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GERMAN LOANWORDS IN ENGLISH

n Historical Dictionary

GERMAN LOANWORDS IN ENGLISH

AN HISTORICAL DICTIONARY

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A true disciple of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing

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German loanwords in English: An historical dictionary is the largest and most up-to-date collection of English words and multiword lexical units borrowed from the German, consisting of over 6,000 items. All major dictionaries in English were surveyed, including the second edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* as well as new-words collections, college dictionaries, and specialized dictionaries.

Each dictionary entry gives the first recorded date of the German loan in English, the semantic field, variant forms, etymology, the first recorded date of the German etymon, a definition of the English word, a listing of derivative forms, and often grammatical comment. The sources for each entry are noted along with a notation giving the approximate degree of assimilation in English. All the included terms are separately listed by semantic field and chronologically grouped within fifty-year periods, according to their first recorded occurrence in English.

A substantial part of the book is devoted to nontechnical, discursive essays, which analyze the data and provide considerable information not found in the dictionary entries. The first essay, chiefly by Pfeffer, treats the chronological sequencing of German loans in English, their relationship to historical events and persons, and their semantic fields. The second essay, chiefly by Cannon, deals with the linguistic phenomena, processes, and concepts involved.

GERMAN LOANWORDS IN ENGLISH

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS BOOK

DICTIONARIES AND OTHER SOURCES

AH	American Heritage	**O-1**	OED (not in 2nd ed.)
Algeo	Algeo Dictionary	**O-1933**	OED Supplement (1933)
B	Third Barnhart	**O-S**	OED 4-vol. Supplement
BDC	Barnhart Dictionary Companion	**R**	Random House 2nd ed.
DA	Dictionary of Americanisms	**Sc**	Schönfelder
DAE	Dictionary of American English	**12**	12,000 Words
L1	Longman Register 1	**W**	Webster's Third
L2	Longman Register 2	**W2**	Webster's Second
Longman	Longman Dictionary	**W9**	Webster's Ninth New Collegiate
Mort	Longman Guardian	**WNW**	Webster's New World
O	OED	**WN20**	Webster's 20th Century

OTHERS

a.	adjective(s)	**Brit.**	British
abbr.	abbreviation	**c.**	circa
ad.	adaptation	**cap.**	capital(ized)
adj.	adjectival	**Chem.**	Chemistry
Admin.	Administration	**Chin**	Chinese
adv.	adverb	**colloq.**	colloquial
Aeron.	Aeronautics	**comb.**	combining
Agric.	Agriculture	**Crystal.**	Crystallography
AmE	American English	**d.**	died
Anat.	Anatomy	**Dan**	Danish
Anthrop.	Anthropology	**deriv.**	derivative
Ar	Arabic	**dial.**	dialectal
Archit.	Architecture	**dim.**	diminutive
attrib.	attributive	**Du**	Dutch
b.	born	**E**	English
Biochem.	Biochemistry	**Econ.**	Economics
Biol.	Biology	**Ed.**	Education
Bot.	Botany	**erron.**	erroneous

esp.	especially
etc.	et cetera
fem.	feminine
fig.	figurative
Fr	French
freq.	frequentative
G	German
gen.	genitive
Geogr.	Geography
Geol.	Geology
Gk	Greek
Gmc	Germanic
Go	Gothic
Heb	Hebrew
Hung	Hungarian
Icel	Icelandic
Ichthy.	Ichthyology
imper.	imperative
interj.	interjection
irreg.	irregular
ISV	International Scientific Vocabulary
It	Italian
L	Latin
LGk	Late Greek
Ling.	Linguistics
lit.	literally
Lit.	Literature
LG	Low German
LL	Late Latin
masc.	masculine
Math.	Mathematics
Med.	Medicine
Metall.	Metallurgy
Meteor.	Meteorology
ML	Medieval Latin
MFr	Middle French
MHG	Middle High German
Mil.	Military
Mineral.	Mineralogy
MLG	Middle Low German
Mod.	Modern
Myth.	Mythology
n.	noun
Nat. Sci.	Natural Science
NHG	New High German
NL	Modern Latin
nom.	nominative
Norw	Norwegian
obs.	obsolete
OE	Old English
OFr	Old French
OHG	Old High German
ON	Old Norse
OPol	Old Polish
OProv	Old Provençal
orig.	originally
Ornith.	Ornithology
ORuss	Old Russian
PaG	Pennsylvania German
Paleon.	Paleontology
part.	participle
Path.	Pathology
Per	Persian
Pg	Portuguese
Pharm.	Pharmacy
Philos.	Philosophy
Physiol.	Physiology
pl.	plural
Pol	Polish
poss.	possibly
prob.	probably
Psych.	Psychology, Psychiatry
Russ	Russian
Serb	Serbian
short.	shortening, shortened
sing.	singular
Skt	Sanskrit
Sociol.	Sociology
Sp	Spanish
specif.	specific(ally)
Sw	Swedish
Tech.	Technology
Theol.	Theology
transf.	transferred
transl.	translation, translated
ult.	ultimately
usu.	usually
v.	verb
var.	variant
Zool.	Zoology

