THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PODCAST TRANSCRIPTS

EPISODE 157: HIGHLANDS, LOWLANDS AND NETHERLANDS

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Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 157: Highlands, Lowlands and Netherlands. In this episode, we're going to continue our look at developments that shaped the English language in the mid-1500s, but we're going to shift our focus briefly to events that were taking place outside of England. Specifically, we're going to examine some important developments in the north in Scotland and across the English Channel in the Netherlands. Developments in those regions had major consequences for England going forward, and also had linguistic consequences throughout the region. During the mid-1500s, both Scotland and the Netherlands rebelled against Catholic authorities and against the continental powers that effectively controlled those countries. By embracing Protestantism, those regions were brought closer to England. In Scotland, that meant the decline of Scots as a distinct national language, and in the Netherlands, it meant that Dutch words continued to pass into English maintaining a pattern that stretched back to the Middle Ages. So this time, we'll look at those developments.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast and get bonus episodes at Patreon.com/historyofenglish.

Now this time, I want to look at the first decade or so of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. In the last episode, we saw that she became queen late in the year 1558, and very early in her reign, she introduced the Elizabethan Settlement which brought Protestantism back to England, and that meant that English once again became an official language of the Church of England.

As I noted last time, Elizabeth inherited a lot of problems beyond those divisive religious issues. England had just lost the city of Calais, which was its last foothold in France. Vagabonds and thieves roamed the highways and streets. The country was in debt and experiencing very high inflation rates. Elizabeth also had to deal with a debased coinage.

For several decades, cheaper metals like copper had been added to silver coins. It had become common for people to refer to coins that were 'blushing,' which referred to the fact that the coins were really copper with a silver coating. As the silver coating wore off, the copper would show through, and the silver coins would turn a shade of red as if they were blushing.

That contributed to the inflation problem because the coins weren't really worth their face value. So sellers demanded more of them for their goods. And it created an even bigger problem for English merchants and traders overseas. Foreign merchants often refused the English coins because it was well-known that they weren't worth their face value. English traders had to use pure gold or silver, which was difficult to obtain. [*SOURCE: Elizabeth I, Anne Somerset, p. 142.*]

So very early in Elizabeth's reign, she and her advisors developed a program whereby the government recalled the existing coins, melted them down, and replaced them with coins containing the proper amounts of gold and silver. The program worked, and within a short time,

the problem had been largely solved. England finally had a stable currency again, and English merchants traveling abroad were once again able to use their own money. [*SOURCE: Elizabeth I, Anne Somerset, p. 143.*]

These policies allowed English merchants to take full advantage of the burgeoning trade that brought in products and materials from as far away as the Americas in the west to China in the Far East.

In the Americas, Spanish and Portuguese traders had discovered tobacco and brought it back home. One of the people who was intrigued by the new plant was the French ambassador in Portugal named Jean Nicot. His last name was spelled 'N-i-c-o-t.' Well, around the time that Elizabeth became queen in England, he brought some of the new tobacco to the French court in Paris. What he actually brought was tobacco seeds and dried tobacco leaves that had been reduced to powder. Native Americans sometimes sniffed powdered tobacco, and some of the Portuguese traders thought it medicinal properties like curing headaches. So Nicot brought the tobacco power back to Paris to promote its supposed medicinal benefits. A few decades later, the formal botanical name of the plant was named after him. It was called 'Nicotiana tabacum.' And when scientists later discovered the addictive element in the plant, they called it ***nicotine*** based on the formal name of the plant. So ultimately, the word ***nicotine*** is derived from the name of Jean Nicot who introduced powered tobacco to Paris around the current point in our story in the year 1560.

Well, from there, that powdered tobacco quickly spread eastward to the Low Countries. And it was there that the Dutch speakers called it ***snuff***, which was a Dutch word that meant 'to inhale or breath in.' It's a word that 'may' be related to the English word ***sniff***. English had also borrowed the Dutch word ***snuff*** as a verb meaning 'to sniff.' And later, it borrowed the word ***snuff*** again from Dutch to refer to this type of powdered tobacco.

Of course, when tobacco made its way to England, people didn't just sniff it. They also smoked it. But they didn't use the word ***smoke*** to refer to that activity. They actually used the word ***drink***. People 'drank' tobacco by inhaling the smoke. But over the course of the 1600s, the verb gradually shifted from ***drink*** to ***smoke***.

Now speaking of drink, it was also around this same time in the early 1560s that western Europeans started to be introduced to tea from East Asia. A Portuguese priest named Gaspar de Cruz had traveled to China, and he wrote the first detailed description of tea drinking based on what he observed there. The Portuguese soon brought tea back to Portugal. But they didn't call it ***tea***. They used the Mandarin Chinese word for the plant and the drink, which was ***cha***. And that's actually how the word was first recorded in English in the late 1500s. And of course, we still have a version of that word, which is ***chai***.

But then, a few decades later, the Dutch made their way to China. And those Dutch traders established a base on the southeastern coastline of China where people spoke a different Chinese dialect called Min, or sometimes called Amoy in English. That's one of the major dialects of Chinese, alongside Mandarin, Cantonese and others. Those dialects are very different from each

other. And in that particular Min dialect where the Dutch had a trading base, the word for the plant and the drink was pronounced ***t'e***. It was the Dutch who introduced the drink to most of western Europe. And that version of the word was adopted wherever the Dutch went. That included England, which adopted the word as ***tea*** from those Dutch traders.

So the words ***tea*** and ***chai*** are really just two different versions of the same word derived from two different Chinese dialects. And interestingly, about half the world uses a term for the drink derived from the word ***cha*** and the other half uses a term derived from the word ***t'e***. And the version that's used really depends on how the plant and the drink arrived in each region. If it arrived by land, then the region typically uses some version of ***cha***. If it arrived by ship, the region usually uses some version of the word ***t'e***. That's because tea spread from China by land into Russia, India, other parts of South Asia, and into Turkey. The words used in languages in those regions tend to be derived from the Mandarin word ***cha***. But the Dutch ships carried the plants down into Indonesia, and around southern and western parts of Africa, and up into Western Europe. So in those regions, the word that is used tends to be version of the Min word ***t'e***. And again, that includes the English word ***tea***.

