THE DIALECT OF CURSOR MUNDI

(Cotton MS Vespasian A III)

by

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This is an investigation of the phonology of Cursor Mundi, (Cotton MS Vespasian A III), a poem ordinarily regarded as representative of the Northern literary dialect of Middle English. A distinction is maintained between a lost original manuscript, composed probably in Southern Scotland, ca. 1300, and the extant manuscript under consideration, written probably in Durham, ca. 1400.

Synchronic methods of investigation are employed to make an analysis of the phonemic system of this dialect, and to establish its relationship to Old English. It is assumed: 1) The poem has a basic metrical regularity; 2) The end-rimes are true; 3) The spelling is phonemically relevant.

A comprehensive statement of the phonemic system of this dialect is given. Generally it conforms to descriptive statements of the handbooks regarding the Northern dialect of Middle English ca. 1400, confirming most of the earlier conclusions. Certain further conclusions are the result of this study:

1. In the Vesp. dialect OE /$\bar{æ}^2$/>/$\bar{e}$/ before voiced dentals, elsewhere /$\bar{e}$/. The vowel, however, of dal 'deal' (vb) and tel 'tell' (vb) is /$\bar{e}$/ in Vesp. These irregularities are explained as resulting from dialect mixture.

2. Both rime and spelling evidence shows that before the consonant clusters /ld, nd, rð/ low and mid vowels are ordinarily long. Little can be inferred regarding high front or back vowels in the same environments.

3. Spelling evidence demonstrates that the Great Vowel Shift is

under way in this dialect of ca. 1400. The evidence also suggests that in its initial stages the shift may have been a raising which appeared primarily before dentals.

4. The Vesp. MS gives no unambiguous evidence to indicate that there is a development of /ō/ > /ü/ in this dialect, although such a development is quite general in the North.

5. An earlier unstressed vowel /ə/, corresponding to a historical inflectional syllable, is everywhere lost in the dialect of the Vesp. MS, the spelling -e remaining only to indicate that the vowel of the preceding stressed syllable is long.

6. An earlier /ə/ before /d, s, n, r, l/ in an unstressed word-final syllable is regularly lost when the following word has an initial vowel. Evidence indicates that an earlier unstressed /-əs/ or /-əd/ also regularly becomes /-s/ or /-d/ respectively before a word with an initial consonant.

7. Vowels of pretonic syllables are levelled to /ə/. A number of words frequently occurring in unaccented positions are also levelled to /ə/ in these positions, occasioning a number of spelling confusions.

8. So-called "loss of medial k" in made from maked, and tan from taken is identified as an analogical development of new inflectional endings on the infinitive-present forms ga and ta which developed as sandhi-variants in frequently unaccented positions.

9. Introduction of words from Old French with initial /v/ and those with medial /f/, and loss in native words of a final inflectional syllable following a fricative which was originally voiced in inter-vocalic position, bring about a phonemic contrast between /f/ and /v/.

10. There is a phonemic contrast between a voiceless and a

voiced interdental fricative in the dialect of the Vesp. MS. This is indicated by a consistent spelling differentiation between þ̲h̲ and þ̲. It is shown that no such spelling distinction occurred in the Cursor original.

11. Initial /h/ is lost preceding the sonorants /n, n, l, r/ and very probably /w/, in spite of the preservation of a rather common qu̲ spelling for the latter.

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# APPRECIATION

## I.  INTRODUCTION

[This study is a description of the phonology of a North-
ern literary dialect of Middle English, specifically that
of Cotton MS Vespasian A III, Brit. Mus., of _Cursor Mundi_,
a manuscript written ca. 1400 in or near Durham, which must
be distinguished from the original poem, composed ca. 1300
in Southern Scotland.]

**1.1.**  The present investigation of a Northern dialect of Middle
English is based entirely on the Vespasian MS[1] of _Cursor Mundi_.  This poem,
a large collection of Biblical paraphrase, medieval legend and ecclesiasti-
cal odds and ends, appears in some ten known manuscripts which vary from
fragments of a few hundred verses to nearly thirty-thousand verses of the
complete poem.

**1.2.**  The Northern origin of the _Cursor_ is indicated by the poet
himself in reference to the Assumption Fragment which he recast into North-
ern English:

20061   In sotherin englis was it draun,
        And turnd it haue i till our aun
        Langage o northrin lede
        þat can non oiþer englis rede.[2]

The more precise provenance of the original has been the subject of specu-
lation by scholars[3] over the past eighty-five years.  Stated opinions are

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[1]In keeping with the practice of the _Middle English Dictionary_, the des-
ignation **Vesp** is used throughout this study instead of the ordinarily cur-
rent _Cotton_.  In order to avoid confusion, the name is changed, without com-
ment, in quotations, and the abbreviation C is simply altered to V wherever
necessary.

[2]These verses do not appear in the Midland manuscripts, Trinity and Laud,
but do appear in Vespasian, Edinburgh, Göttingen and Fairfax.  The latter is
from Lancashire and is considered 'northrin' in contrast to the 'sotherin'
(Midland) of the Assumption Fragment, vss. 20065-848.