SEMANTIC FIELD LABELS USED IN THIS BOOK

Admin.	Administration
Aeron.	Aeronautics
Agric.	Agriculture
Anat.	Anatomy
Anthrop.	Anthropology
Apparel	
Archaeology	
Archit.	Architecture
Art	
Astronomy	Astronomy, Astrology
Beverages	
Biochem.	Biochemistry
Biol.	Biology
Bot.	Botany
Chem.	Chemistry
Commerce	
Crystal.	Crystallography
Currency	
Dance	
Ecology	
Econ.	Economics
Ed.	Education
Entomology	
Ethnology	
Food	
Forestry	
Furniture	
Games	
Geogr.	Geography
Geol.	Geology
History	
Ichthy.	Ichthyology
Immunology	
Industry	
Law	
Ling.	Linguistics
Lit.	Literature
Math.	Mathematics
Med.	Medicine
Metall.	Metallurgy
Meteor.	Meteorology
Mil.	Military
Mineral.	Mineralogy
Mining	
Music	
Myth.	Mythology
Optics	
Ornith.	Ornithology
Paleon.	Paleontology
Path.	Pathology
Pharm.	Pharmacology
Philos.	Philosophy
Physics	
Physiol.	Physiology
Politics	Politics
Pottery	
Printing	
Psych.	Psychology, Psychiatry
Sociol.	Sociology
Sports	
Tech.	Technology
Textiles	
Theater	
Theol.	Theol.
Trades	
Transportation	
Travel	
Zool.	Zoology

INTRODUCTION

UNTIL THE PUBLICATION OF PFEFFER'S *Deutsches Sprachgut im Wortschatz der Amerikaner und Engländer* (1987), book-length treatments concerning the impact of German on the English vocabulary concluded that German was a small and quantitatively minor source. The borrowings were said to be comparatively few, and the majority of these were characterized as technical items, especially in chemistry and mineralogy, which the ordinary speaker or reader of English would not encounter.

The great etymologist Walter Skeat had much to do with this still rather prevalent assessment. He held that the German language was linguistically "the furthest removed from English [by comparison with major sources like Latin, Greek, French, and Italian], and the one from which fewest words are directly borrowed, though there is a very popular general notion that the contrary is the case." Although millions of native German speakers settled in America long ago and have been in constant linguistic intercourse with native English speakers there, Skeat added that "The number of words in English that are borrowed directly from German is quite insignificant, and (what is more) they are nearly all of late introduction." He listed only thirty-six items directly borrowed from German (Skeat 1910: xxiii, 764). Mary Serjeantson's *A History of Foreign Words in English* (1935) proceeded to document seventy-seven items.

C. T. Carr's *The German Influence on the English Vocabulary* (1934) somewhat corrected Skeat by collecting 820 items that English had taken from German, but he noted that some were obsolete and that many others were of a scientific nature. Finding only 420 of the 820 in C. T. Onions's *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* (1933), Carr concluded that about half of these were technical, so that the influence of German on the ordinary English vocabulary was "not very considerable" and consisted of no more than 200 words (Carr 1934: 88–9).

Also, one of the best current histories, Thomas Pyles and John Algeo's *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (3rd ed., 1982: 309), continued the belief that "High German has had comparatively little impact on English," and devoted to German little more than one page in a twenty-five-page chapter on borrowings into English.

The appearance of Pfeffer's 1987 collection of over 3,000 German borrowings in American and British English now called for a striking revision of past impressions. Successive book-length studies of particular language-sources have required historians of the English language to strengthen and widen their descriptions of the debt to Spanish (Bentley 1932), Dutch (Bense 1939), Greek and Latin (Brown 1942, 1946), Indic and Dravidian languages (Rao 1954), Cantonese (Chan and Kwok 1985), and Yiddish (Steinmetz 1986), among other major studies of English borrowings.

