (2004): 143-50. For perhaps the best survey of these emigrants, see Kenneth W. Keller, “What is Distinctive about the Scotch-Irish?” in Robert D. Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers: Settlement, Society, and Development in the Preindustrial Era* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 67-86. Early emigrants from the north of Ireland have frequently but somewhat erroneously been collectively called “Ulster Scots,” but they were actually a more diverse stream that included Ulster English and Ulster Irish. Accordingly, they must have brought mixed varieties of English with them. Estimates of their numbers before the American Revolution range from 50,000 to 500,000. An authoritative estimate is at least 150,000, which was the collective judgment of a seven-member team of American experts assembled by the Ulster-American Folk Park in 2004 to advise it on interpreting the recreated American landscape at the open-air museum in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland.
6. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West*, vol. 1 (New York: Putnam, 1889); Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities of the Colonial South* (New York: Atheneum, 1963); David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
7. Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Old West,” in *The Frontier in American History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press 1986), 67-125.
8. “Isolation” is a phenomenon all too broadly and too loosely and mistakenly perceived by

outsiders, and it consists of factors that have only begun to be teased apart. See Michael Montgomery, "Isolation as a Linguistic Construct," *Southern Journal of Linguistics* 1 (2000): 25-36; Michael Montgomery, "The Idea of Appalachian Isolation," *Appalachian Heritage* 28, no. 2 (2000): 20-31.

9. For example, see "Italians," in *The West Virginia Encyclopedia* (Charleston: West Virginia Humanities Council, 2006), 370-71.

10. The best known example of this is Walt Wolfram and Donna Christian, *Appalachian Speech* (Arlington: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1976), based on two counties in southeastern West Virginia. In fairness, the present author must acknowledge that he did this himself in his doctoral dissertation: Michael Montgomery, "A Discourse Analysis of Expository Appalachian English" (PhD diss., University of Florida, 1979), based on one county in east Tennessee.

11. John C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1921), xxi.

12. Anne Royall, *Sketch of History, Life, and Manners in the United States* (New Haven, CT: Ann Royall, 1826), 58.

13. George Washington Harris, *Sut Lovingood: Yarns Spun by a "nat'ral Born Durn'd Fool," Warped and Wove for Public Wear* (New York: Fitzgerald, 1867), 49.

14. M. Thomas Inge, "The Appalachian Backgrounds of Billy de Beck's Snuffy Smith," *Appalachian Journal* 4 (1977): 120-32.

15. William T. Thom, "Some Parallelisms between Shakespeare's English and the Negro-English of the U.S.," *Shakespeareana* 1 (1883): 129-35; Pickering, John, "Memoir on the present state of the English language in the United States of America, with a vocabulary, containing various words and phrases which have been supposed to be peculiar to this country." *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 3, no. (1815): 439-536.

16. Calvin S. Brown, "Dialectal Survivals in Tennessee," *Modern Language Notes* 4 (1889): 205-9.

17. William Goodell Frost, "Our Contemporary Ancestors," *Atlantic Monthly* 83 (1899): 313.

18. Olive Dame Campbell and Cecil J. Sharp, 1917. *English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians, Comprising 122 Songs and Ballads, and 323 Tunes* (New York and London: Putnam's; Cecil J. Sharp and Maud Karpeles. *Eighty English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968).

19. John J. Duncan, Jr., "Letter from East Tennessee," *Chronicles* 28, no. 1 (2004), 44.

20. Josiah H. Combs, "Old, Early and Elizabethan English in the Southern Mountains," *Dialect Notes* 4 (1916): 283-97; Josiah H. Combs, "The Language of the Southern Highlander," *Publication of the Modern Language Association* 46 (1931): 1302-22.