So that's a good example of how those trade routes shaped languages around the world. And as those examples illustrate, plants like tobacco and tea, as well as many other products, were pouring into Western Europe in the mid-1500s. And those products were coming in from all parts of the world. But notice that words like ***snuff*** and ***tea*** actually came into English from Dutch.

I should emphasize that, even though those substances were making their way into Europe around the current point in our story, they didn't really make their way to England or English until the following century. And that's partly because the Dutch Empire didn't really get underway until the following century. At the current point in our story in the mid-1500s, the Netherlands was still a loose collection of provinces largely under the control of Spain. You might remember that the massive Habsburg Empire had been divided in the mid-1500s during the reign of Queen Mary. Mary's husband Philip received Spain and the Netherlands as part of that division. So when Elizabeth came to the throne, the Netherlands were part of Philip's Spanish realm. Of course, the North Sea culture of the Netherlands was very different from the Mediterranean culture of Spain, and the Netherlands had a growing Protestant population, whereas Spain was staunchly Catholic. All of that produced a growing tension between the Netherlands and Spain.

But when Elizabeth became queen of England, the Netherlands was still a very important trading center for the Spanish realm. The ports of the Netherlands were home to more seagoing ships than anywhere else in Europe. And the North Sea commercial traffic converged at the ports in that region.[*SOURCE: Wielenga, Friso. A History of the Netherlands (p. 11). Bloomsbury Publishing. Kindle Edition.*] And the region remained a very important center for English traders – as it had been for centuries.

As we've seen throughout the podcast series, England had a close trading relationship with the provinces of the Netherlands over the course of the Middle Ages. Of course, those provinces were located directly across the English Channel from England. In fact, going back in time even

further, we can assume that many of the first Anglo-Saxon immigrants would have probably passed through the same region on their way to Britain when they left continental Europe in the 5th and 6th centuries. And the Anglo-Saxons would have returned to trade with those territories even in the early Middle Ages. The language in that region was a Frankish dialect that would have been very similar to Old English at the time. The Anglo-Saxons would have been able to speak with the people there without any problem.

But over time, the languages on each side of the Channel started to diverge. English changed dramatically after the Norman Conquest, and that old Frankish dialect spoken on the other side of the Channel evolved into an early form of Dutch. The various provinces of that region gradually emerged, including places I have mentioned throughout the podcast series like Flanders and Holland, as well as about fifteen other small provinces.

The region was well-known in the Middle Ages for its cloth-making industry, and of course, England was well-known for its sheep and wool production. So that created a symbiotic relationship. England sold wool to the provinces across the Channel, and English merchants often bought cloth and fabric in return. The close trading relationship between the two regions is reflected in the large number of words that English borrowed from Dutch in the Middle Ages.

In fact, the word ***trade*** itself is a Dutch word, as it the word ***mart***, which meant a place for buying and selling. That word ***mart*** is actually a Dutch version of the French word ***market***. English also borrowed lots of other trading terms from Dutch in the Middle Ages. I've mentioned some of these before, but we have the word ***huckster***, and we have words for vehicles used to transport goods like ***wagon*** and ***sled***. We also have words used in the process of packing and bundling goods like the words ***pack*** and ***bundle***, as well as the word ***bale*** like a bale of cotton or bale of hay. We also have words for the containers used to transport goods like the word ***tub*** and the word ***bung***, which was a kind of stopper or cork used in a barrel. The word ***kit*** was also borrowed from Dutch. It originally mean a small wooden tub. Over time, the word ***kit*** came to refer to a small wooden chest, and then it came to refer to the collection of items kept in the chest. And that's how the word acquired its modern sense as a collection of personal items or articles.

In the last episode about vagabonds and thieves, I mentioned the word ***booze***, which was used as a canting or slang term for alcoholic drinks in the mid-1500s. Well, it also entered English as a Dutch loanword. The original Dutch version of the word meant a large drinking vessel.

Because of the importance of the wool and cloth trade, English also has quite a few Dutch loanwords associated with the cloth industry. That includes words like ***spool***, ***mesh*** and ***nap*** (found in the word ***napkin***).

Of course, trade between England and the Netherlands had to cross the English Channel by ship, so English also borrowed a lot of nautical terms from Dutch. That included words like ***skipper***, ***keel***, ***deck***, ***dock***, ***pump***, ***scout*** (which was originally a flat-bottomed boat), ***freight*** (which was originally the hiring of a ship for transport), ***splice*** (which originally referred to the joining of cables or ropes on a ship), ***school*** (in the sense of a group of fish), ***roe*** (as in fish eggs), ***whiting***

(as in a type of fish), and the word ***buoy*** (or 'boy' depending on your pronunciation) for a floating marker in the water. Words like ***hoist*** and ***shore*** may also be derived from Dutch, though the specific origin of those words is a little less clear. Other terms borrowed from Dutch in the Middle Ages include ***scoop***, ***rack***, ***splint***, ***splinter***, ***damp***, ***grime***, ***morass***, ***groove***, ***peg***, ***pickle***, ***snap***, ***uproar***, and many others.

England's trading relationship with the Netherlands also gave us the first book to be printed in English. You might remember that William Caxton came across the printing press while he was in Flanders as a merchant. And his first printing press was established in Flanders. And that press produced the first book published in the English language. It was a translation of a French book about the Trojan War.

England's connection with the provinces of the Netherlands wasn't just a trading relationship. England often hired mercenaries from the Netherlands, and many of those soldiers ended up in England. That's probably how English ended up with the term ***forlorn hope***. Today, it refers to a situation that is hopeless or has little change of success. Well, believe it or not, the original version of that term had nothing to do with hope. It was actually a Dutch phrase – 'verloren hoop' – spelled 'v-e-r-l-o-r-e-n h-o-o-p.' ***Verloren*** mean 'lost', and ***hoop*** (h-o-o-p) meant troops. ***Hoop*** is actually the Dutch version of the English word ***heap*** in the sense of a collection or group of things – in this sense a group of soldiers. So a ***verloren hoop*** literally meant 'a lost troop' or 'a lost expedition.' It originally referred to the men placed at the front of an attack – in what was basically a hopeless or suicide mission. That's why the troops were lost. English speakers eventually adopted that phrase and anglicized it into ***forlorn hope*** with the modern sense of a hopeless situation. So the Dutch word ***hoop*** meaning 'troops or expedition' was converted into the English word ***hope*** meaning 'confidence of success.' The English version of that Dutch phrase first appeared in English documents in the 1530s and became common in the late 1500s as England found itself more directly involved in the Dutch military matters.

