

THE ORIGIN OF YANK

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

The nickname Yank, as applied to the A.E.F. soldiery, has something of charm in the tradition of the word. Persons interested in the history of words may have noted with interest a footnote in Cooper's "The Deerslayer:"

It is singular there should be any question concerning the origin of the well-known sobriquet of "Yankee." Nearly all the old writers who speak of the Indians first known to the colonists make them pronounce the word "English" as "Yengeese." Even at this day it is a provincialism of New England to say "English" instead of "Inglish," and there is a close conformity of sound between "English" and "Yengeese," more especially if the latter word, as was probably the case, be pronounced short.

The transition from "Yengeese," thus pronounced, to "Yankees," is quite easy. If the former is pronounced "Yangis," it is almost identical with "Yankees," and Indian words have seldom been spelt as they are pronounced. . . . The liquids of the Indians would easily convert "En" into "Yen."

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