Of extensive studies that included mutual borrowings, Frazer Mackenzie's French-English book *Les relations de l'Angleterre et de la France d'après le vocabulaire* (1939) and T. E. Hope's French-Italian analysis *Lexical Borrowing in the Romance Languages* (1971) have suggested useful approaches in the preparation of the present book.

In his *Deutsches Sprachgut* (1987) Pfeffer underlined the fact that the then-impending publication of the fourth (last) volume of Burchfield's *A Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary* plus his own continuing canvass of more specialized dictionaries in music, philosophy, medicine, and the like would probably disclose new borrowings and necessitate the publication of a supplement to his own book. By 1989 he had collected some 450 additional items. Moreover, new-word dictionaries by the Barnharts, an additional five-year Addenda Section in the reprints of *Webster's Third* (1961), the serial *Barnhart Dictionary Companion* (1982–), and the impending publication of a second edition of the *OED* promised many more.

Cannon was meanwhile pursuing a series of studies of borrowings into English that for the first time was utilizing electronic retrieval of items in the *OED* by means of searches programmed to ferret out entries identified as deriving from certain foreign languages. From this came accounts of English borrowings from Japanese (1981, 1984), Chinese (1988), Malay (1992), and a book-length work on borrowings from Arabic (1994). Cannon's approach held out promise for additional increments to Pfeffer's collection.

Correspondence between Pfeffer and Cannon soon made it clear that a completely new book on German loanwords ought to be the goal and that a collaborative approach would enhance its advent. As a book about English borrowings ought to be easily accessible to students of that language, it was decided that English would be the medium.

As *Webster's Third* does not permit electronic access, it was subjected to an additional conventional search with rewarding results. Victoria Neufeldt generously made electronic searches of the corpus of the 1988 edition of her *Webster's New World Dictionary of American English,* as did Walter C. Daugherty and Lawrence C. Peterson of the Computer Science Department of Texas A&M University for German items in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (1983). Both desk dictionaries surprisingly yielded items not identified elsewhere. R. W. Burchfield, who had kept informal lists of certain borrowings as he compiled his huge *Supplement,* obligingly made these available to the co-authors. His succeeding co-editors (Edmund Weiner and John Simpson) and the *New Oxford English Dictionary* department provided other valuable help. Of greatest assistance in collecting additions to the original corpus have been Frank Tompa and the University of Waterloo Centre for the New Oxford Dictionary, whose on-line access to the complete second edition of the *OED* turned up many items that otherwise might never have been found by the co-authors of this collection, particularly since the CD-ROM retrieves items only from the original edition of the *OED.* Further, individual scrutiny of the fine print of the twenty volumes uncovered other unidentified items, as did work on our Historical Overview section. The result was a near-doubling of Pfeffer's original corpus. Indeed, three items were discovered too late for inclusion–*GDR* (Random House) and *S.D.* and *word-hero,* both in the *OED.* And the high frequency of 680 items was demonstrated by their inclusion in the new *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (10th ed., 1993).

Aside from the expanded coverage and the medium of English, other major changes were agreed upon. The analysis of the materials would take advantage of new sociolinguistic and lexicographic findings, so that scholars in those areas, who may not be particularly interested

in English and German per se, might find some data of value. The definitions were systematically revised to reflect recent findings in chemistry, biology, botany, mineralogy, etc; and the co-authors decided to address the common criticism of studies of borrowing in general by positing a degree of naturalization for each of the items included.

At least as important as assembling a complete corpus was the need to make its contents and implications available to a larger readership. For example, in concentrating on the dictionary portion, Pfeffer had limited himself to only ten pages of chronological overview of German borrowings from 1500 to post-1945. Of course, chemists and geologists especially are generally aware of the German contributions to their disciplines. But the co-authors agreed that an extensive chronological overview of each semantic field, represented by the borrowings and highlighted by individual histories, would deepen and broaden their understanding and that of other readers of the richness of the German contributions to these disciplines.[1]

The co-authors also decided that the entries would include etymologies and other data that would shed light on relevant disciplines and the phenomena of borrowing, while still advancing overall knowledge of general and historical linguistics, and that an overview of these aspects would introduce the dictionary. Thus a substantial portion of the book is devoted to an Historical Overview by Semantic Fields that Pfeffer prepared, and a Linguistic Overview that Cannon prepared. The first of these essays treats the chronological sequencing of the German loans in English, their historical relationship to events and persons, and their semantic distribution.