So as you can see, English borrowed quite a few words from Dutch in the Middle Ages, and that process continued into the early modern era.

As I noted, many of those loanwords are the result of a close trading relationship between England and the Netherlands over the centuries. But the provinces of the Netherlands didn't just have a close relationship with England. They also had a close relationship with England's neighbor to the north – Scotland. Not only did Dutch traders end up in Scotland, but those mercenaries who fought in English wars were often settled in border regions when the conflicts came to an end. As a result, a fair number of those people ended up in Scotland. The large number of Flemish settlers is how the word ***Fleming*** became a common surname in places like Scotland.

In Scotland, those Flemings would have encountered people speaking Scots – the Scottish form of speech that had evolved out of Old English. Remember that Scots was quite distinct from English. In modern Scotland, most people speak English with a Scottish accent, but that's not Scots. Scots is an older form of speech that originated with the early Anglo-Saxon settlements in southern Scotland. It is still used by some speakers today, even though some of the differences

between Scots and standard English have eroded over time for reasons that we will explore in this episode.

Now I should emphasize that English, Scots and Dutch all had common West Germanic origins, and similarities between those forms of speech would have been even more apparent in the Middle Ages. In fact, there is even a similarity in the terms used for the regions where Dutch and Scots were spoken. The term ***Netherlands*** really emerged in the 1500s. It's a slightly anclicized version of the Dutch term Nederland – literally 'low land.' The English version of that Dutch word ***neder*** is ***nether***, also meaning 'low' as in 'nether world' and 'nether regions.' So English speakers simply substituted the English version of that word and produced the term ***Netherlands***. It referred to the low lands in the coastal regions where the Netherlands provinces were located. We also have another similar term for the same basic region – the 'Low Countries.'

Well, in Scotland, the Scots form of speech was traditionally spoken in the low-lying areas of southern Scotland, as opposed to the Highlands where the Celtic 'Gaelic' language was spoken. From the late 1700s, Scots was sometimes referred to as ***lallans***, which literally meant 'Lowlands.' It's a term largely attributed to the poet Robert Burns who referred to the speech as the 'lallan tongue.' So in that sense, ***lallans*** and ***Netherlands*** both refer to 'low land' regions.

The relationship between English, Scots and Dutch can also be found in certain words that English borrowed from Dutch, but did so via Scots. So these are words that passed from Dutch to Scots, and then passed from Scots into English. For example, if you enjoy a delicious ***scone*** (/sco:n/), or /scawn/ depending on your pronunciation, you're enjoying a type of bread that followed this path. It was originally a Dutch or Low German word, and the distinction between Dutch and Low German is very difficult to make. Words from the lowlands of the Netherlands and the lowlands of northern Germany are often very similar, and sometimes almost identical. But the word ***scone*** (or /scawn/) appeared in Scots in the early 1500s in the writings of the Scots poet Gavin Douglas. In fact, for the next couple of centuries, it's mainly recorded in Scotland, but then it started to filter down into the English of England where is was common by the late 1700s. Part of the modern difference in the pronunciation of the word is still geographical. The pronunciation as /scawn/ is still more common in Scotland and northern England, whereas ***scone*** becomes more common as you move southward.

If you're a fan of crooners like Frank Sinatra or Tony Bennet, you should know that the word ***croon*** is also a Dutch word that passed into Scots, and was then borrowed into English in the 1500s.

Another word that followed this same path is the word ***dollar***, which we've seen before in the podcast. The word is derived from the name of the Bohemian town where the silver for the coin was first mined. The word became common in the Holy Roman Empire, and then became common in the Netherlands. From there, Dutch traders brought the term ***dollar*** to Scotland where it started to be used around the current point in our story to refer to a particular Scottish coin that was minted around that time. And the people of Scotland apparently embraced the term ***dollar*** to distinguish their currency from the currency of England in the south. And in the following

centuries, Scottish immigrants took the word with them to the New World, which is part of the reason why the word ***dollar*** was never all that common in England itself.

Of course, these are only a few examples of words that English borrowed directly from Scots. Some of the other Scots loanwords had Gaelic origins, like ***clan***, ***loch***, ***bard***, ***plaid***, ***trousers*** and ***brogue***. So there was a noticeable Gaelic influence in Scots, but most of the Scots lexicon was Germanic because it evolved out of Old English. And that brings us to the tricky question of the relationship between Scots and English. It's an issue that is tied in with the larger issue of the relationship between Scotland and England. I've talked about Scots in prior episodes, and I've noted that some people believe it is a dialect of English, while others believe it to be a separate language. So which is it? Well, I haven't really addressed the distinction between a dialect and language before, so this is probably a good time to do that.

Sometimes the distinction is very clear. Obviously, English and Chinese are separate languages. They have no historical relationship to each other, and any similarities between them are purely coincidental. But the distinction between a language and dialect becomes more complicated when the two forms of speech are historically related and evolved out of a common, shared language at some point in the past. This has actually been one of the recurring themes of the podcast from the time of the original Proto-Indo-European language. People who speak a common language become separated, and over time, their speech evolves and becomes more and more distinct from each other. Initially, the differences are described as dialects of the same language, but at some point, the differences become so great that they are described as different languages. For example, Latin initially evolved into a collection separate dialects known as Vulgar Latin dialects. But eventually, those dialects continued to evolve into the modern Romance languages like French, Spanish, Italian and so on.

Of course, the same thing happened within the Germanic language family. What began as a more or less common Germanic dialect in northern Europe split into three different dialects. An eastern dialect evolved into the now extinct Gothic language. A northern dialect evolved into Old Norse and the modern languages of Scandinavia. And a western dialect evolved into German, Dutch and English. So it is tempting to suggest that when the differences are relatively minor and two different groups of people can still communicate with each other, we have separate 'dialects.' And when the differences become so great that the two groups can no longer communicate effectively, we then have different 'languages.' But that approach doesn't always work. And the field of linguistics doesn't use that approach to distinguish a dialect from a language. In fact, there is no simple linguistic formula or test to distinguish the two. The difference is actually much more subjective.