21. Combs, "Old, Early, and Elizabethan English," 283.

22. Josiah H. Combs, *The Kentucky Highlander from a Native Mountaineer's Viewpoint*, (Lexington, KY: Richardson, 1913).
23. Sylvester Primer, "Dialectical studies in West Virginia," *Publication of the Modern Language Society* 6, no. (1891): 165.
24. Campbell, 50-71.
25. The degree of overestimation of English ancestry remains a controversial, if not unresolvable issue. For further discussion, see American Council of Learned Societies, *Report of Committee on Linguistic and National Stocks in the Population of the United States*, annual report, vol. 1, (American Historical Association, 1931); Thomas L. Purvis, "The European Ancestry of the United States Population, 1790," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser. 41 (1984): 85-101.
26. Horace Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders* (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 280.
27. Combs, "Old, Early and Elizabethan English," 296.
28. Cratis D. Williams, "Appalachian Speech," *North Carolina Historical Review* 55 (1978): 174.
29. John Braidwood, *The Ulster Dialect Lexicon* (Belfast: Queen's University of Belfast, 1969), 31-32.
30. Alan Crozier, "The Scotch-Irish Influence on American English," *American Speech* 59 (1984): 310-31.
31. Michael Montgomery, *From Ulster to America: The Scotch-Irish Heritage of American English* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2006).
32. Kurath, *Word Geography of the Eastern United States*; Hans Kurath and Raven I. McDavid Jr., *Pronunciation of English in the Atlantic States* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961); Hans Kurath et al., *Handbook of the Linguistic Atlas of New England* (Providence, RI: Brown University, 1939); William A. Kretschmar et al., *Handbook of the Linguistic Atlas of the Middle and South Atlantic States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
33. Kurath, *Word Geography of the Eastern United States*, 1.
34. John F. Rooney Jr., Wilbur Zelinsky, and Dean R. Louder, *This Remarkable Continent: An Atlas of United States and Canada Society and Culture* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1982); Wilbur Zelinsky, *The Cultural Geography of the United States* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973)..
35. Rooney, Louder, and Zelinsky, *This Remarkable Continent*, 244.
36. Kurath, *Word Geography of the Eastern United States*, 3-4.
37. *Ibid.*, 28.
38. *Ibid.*, 29.
39. *Ibid.*, 31.
40. Alva L. Davis and Raven I. McDavid, Jr., "'Shivaree': An Example of Cultural Diffusion,"

American Speech 24 (1949): 249-55.

41. Frederic G. Cassidy and Joan Houston Hall, eds., *Dictionary of American Regional English*, 5 volumes (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985-2012). A sixth volume of the dictionary that includes indexes, summaries, and other ancillary materials is in press, and an electronic edition of the entire dictionary is also planned for the near future.

42. A master list of terms can be found at <http://dare.wisc.edu/sites/dare.wisc.edu/files/DAREindex.htm#Kentucky>. They are grouped according to four hundred different regional labels (Acadian to Wyoming), social labels (abusive to young), and language of origin (Abnaki to Yupik).

43. Michael E. Ellis, "The Relationship of Appalachian English with the British Regional Dialects" (MA thesis, East Tennessee State University, 1984); Michael E. Ellis, "On the Use of Dialect as Evidence: Albion's Seed in Appalachia," *Appalachian Journal* 19 (1992): 278-97; Edgar W. Schneider, "Appalachian Vocabulary: Its Character, Sources, and Distinctiveness," in *Verhandlungen des Internationalen Dialektologenkongresses Bamberg 1990 Band 3*, ed. Wolfgang Viereck (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1994), 498-512; Michael Montgomery, "Exploring the Roots of Appalachian English," *English World-Wide* 10 (1989): 227-78.

44. R. Whitney Tucker, "Linguistic Substrata in Pennsylvania and Elsewhere," *Language* 10 (1934): 1-4; Michael Adams, "Lexical Doppelgängers," *Journal of English Linguistics* 28 (2000), 295-310.

45. Michael Montgomery, "The Celtic Element in American English," *Celtic Englishes II*, ed. Hildegard Tristram (Heidelberg: Winter, 2000), 231-64; Montgomery, *From Ulster to America*.

46. Claude M. Newlin, "Dialects on the Western Pennsylvania Frontier," *American Speech* 4 (1928): 104-10; Michael Montgomery, "The Problem of Persistence: Ulster-Scot-American Missing Links," *Journal of Scotch-Irish Studies* 1.1 (2000): 105-19.

47. Ellis, "Relationship of Appalachian English with British Regional Dialects," 41, 42.

48. Paul M. Fink, *Bits of Mountain Speech* (Boone: Appalachian Consortium, 1974); Joseph Wright, ed., *English Dialect Dictionary*, 6 vols. (London: Frowde, 1898-1905).

