

WHERE THE WORD "COP" COMES FROM

There have been advanced a number of stories as to the origin of the word "cop" as applied to policemen. The word cop is supposed to be derived from the Old English verb to cop, meaning to catch, to get hold of, to nab. This meaning is retained in the slang expression to cop off, meaning to grab; to make away with something sought by others. In England, a policeman is often called a copper, that is, one who cops or catches offenders.

As applied to a policeman, the word cop dates back to 1859. The verb cop, as used in dialect English, has been traced back to the Seventeenth century. There is no evidence that cop was originally the abbreviation of constabulary of police.

Another story of the origin of the word is connected with the following: In 1829 Sir Robert Peel organized the first modern police force in London. Members of the police force were blue uniforms with very large copper buttons. These buttons gave the police the name copper, shortened to cop.—*Literary Digest*.

HOW THE EXPRESSION "BY HOOK OR BY CROOK" BEGAN

In this expression the final word was formerly Croke. Hook and Croke were able English lawyers, in whose day it was customary to say, "If I can't win by Hook I will by Croke."—*The Kablegram*.

THE ORIGIN OF "O. K."

The expression "O. K." has many origins. H. L. Mencken produces eleven or twelve alleged sources. He says that one theory derives it from the initials of one Obediah Kelly, an early railway freight agent, who signed his initials to bills of lading. Another traces it to an early Presidential campaign slogan, "The people is oll korrect." Still another derives it from a Choctaw word, "okeh" signifying "it is so." Woodrow Wilson accepted this etymology and used "okeh" in approving official papers. This made the form popular, and as a result we still have "Okey" phonograph records, shoe-shining parlors, lunchrooms and hot-dog stands.—*N. Y. Herald-Tribune*.