For example, I mentioned that Old Norse evolved into the modern languages of Scandinavia. And most everyone agrees that Danish, Swedish and Norwegian are separate languages. But those speakers can communicate with other without too much difficulty, especially the speakers of Danish and Swedish. Those languages are mutually intelligible, but they're still considered to be separate languages, largely because they are spoken in separate countries and because the speakers of those respective languages perceive their forms of speech to be separate languages. So perception is a major factor here.

Similarly, I mentioned earlier that the words ***tea*** and ***chai*** are ultimately the same word, but each form is derived from separate Chinese dialects. Those dialects are so different from each other that Chinese speakers find it very difficult, if not impossible, to communicate with each other in those dialects. So they aren't really mutually intelligible, but in those cases, they are considered to be part of the same Chinese language. They're just different 'dialects.' And again, that's because those speakers perceive their different forms of speech to be part of the same language. Again, the key is perception.

Ultimately, the difference between a dialect and a language isn't really determined by how well the speakers can understand each other, it more dependent on factors like politics, culture and national identity. There's an old saying that you may have heard before: "A language is a dialect with an army and a navy." That may be simplifying things a bit, but it points to a basic fact of language. If people think of their speech as a separate language, then it's a language. If they think of their speech as a dialect, then it's a dialect. So it is somewhat subjective. But people don't tend to think of their speech as a separate language unless it has features that are unique and distinguish it from other forms of speech. So the technical differences are important as well. Again, there is a gray area between dialect and language where perception is just as important as technical differences. And for the past few centuries, Scots has existed in just such a gray area.

The classification of Scots is made all the more difficult due to the events that took place after the current point in our story. In the 1600s, when Elizabeth I died, the Scots king became the English king. And the two courts were combined in London. And after that, there was a formal political union of Scotland and England. The influence of English was so great after that point that it started to replace Scots in Scotland itself. Scots continued to be spoken, but it was increasingly influenced by English. Over time, even many people in Scotland didn't consider Scots to be a separate language. But in recent years, the trend has moved in the other direction. There has been a concerted effort to recognize Scots as a separate language. The debate still isn't fully settled, but the modern trend in linguistics to classify it as a language, not a dialect, in part because there has been a growing perception within Scotland and elsewhere that it is a separate language.

About 30 years ago, a University of Aberdeen English professor named J. Derrick McClure published a book called 'Why Scots Matters.' In it, he made the compelling argument that Scots began as a dialect of Old English, but over the course of the late Middle Ages through the 1500s, it became a separate language. It became increasingly distinct from the English spoken south of the border. It developed its own pronunciations, its own vocabulary, its own distinct writing system, and even some separate grammatical features. It also developed its own literature and poetry. It became the language of the government. And importantly, people increasingly perceived it as a distinct language. Whereas previously it was referred to as ***Inglis***, in the 1500s it came to be called ***Scottis*** – or ***Scots***. There was even a law adopted in Scotland in 1534 that attempted to ban Protestant works that were pouring into the country. The law prohibited such works whether composed in "Latyne, Scottis, Inglis and Flemys" – literally 'Latin, Scots, English or Flemish (which meant Dutch).' [*SOURCE: Scots: The Mither Tongue, Billy Kay, p. 79.*] So the law clearly distinguished Scots from English. But as I noted, everything changed when Scotland and England became part of the same political union. So McClure argued that Scots

ceased to be a separate language during that period, both because the differences became less distinct and the perception of Scots as a separate language declined. But then he argued that Scots was once again at the point of re-emerging as a distinct language in the modern era as people begin to embrace its uniqueness and no longer perceive it as simply 'bad English.' So according to McClure, the status of Scots has alternated between a dialect and a language over the centuries as Scotland's relationship with England has evolved, and as the influence of English itself had ebbed and flowed in Scotland.

Again, it's a compelling argument, and if one accepts it, Scots was undoubtedly a separate language at the current point in our story in the mid-1500s. Not only had it evolved separately from English for almost five centuries, it was also the form of speech used by a large percentage of people in the lowlands of Scotland. It was the language of the royal court and the government. And it was the language of the Scottish printers. Even when they printed a text in English from England, they would usually re-work the text so that it matched the spelling conventions used in Scots. They would even translate the passages into Scots where the languages were clearly different.

But that distinctiveness started to be lost with an important development that took place around the time that Elizabeth became queen of England. Of course, Elizabeth was at the very beginning of her reign, so that development wasn't the later merger of the two royal courts. But it was something that Scotland and England had in common. It was arrival of the Protestant Reformation in Scotland.

At this point, Scotland was still a Catholic country ruled by a Catholic monarch, but Protestantism had been growing for a couple of decades. Then during Elizabeth's first year as queen of England, a Scottish minister and religious reformer named John Knox returned to Scotland after several years on the continent. Knox had embraced the Calvinist doctrines that were flourishing in northern Europe. And he brought those views back with him to Scotland. He injected a new life and energy into the Protestant movement in Scotland, and many of the Scottish nobles were converted to Protestantism. And within a short period of time, they had started to rise in rebellion against the Catholic authorities.

Now to understand what happened at this point, we have to consider what was going on with the monarchy in Scotland. As I noted a few episodes back, the prior Scots king James V had died about 17 years earlier in 1542. He was survived by a baby daughter named Mary who was only a few days old at the time of his death. The baby inherited the throne and became Mary Queen of Scots. She was soon betrothed to the son of the French king, and she was sent to the French court where she was raised as essentially a French noblewoman. Meanwhile, her mother (who was also French) was left in charge of Scotland as regent. Her mother's name was Mary of Guise.

Now again, Mary Queen of Scots grew up in France speaking French, and she formally married the French king's son in 1558. But the terms of the marriage contract were so heavily weighted in France's favor that it effectively placed Scotland under French control. [*SOURCE: Scotland's Story, Tom Steel, p. 80.*] And that created a growing tension between the Scots nobles and Mary of Guise who was ruling as regent at the time.

