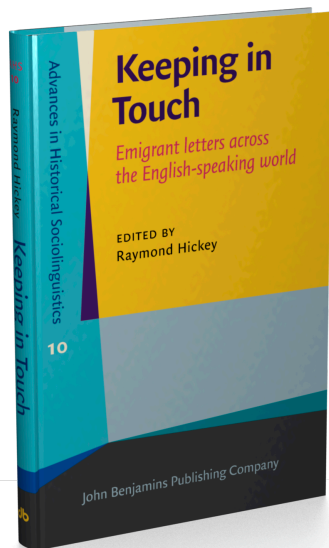


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## Keeping in Touch

Emigrant letters across the English-speaking world

Edited by Raymond Hickey

University of Duisburg and Essen

The current volume presents a number of chapters which look at informal vernacular letters, written mostly by emigrants to the former colonies of Britain, who settled at these locations in the past few centuries, with a focus on letters from the nineteenth century. Such documents often show features for varieties of English which do not necessarily appear in later sources or which are not attested with the same range or in the same set of grammatical contexts. This has to do with the vernacular nature of the letters, i.e. they were written by speakers who had a lower level of education and whose speech, and hence their written form of language, does not appear to have been guided by considerations of standardness and conformity to external norms of language. Furthermore, the writers of the emigrant letters, examined in the current volume, were very unlikely to have known of, still less have used, manuals of letter writing. Emigrant letters thus provide a valuable source of data in tracing the possible development of features in varieties of English in the USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

[Advances in Historical Sociolinguistics, 10] 2019. x, 289 pp.

HB 978 90 272 0447 9 EUR 99.00

E-BOOK 978 90 272 6188 5 EUR 99.00

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