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Vlaardingse woorden

Summary

In this article an account is given of an investigation into the vocabulary formerly spoken in Vlaardingen (a town to the west of Rotterdam). The underlying question is whether it is possible to discover words or meanings which are (were) peculiar to Vlaardingen or, more generally, to any particular place. The etymology, sense and geographical distribution of a number of old Vlaardingen words which differ from Standard Dutch are discussed. It becomes evident that finding such characteristic words is difficult. Sometimes there is a word that does not occur elsewhere, but it is always possible that it did occur elsewhere but simply had not been recorded. Nevertheless it is not improbable that words typical of a particular locality did indeed exist: contacts between towns were less intensive than they are now. Moreover many content words show a very varied geographical distribution; therefore they, more than other language elements, may be expected to be connected with specific places. For the present, however, it is clearly difficult to find such locally restricted words.