Then, around the time that John Knox arrived back in Scotland bringing Calvinism with him, the French king died. His son Francis (or Francois) II then became king, which meant that Mary Queen of Scots now also became the queen of France.

So when Knox arrived back in Scotland, the country was squarely under the thumb of France with the Scots queen living in France and married to the French king. And her French mother was effectively ruling Scotland. And they were all Catholic. So that growing anti-Catholic sentiment in Scotland soon turned into an anti-French sentiment as well. And fighting broke out between the Protestant nobles and the Catholic authorities a short time later.

In England, Elizabeth had just become queen, and she was a Protestant. So the Scottish Protestants appealed to her for help in their fight against the Catholic authorities in Scotland. Initially, Elizabeth agreed to send money and equipment to the Scottish Protestants, but not troops. But after a few months, she changed her mind and sent 8000 English troops across the border to support the Protestant rebels. And then a few weeks after that in June of 1560, Mary of Guise died in Scotland. The English military support combined with the death of the queen's mother finally led the French to abandon the cause in Scotland. The Catholic French authorities left, and that allowed the Protestant nobles to take control of the government. Pursuant to a treaty called the Treaty of Edinburgh, all English and French troops left Scotland, and a Council of Nobles was designated to govern the country. [*SOURCE: A History of England: Volume 1, Third Edition: Prehistory to 1714, Clayton and David Roberts, p. 293.*] In August, the Parliament of Scotland adopted a series of laws that outlawed the Catholic mass and abolished the Pope's authority over the Church.

Now these developments are important to our story for two reasons. First, it effectively brought an end to the long alliance between Scotland and France known as the Auld Alliance. And in doing so, it allowed Scotland to become more politically aligned with England, which eventually led to the political union of the two countries.

But those developments also brought about the decline of Scots as a distinct language, and that's the other reason why those developments are important to our story.

The Scottish Protestants didn't have a complete Bible in Scots. Portions of John Wycliffe's Middle English Bible had been translated into Scots, but again, it wasn't complete and it only existed in manuscript form, so it wasn't widely available in a printed version. Without a Scots Bible, the Protestants adopted the Geneva Bible which was printed in English. Furthermore, John Knox was asked to produce a document that outlined the terms of the new faith, and together with a group of other religious reformers, he produced a document that is known as the 'Scots Confession.' It became the basis of the new Church, and it was also composed in English. Other Protestant works were also imported from England – and were left untranslated. [*SOURCE: Why Scots Matters, J. Derrick McClure, p. 8.*]

So as a practical matter, the primary language of the new Protestant Church in Scotland was English – not Scots. And at a time when the language of religion exerted a much greater influence on society than it does today, the use of English by the Scottish Church delivered an initial blow to the overall influence of Scots.

By the way, this new English influence in the Church didn't go unnoticed. In fact, Catholic opponents of the new faith attacked John Knox and the Protestants for their embrace of English at the expense of Scots. Ninian Winyet (also known as Ninian Wingate) was a Catholic priest in Scotland who vehemently opposed the Reformation. In his many writings criticizing the new faith, he attacked John Knox for his use of English in place of Scots. He wrote, "Gif ye, throw curiositie of novatiounis, hes foryet our auld plane Scottis quhilk your mother leirit you, in tymes coming I sall wryte to you my mind in Latin for I am nocht acquent with your Suddrone." – 'If you, through curiosity of innovation, has forgotten our old plain Scots which your mother taught you, then in times coming I shall write to you my mind in Latin, for I am not acquainted with your Southern speech." [*SOURCE: Scots: The Mither Tongue, Billy Kay, p. 73-4.*]

In that passage, his word forms and spellings are traditional Scots like 'g-i-f' for ***if***, and 'n-o-c-h-t' for ***not***. Words beginning with a 'wh' in English like ***what*** and ***which*** were spelled with a 'q-u-h' in Scots because the initial sound was much more aspirated in Scots. And words ending in 'ch' in English, often ended in a hard 'k' sound in Scots like ***kirk*** for ***church***. So here we find the English word ***which*** ('w-h-i-c-h') rendered in Scots as ***quhilk*** spelled 'q-u-h-i-l-k.' And the English past tense suffix 'ed' was rendered in Scots as 'it', so here we find the Scots word ***leirit*** for English ***lered***, which meant 'learned' or 'taught.' The passage also refers to English as ***Suddrone***, which literally meant 'southern' and specifically meant 'southern speech' or 'the speech used in the south in England.'

Another Catholic opponent of the Scottish Reformation was Archibald Hamilton, and he was even more critical of John Knox's use of English in the new Church. He wrote, "Giff King James the fyft war alyve, quha hering ane of his subjectis knap suddrone, declarit him ane trateur: quidder vald he declaire you triple traitoris, quha not onlie knappis suddrone in your negative confession, bot also hes causit it to be imprentit in London in contempt of our native language." – 'If King James the fifth were alive, who hearing one of his subjects speak Suddrone – or speak English – he would declare him to be a traitor; immediately would he declare you to be triple traitors, who not only speak English in your negative confession, but also has caused it to be printed in London in contempt of our native language.' So here we see a specific complaint about Scottish religious texts that were being printed in English by printers in London. [*SOURCE: Scots: The Mither Tongue, Billy Kay, p. 74.*]

Now, to be fair, the Protestant Reformers weren't really pro-English. They just needed a Protestant Bible and Psalm Book that congregations in Scotland could read, and there were existing English versions, but no Scots versions. So as a matter of convenience – and even necessity – they embraced the English versions. They were religious reformers, not language reformers. But one of the consequences flowing from that decision was the increased use of English in Scotland beginning in the 1560s, several decades before the political union of England and Scotland.