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW BY SEMANTIC FIELD

Contrary to previously held views, nine of the 5,380 loanwords in the dictionary proper antedate 1501. The oldest of them to appear in English print is *snorkle*. Its first date of record is 1346, and its origin is to be found in the language of German mysticism. The most recent of the borrowings is *wallpecker*. It was reduced to print in English in 1990; it has its basis in the events accompanying the reunification of Germany in 1989.

Between 1501 and 1750, German loans enriched the English vocabulary at a moderate yet consistent pace. Averaging over one item per year during the two and one-half centuries, they accounted by 1750 for nearly 280 of the borrowings that now make up the store of German loanwords in the British and American lexicon. Some 200 of these early transfers range in somewhat large numbers over ten semantic fields, from theology to currency and some aspects of daily life. The remainder come in ever smaller numbers under the headings of eighteen special areas, extending from chemistry to art.

However, these 280 loans represent but a trickle compared to the near-flood of borrowings from German that was to follow. During the next five decades, from 1751 to 1800, the transfer rate of Germanisms or German loans rose from an average of over one to over two per year. It increased to more than five from 1801 to 1850. And it reached its apex in the following

[1]See for example Louis Deroy's monumental *L'imprunt linguistique* (1981) and the best chapters in Fraser Mackenzie's *Les relations de l'Angleterre et de la France d'après le vocabulaire* (1939), Uriel Weinrich's *Languages in Contact* (1953), Einar Haugen's *The Norwegian Language in America* (1969), T. E. Hope's *Lexical Borrowings in the Romance Languages* (1971), and other such studies.

fifty years, with an average of thirty-five attested German loanwords in English per annum. The next five decades, beginning with 1901, witnessed a small decline to about thirty-one each twelve months, despite the upheavals of World War I. World War II drastically reduced the rate of transfer to nearly four a year, barely greater than that which prevailed two hundred years earlier.

Next to mineralogy and chemistry, which account for more than three-tenths of the 5,380 loans, rank in number biology, geology, and botany, which add up to another tenth. In the order of number of loans, biochemistry, philosophy, psychology, zoology, and terms relating to the military make up one-tenth. The borrowings in fifty-eight other semantic areas, from food with 115 loans to trades with five, together represent the other five-tenths.

LINGUISTIC OVERVIEW

A second essay treats the linguistic phenomena, processes, and concepts. The linguistic overview points to the fact that the great bulk of the borrowings having High German etyma moved into English as spontaneous transfers; that few, if any, replaced existing words, instead simply expanding the English lexicon. That overview indicates further that there is little evidence that English borrowed any German sounds or distributions. Short of partial or full translations, there have been small changes in spelling to fit the English graphemic or phonetic pattern. The items that English borrowed are of any form, but principally nouns, adjectives, and verbs in a ratio of 80:8:1. The number of bound forms is statistically small. The transfers include a number of trademarks and eponyms, but there are very few pseudo-Germanisms. Reborrowings are rather uncommon.

PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSION

We use the term *loanword* in a broad sense so as to cover the types of borrowings that German has supplied to English over the centuries. These lexical items, also called *linguistic units,* include items where both the meaning and the form are transferred, as in *Abgesang.* They include few loan blends, where the meaning but only part of the form are transferred, as in *Afrikanerdom,* where *Afrikaner* was borrowed into English but then affixed by the English suffix *-dom* so as to provide a word that Afrikaans never had. We will elaborate on this point shortly. Our loanwords include various types of translations, ranging from partial renditions like *apple strudel* (from *Apfelstrudel*) to full loan-translations like *airship* (from *Luftschiff*). These too will be detailed later. The borrowings also include a small number of semantic loans, that is, senses of German words that were added to existing English forms, such as that of *Kurfürst* to *elector.*

In collecting this corpus of borrowings, and describing and analyzing them, the co-authors have followed the tradition of major studies of borrowings by making several assumptions, which have inevitably affected our results and conclusions.

Most importantly, our corpus, which is presented alphabetically in the dictionary portion, has been collected entirely from English language dictionaries and thus from writing rather than from oral sources or "direct specimens of language," as Clausing (1988) noted in his