49. Schneider, "Appalachian Vocabulary," 509.

50. James G. Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962); R. J. Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718-1775* (London: Routledge, 1966; reprint, Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1987); Warren R. Hofstra, ed., *Ulster to America: The Scots-Irish Migration Experience, 1680-1830* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2011); Kerby A. Miller et al., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Richard K. MacMaster, *Scotch-Irish Merchants in Colonial America* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2010).

51. Some of these correspondences have been identified thanks only to such recent publications as James Fenton, *The Hamely Tongue: A Personal Record of Ulster-Scots in County Antrim*, 3rd ed. (Belfast: Ullans Press, 2006) and Caroline Macafee, ed., *A Concise Ulster Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

52. Margaret Van Horn Dwight, *Journey to Ohio in 1810*, cited in *A Dictionary of Americanisms on Historical Principles*, ed. Mitford M. Mathews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

53. Michael Montgomery, "The Scotch-Irish Element in Appalachian English: How Broad? How Deep?," in H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood, eds., *Ulster and North America: Transatlantic Perspectives on the Scotch-Irish* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press 1997), 189-212.

54. Sam McCool, *Pittsburghese: How to Speak like a Pittsburgher* (Pittsburgh: Goodwill Industries, 1982).

55. This problem is a general one. Early in the nineteenth century, commentary and short glossaries began to appear. Many of these are very usefully collected in Mitford M. Mathews, ed. *The Beginnings of American English: Essays and Comments*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931).

56. Reuben Gold Thwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg, eds., *Documentary History of Dunmore's War 1774* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1905).

57. Joseph Doddridge, *Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia & Pennsylvania: from the Year 1763 until the Year 1783 Inclusive; Together with a View, of the State of Society and Manners of the First Settlers of the Western Country* Pittsburgh: Ritenour and Lindsey, 1824[1912]).

Scottish English, Irish English, German, Czech, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Yiddish and other languages are what gave us what it is today. The famous W PA pronunciation of "dahntahn" for "downtown", for example, is thought to be of Slavic origin. In much the same way as isolated Appalachian settlers preserved a dialect that was in some way closer to that of their ancestors, their ballads were also well preserved compared to the British tradition. It should be noted that these people were primarily from the English/Scottish border country or the Ulster descendants of border folk, so the music is more Anglo-Scottish than Irish/Celtic. This description of Appalachian speech, derived from one part of the final report of a research project on Appalachian Dialects, is intended as a reference work for educators, particularly reading specialists, English teachers, language arts specialists, and speech pathologists. Chapters deal with the following main topics: (1) a sociolinguistic framework for the study of Appalachian English; (2) phonological aspects of Appalachian speech; (3) grammatical features of Appalachian speech; and (4) educational implications of dialect diversity, with particular reference to language attitudes, testing, and education in Appalachia. Quite the same Wikipedia. Just better.

Appalachian English. The Appalachians: The Scotch-Irish / Scots-Irish. Growing Up In Appalachia: Living in the Appalachian Mountains. After the war, northern parts of Appalachia experienced an economic boom, while economies in the southern parts of the region stagnated, especially as Southern Democrats regained control of their respective state legislatures at the end of Reconstruction. [19] Pittsburgh as well as Knoxville grew into major industrial centers, especially regarding iron and steel production. By 1900, the Chattanooga area and north Georgia and northern Alabama had experienced similar changes due to manufacturing booms in Atlanta and Birmingham at the edge of the Appalachian region. Appalachian English is American English native to the Appalachian mountain region of the Eastern United States. Historically, the term "Appalachian dialect" refers to a local English variety of southern Appalachia, also known as Smoky Mountain English or Southern Mountain English in American linguistics. This variety is both influential upon and influenced by the Southern U.S. regional dialect, which has become predominant in central and southern Appalachia today, while a Western Pennsylvania regional dialect remains distinct. PDF | The varieties of English in the United States' Appalachian region have undergone changes throughout the 20th century. This paper examines a change in the English of Appalachia. Find, read and cite all the research you need on ResearchGate. history of the English language, and Erin Simmons and Ashley King for insightful feedback. © 2011. John Benjamins Publishing Company. Our study focuses on this variable in the English of Appalachia. This variable is usually described as consisting of a two-way opposition between these and those, but for some Appalachian speakers, there is a third variant in the paradigm, them.