From this point forward, it became more common for printers in Scotland to use English in their publications alongside the traditional Scots. Whereas previously, English manuscripts like the poetry of Chaucer were translated into Scots, now it became more common to just use the English version. Sometimes, printers would even translate Scots manuscripts into English, something was previously uncommon. Of course, there were a lot more printers in England than in Scotland, so English publications from the south also poured into Scotland. And Scots writers increasingly realized that they could reach a wider audience by writing and publishing in English rather than Scots. All of that meant that English started to take a place beside Scots in Scotland in the late 1500s and 1600s. [*SOURCE: Scots: The Mither Tongue, Billy Kay, p. 77.*] And of course, that process was heightened when Elizabeth died and the Scots king became the English king. Of course, that development was still about four decades away, but the groundwork for that later union was established at this point in the 1560s because it was at this point that Mary Queen of Scots made her return to Scotland and set in motion the events that would lead to her eventual downfall, and would allow her son to emerge as the successor to Elizabeth in England.

Remember that Mary Queen of Scots was living in France as the Queen of France when the Protestants took control of the Scottish government. Her husband was the young French king Francis (or Francois) II. Unfortunately, he was very frail and sickly, and he died a few months after the Protestant revolt in Scotland. That left Mary in the French court as a young childless widow. And it soon became clear that she was no longer welcome there, so in August of 1561, she made her way back to Scotland for the first time since she was a young child. Upon her arrival, she gave a speech in Scots, and it appears from other accounts that she had fully retained her native Scots language in addition to her acquired fluency in French. [*SOURCE: 1000 Years of Annoying the French, Stephen Clarke, p. 169.*] But despite her use of Scots, she found herself in an uncomfortable situation in Scotland. She was a Catholic queen in a newly-Protestant country. And her close connection to the French court was viewed with suspicion in a country that had just repelled the French authorities from positions of power. She was a bit of a stranger in her own home country.

Mary's presence in Scotland also posed a problem for her cousin Elizabeth in England. Remember that both queens were Tudors. Mary's grandmother was the sister of Henry VIII. So Elizabeth was Henry VIII's daughter and last legitimate descendant. But Mary was Henry VIII's grand-niece, and she was widely presumed to be next in line to the English throne if anything happened to Elizabeth.

But remember that many Catholics in England didn't consider Elizabeth to be a legitimate heir. They didn't recognize Henry's marriage to Elizabeth's mother Anne Boleyn because Henry's first marriage had never been formally annulled by the Pope. So many Catholics thought that Mary should be the Queen of England. Of course, the fact that she was Catholic only encouraged that view. And Mary had not renounced her claim to the English throne. So with Mary now in Scotland, just across the border, it only encouraged Catholics in England to rally around her.

Then in 1562, Elizabeth contracted smallpox and almost died. She did eventually recover, but the whole episode only heightened the concern among English Protestants about the succession issue. If Elizabeth died, then England would once again have a Catholic queen – this one from Scotland.

After that point, the English Parliament started to put pressure on Elizabeth to find a husband and to produce an heir, much as they had done with her sister Mary a few years earlier. But Elizabeth was more reluctant. She resisted, and delayed, and never committed to marry. She did receive quite a few offers though. Among the proposals she rejected was one from her former brother-in-law, Philip of Spain. Remember that Philip had been married to Elizabeth's sister Mary – the prior queen of England. Despite Philip's offer of marriage, Elizabeth had no interest in Philip returning to England and once again meddling in English politics. So Elizabeth remained the Virgin Queen, and the matter of the succession remained unresolved.

Now speaking of Philip of Spain, as I noted earlier, his Spanish realm included not only Spain and the Spanish territories in the New World, it also included the provinces of the Netherlands thanks to that division of the Habsburg Empire a few years earlier. And the provinces of the Netherlands found themselves in a similar position as Scotland. It was a region that was becoming increasingly Protestant while being ruled by a major Catholic power in another part of Europe. And much like in Scotland, the nobles in the Netherlands also started to assert their independence in the 1560s.

And it was around this same time that a development occurred that shaped the culture and landscape of the Netherlands to this day. That development actually began in Turkey where a Flemish diplomat named Augier Ghislain de Busbecq was stationed. For several years, he had served as a diplomat in the service of the Holy Roman Empire. He primarily served in Constantinople in the court of the Ottoman sultan, but he also traveled to other parts of the Ottoman realm including the Crimean Peninsula in the northern part of the Black Sea. And it was there that de Busbecq made his first contribution to our story.

While he was Crimea around the current point in our story in the early 1560s, he noticed that some people were speaking a language that resembled in own native Dutch language. Now again, this was in Crimea in the Black Sea region – nowhere near the Germanic-speaking parts of northern Europe. He eventually concluded that the language he heard was the last surviving remnants of the ancient Gothic language. I mentioned the Gothic language earlier in the episode, and I also talked about it in the early episodes of the podcast. It was a language that emerged out of the east Germanic dialects spoken by the early Germanic tribes during the period of the Roman Empire. These speakers became known as the Goths, and they migrated southeastward and eventually settled in the Black Sea region where a Gothic translation of the Bible was composed. Thanks to that translation, Gothic is the oldest recorded Germanic language, and of course, the Goths later migrated westward and contributed to the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west. But apparently, some of the Goths remained behind in the region around Crimea. And as late as the mid-1500s, some of those descendants were still speaking a later version of that Gothic language. De Busbecq recorded as many of the words as he could – about a hundred in total, and he published them a few years later. His work was the last evidence of that Gothic

dialect – before it apparently disappeared forever a short time later. [*SOURCE: Spellbound, p. 163-4.*] Way back when I talked about the Goths in Episode 27, I mentioned that remnants of the language were found in Crimea as late as the 1500s. Well, that was thanks to de Busbecq's work.

But de Busbecq is also important to our story for another reason. As I noted, De Busbecq served at the capital of Constantinople during his time as a diplomat in the Ottoman Empire. While he was there, he took notice of a particular flower. It was a colorful flower that seemed to resemble the tall vertical turbans that many of the Turks wore. He had a friend who was in charge of the botanical gardens in Holland, so de Busbecq sent some of the bulbs to his friend to study and to add to the botanical gardens. De Busbecq reported that some of the people he encountered thought the flowers resembled turbans, so that's what they called them. The word ***turban*** began as a Persian and Turkish word, which was ***tülbent***. It eventually made its way into English, and in fact, it is first recorded in English around the current point in our story in 1561. When it first appeared, it actually appeared in this same form as ***tulbant***. But at some point, as the word passed through various other European languages, the 'l' sound in the first syllable became an 'r' sound, thereby producing the modern form of the word as ***turban***. But when de Busbecq reported the name of the flower, he used the form of the word as he had encountered it – ***tülbent***. And ***tülbent*** soon became ***tulip***. And within a few years, the tulip had become synonymous with Holland and the Netherlands. And it's an association that continues to this day. So thanks to that connection, the words ***turban*** and ***tulip*** are actually cognate. They come from the same Persian root word.

Now during the mid-1560s when de Busbecq was documenting the remnants of the Gothic language in Crimea and sending tulip bulbs to Holland, there was a growing resistence to Spanish rule in the Netherlands. As I noted earlier, the various provinces of the Netherlands had very little unity in terms of the law or the economy. Much of the region spoke Dutch, though there were some French-speaking areas in the south closer to the French border. But other than language, there wasn't much that unified the provinces. Under Habsburg rule, efforts had been made to centralize the bureaucracy and create a more unified government, but the local nobles resisted any loss of their power. That created some tension. Then Philip went to war with France, and he needed money. You might remember from an earlier episode that he had to go back to England to ask his wife Mary to help him out with money and troops. Well, he also went to the Netherlands, and increased taxes there. That also created tension. But the biggest source of conflict was religion.

Much like in Scotland, Calvinism had been spreading into the Netherlands region for a couple of decades. But Philip was a staunch Catholic. He viewed Protestants as heretics, and he cracked down on them severely – burning many of them at the stake. So here we can see a parallel to what happened in England at the same time under Philip's wife Mary. Eventually, the people of the Netherlands provinces began to rise up in opposition to the burnings. And by the mid-1560s, that opposition had erupted into riots around the region. Churches were sacked; Catholic statues, paintings and other images were destroyed; and Calvinists started having their own religious meetings and services in open violation of the law.

In late 1566, the local Catholic authorities started to crack down on the Protestant rebels, and then Philip sent in several thousand troops from northern Italy to subdue the rebellion. After that, the authorities began to persecute the rebels and other Protestants. Nearly 10,000 were convicted and had their property seized. About 1,000 were executed. And tens of thousands more fled the region altogether – many of them crossing the Channel to England. There was also increasing concern within England itself that Philip was trying to secure his foothold in the Netherlands so he could use it as a launching pad for a later invasion of England.

In 1568, some of the rebels who had fled the Netherlands tried to return to the region to overthrow the Spanish authorities, and that marked the beginning of what became known as the Eighty Years War, which was the war for Dutch independence.

At first the rebels didn't have much success. One of the leading nobles who led the rebellion was William of Orange. And in 1572, he was finally able to recapture Holland and establish a base there. From that point on, Holland in the northern half of the region remained independent of Spain's control. That also led many people to flock there from the southern regions. And that enabled Holland to grow in power and prestige, and its economy also started to boom. The growth of Holland and its capital Amsterdam led many people in later centuries to equate Holland with the Netherlands itself, even though it was only one part of the Netherlands.

By 1579, the Dutch nobles had effectively secured control of the northern part of the provinces, while Spain continued to control the south. And it was in that year, that the two regions were effectively divided into separate political entities with the northern half retaining the name of the Netherlands and later referred to as the Dutch Republic. The southern half was controlled by various European powers over the following decades and centuries, but it eventually became known as Belgium, along with a separate portion known as Luxembourg. Today, some people refer to those three regions as the Benelux Countries – a portmanteau combining the first parts of Belgium, Netherlands and Luxemburg.

When the region was divided in 1579 a few years later in our story, the region in the north was almost entirely Dutch-speaking. But in the south, in what became Belgium in later centuries, there was a mixture of Dutch and French. And that's still the case today. The important region of Flanders was south of that dividing line, so it ultimately became part of Belgium. It's a Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, but the Dutch language spoken there is sometimes referred to as Flemish. But Flemish is not a separate language. Even in Flanders, it is considered a dialect of Dutch.

Now as I noted, the war between the Netherlands and Spain dragged on for about 80 years before the Netherlands finally secured its independence. And for a brief period of time in the 1580s, England also joined the war on behalf of the Protestants against Spain.

The combination of Dutch refugees in England, the English troops sent to the Netherlands, and the general trade between the two regions meant that Dutch words continued to flow into English during the late 1500s and early 1600s.

For example, Dutch military terms that were borrowed during this period include ***onslaught***, ***furlough***, ***holster*** and ***knapsack***. The word ***drill*** was also borrowed during this period, originally in the sense of boring a hole with a rotating bit, but also in the sense of military exercises like in the term 'drill sergeant.' That was because troops often moved around in a rotating motion while doing those exercises. The word ***leaguer*** was borrowed meaning a group of soldiers engaged in a siege. Now we don't tend to use that word much today, but it evolved in the word ***beleaguered*** originally meaning 'to engage in a military siege,' but today, is typically used in the broader sense of being beset with problems. So if you're 'beleaguered,' you probably feel like you're under siege.

The word ***duffel*** was also borrowed from Dutch. It referred to a type of coarse woolen cloth, and it's common today in the term 'duffel bag.' As I noted a moment ago, the word ***knapsack*** was borrowed in a military context, so ***knapsack*** and ***duffel bag*** are both derived from Dutch roots.

If you have a 'hankering' for something, you should know that the word ***hanker*** came from Dutch during this period. The words ***frolic***, ***slim***, and ***decoy*** also came in from Dutch during this period.

The maritime connection continued to lead to the borrowing of nautical terms from Dutch. The word ***freebooter*** was borrowed in the sense of a pirate, and the words ***smuggle*** and ***smuggler*** were also borrowed. ***Reef***, ***yacht***, ***sloop*** and ***cruise*** were borrowed, as was the word ***scrub*** in the original sense of cleaning a boat, and the word ***split*** in the original sense of a ripped sail or a ship's broken hull. The word ***commodore*** was also borrowed from Dutch. ***Commodore*** is actually a Dutch rendering of the French word ***commander***. The words ***brandy*** and ***gin*** also came in from Dutch. After the war, the Netherlands became a haven for artists, and through that connection, Dutch gave us words like ***landscape***, ***easel***, ***etch*** and ***sketch.***

After it gained its independence in the mid-1600s, the Netherlands formed an empire with colonies around the world. Of course, one of those colonies was New Amsterdam in North America, which became New York when the British acquired it. The Dutch influence is still prominent in place names in and around New York City. For example, ***Brooklyn*** and ***Harlem*** are both named for cities in the Netherlands. The Dutch Parliament was called the States General – or Staten Generaal – and that's the origin of the word ***staten*** in Staten Island. ***Yonkers*** is named for an early Dutch settler. And those Dutch settlers were called ***knickerbockers*** , which survives in the nickname of the New York Knicks.

In more recent centuries, English has borrowed other words from Dutch like ***waffle***, ***cookie***, ***coleslaw***, and ***iceberg***. All in all, it is estimated that a little over one percent of the words in Modern English come from Dutch. [*SOURCE: Borrowed Words, Philip Durkin, p. 30.*]

So to take us back to the current point in our overall story in the mid-1560s, it's important to note that it was during that period that the Netherlands began its long march toward independence from Spain. In doing so, an emerging Protestant country separated itself from a major Catholic power in Europe, just like Scotland had done with respect to France earlier in the decade.

And speaking of Scotland, we need to turn our attention back there for a moment because there were some more very important developments there in the late 1560s around the time that the war broke out between the Netherlands and Spain. Those developments in Scotland concerned Mary, the Queen of the Scots. As we saw earlier in the episode, she was the Catholic queen of what was now a Protestant country, and she was also a queen with long-standing ties to France. And in the year 1565, she fell in love with a nobleman who happened to be her cousin. His name was Henry Stuart, but he is better to known to history by his title Lord Darnley. Like Mary, he was also a descendant of Henry VIII's sister Margaret. So he and Mary were not only cousins, they were also both direct descendants of the Scottish House of Stuart and the English House of Tudor. Because of that shared heritage, the marriage actually strengthened Mary's claim to the English throne. Unlike Elizabeth, Mary now had a husband, and he was a Tudor as well. And a few months later, she became pregnant with an heir who would also be a Tudor and a Stuart.

But Mary's husband turned out to be a major problem, and their marriage turned into a royal mess. Darnely was arrogant and violent and jealous, and also a bit of a drunk. Mary had proclaimed him as king without getting the consent of the Scottish nobles. He then started to act like he actually was the king. He offended the nobles, and even offended Mary. She later demoted him from 'king' to simply 'the queen's husband.' But he was still a problem. Then, about a year into the marriage, he became jealous of Mary's closest advisor – an Italian secretary named David Rizzio. Darnley became convinced that the two were having an affair, so he and group of accomplices broke in and held Mary captive while Rizzio was murdered.

Mary survived the attack, and a few months later, she gave birth to a son named James. By the following year – 1567 – there were rumors that Darnley was going to kidnap his young son and try to rule Scotland as the boy's regent. But then, Darnley himself was murdered.

By this point, Mary was hanging around with a Scots noble named James Hepburn, the earl of Bothwell. Again, he is known to history as simply Bothwell. The nature of the relationship between Mary and Bothwell is a matter of some debate. Some think Mary was in love with him, while others think he forced himself on her and she was basically under his control. At any rate, there was a lot of speculation that Mary was behind the murder of her husband, and that Bothwell was in on the plot. Bothwell was actually married to another woman at the time, but then Mary had his marriage annulled, and she turned around and married him. Not only was the marriage controversial, but in the minds of many people, it seemed to confirm the suspicion that the two had conspired to kill Darnley to get him out of the way.

It turned into such a major scandal that the Scottish nobles decided to get rid of Mary altogether and replace her with her young infant son James. The nobles took up arms and forced Mary to abdicate the throne in July of 1567. She was placed in prison, and the 13 month old boy was proclaimed King James VI of Scotland. And unlike his mother, he was raised as a Protestant.

And the reason I'm taking you through these events is because James not only became the King of the Scots, he also became the King of England when Elizabeth finally died in 1603. Since Elizabeth never married and never had any children of her own, she eventually designated James

as her heir. And later in our story, he will become James I of England – the same James of the King James Bible fame.

His later succession to the English throne effectively merged the thrones of Scotland and England under the House of Stuart, and eventually led to the formal political union of the two countries. It also ensured the spread of English into Scotland to the further detriment of Scots, but that's a story for a future episode.

But what about James's mother Mary? Well, she remained imprisoned in Scotland for about a year. But then, she managed to escape, and she fled south across the border into England. And at that point, she was taken into custody by the English authorities, and she remained there for the rest of her life.

The problem is that she continued to pose a threat to Elizabeth because many Catholics still viewed her as the rightful queen of England. And that view was increasingly shared by Philip in Spain. He became further incensed a few years later when Elizabeth got involved in the on-going war in the Netherlands on behalf of the Protestants. So from this point forward, Elizabeth faced increasing pressure and plotting against her. And some of that plotting involved Mary herself. But again, that's a story for a future episode.

I was going to leave the story there for now, but I do have an interesting footnote to this story which seems to add more support to the idea that Scots was perceived as a separate language at the time. While Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned in England, she supposedly took lessons to improve her English, which was still very distinct from her native Scots. [*SOURCE: 1000 Years of Annoying the French, Stephen Clarke, p. 179.*] And at one point, she tried to find priests who would travel to the Scottish court and convert her son James back to Catholicism. But when she was informed that two English priests had been selected, she wrote that she doubted their ability to carry out the mission because 'they are foreigners and do not understand the language, they could not do much good.' [*SOURCE: Scots: The Mither Tongue, Billy Kay, p. 79.*] Ironically, her son would be a major factor in the erosion of those linguistic differences, including his authorized Bible which is almost certainly the most read book in the entire history of the English language.

With that, I'm going to conclude this look at several important developments in Scotland and the Netherlands. As we move forward, we'll see how those developments impact our overall story. In the meantime, we have reached a point in the overall story where we need to take a closer look at the English language itself in the later part of the 1500s. As we move forward, we are going to encounter very detailed descriptions of English spelling and pronunciation during this period. So we'll finally get a good sense of what spoken English sounded like in the late 1500s.

We'll also start to see how English spelling became standardized , which was a long and gradual process. And we'll also continue to look at social and political developments that shaped the language during that period.

So until next time, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.