[3]James A. H. Murray, _The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland_,
Transactions of the Philological Society, 1870-1872 (London, 1873), p. 30.
[Durham]

rather evenly divided between Scotland and one of the Northern counties of England, usually Durham. Much of the difficulty arises from a vagueness on the part of the scholars themselves regarding the particular manuscript referred to. It is essential to maintain a distinction between a lost original manuscript, regarding which only inferences are possible, and certain manuscripts which have been preserved to the present. Apparently those favoring Durham have reference to the Vesp. MS rather than to the original, but this is not made clear. Before a decision is reached, one has to account for a somewhat ambiguous passage in the Proloug:

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231  Efter haly kyrc state
     þis ilk bok it es translate
     Into Inglis tong to rede
     For þe loue of Inglis lede;
     Inglis lede of Ingland
     For þe commun at understand.
     Frankis rimes here I redd
     Communlik in ilk sted
     Mast es it wroght for frankis man:
     Quat is for him na frankis can?
     Of Ingland þe nacion,
     Es Inglis man þar in commun;
     þe speche þat man wit mast may spede,
     Mast þar-wit to speke war nede;
     Selden was for ani chance
     Praised Inglis tong in france;
     Giue we ilkan þare langage
     Me think we do þam non outrage.
     To laud and Inglis man i spell
     þat understandes þat i tell.
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T. L. Kington Oliphant, The Old and Middle English (London, 1878), p. 400 [North of Yorkshire]

Max Kaluza, "Zu den Quellen und dem Hss-Verhältnis des Cursor Mundi," Englische Studien, XII (1888), p. 453. [Nördlich vom Tweed]

Heinrich Hupe, Cursor Studies and Criticism on the Dialects of its MSS. (1888), p. 186*. [Lincolnshire]

Curt Barth, Der Wortschatz des Cursor Mundi, Königsberg Diss., (1903) p. 50. [Durham]

Otto Strandberg, The Rime-Vowels of Cursor Mundi, Uppsala Diss., (1919), p. xv. [Northumberland].

Rolf Kaiser, Zur Geographie des mittelenglischen Wortschatzes. Palaestra 205; (Leipzig, 1937) p. 8. [Scotland]

Bruce Dickins and R. W. Wilson, Early Middle English Texts, (Cambridge, 1951) p. 114. [Durham]

England is mentioned specifically. For this reason several scholars, in particular Strandberg, reject Scotland: "I should like to assume, like Kaluza, that the original was written in Scotland, if it were not for a passage that seems to speak against this."[4] As a kind of compromise he suggests Northumberland. Actually it is the contrast between _Inglis_ and _Frankis_ that concerns the poet. Kaiser remarks:

> Zunächst geht doch nun aus dem Textzusammenhang klar hervor, dass hier der Verfasser mit dem Begriff 'Inglis' sein National-algefühl, dies aber nur im Gegensatz zu 'Frankis' zum Ausdruck bringt. An einen Gegensatz zu 'schottisch' ist überhaupt gar nicht gedacht.[5]

Kaiser demonstrates that the term 'Scottish' was not commonly used until the end of the 15th century, hence 'English' at that time was applied to all localities where non-Gaelic or non-French was spoken, including Southern Scotland.

   <u>1.3.</u>  The time of composition is also subject to some dispute. The first attempt to assign a date was made by Murray, ".. written, near Durham, about 1275-1300 (while Alexander III reigned in Scotland), and preserved

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[4]Strandberg, op. cit., p. xiv.

[5]Kaiser, op. cit., p. 8. The same argument was given 40 years earlier by O. F. Emerson, The History of the English Language (New York, 1897), p. 100: "Lowland Scotch, as it is called, is an outgrowth of Northern English, and did not differ from it materially until about 1450. In this early period the language of the Scottish writers and that of Cursor Mundi or other Northern works is almost, if not quite, identical. Moreover the Scotch themselves called the language English, or Inglis, their form of the word." Also Murray, op. cit., pp. 41-2: "Down to the end of the 15th century, there was no idea of calling the tongue of the Lowlands Scotch; whenever the 'Scottish language' was spoken of, what was meant was the Gaelic or Erse, the tongue of the original Scots, who gave their name to the country. The tongue of the Lowlanders was 'Inglis', not only as having been the tongue of the Angles of Lothian and Tweeddale, and as having been introduced beyond the Forth by Anglo-Saxon settlers, but English as being the spoken tongue of the northern subjects of the King of England, those with whom the subjects of the King of Scotland came most immediately in contact."

in an orthography not much later."[6] Murray's dating rests on the Vesp. MS which in any case is younger than he supposes. His date is probably a guess. Hupe fixes the time at 1255-1280.[7] The earlier date he deduces from a reference in vs. 9515 to "sent Robert bok," that is, Robert Grosseteste's Chasteau d'Amour. The terminal date is assigned on negative evidence: no mention is made of the expulsion from England of the "felun Iuus" in the year 1290, and no mention is made either of a "groat", a new silver coin minted in 1279. Actually Hupe has settled on this date to agree with his preconceptions regarding the author of the Cursor. Strandberg says, without elaboration, "It was composed just before 1300."[8] Kaiser states: "Der C. M. wurde wahrscheinlich um die Wende des xiii/xiv Jh. abgefasst."[9]

It appears probable that the Cursor original was composed in the southern part of Scotland at about 1300. It is neither possible nor necessary to locate or date it more precisely.

1.4. The Cursor Mundi is unquestionably the work of a single rather resourceful writer who drew liberally from a variety of English, French and Latin sources.[10] He may also have added several thousand verses of original material to his compilation.[11]

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[6] Murray, op. cit., p. 30.

[7] Hupe, op. cit., pp. 187*-9*. Hupe settles on Lincolnshire because it enables him to explain the name of John of Lindberghe which occurs in Gött. 17100. He then identifies this name with a Lincolnshire man, having made up his mind regarding the date before he begins examining the evidence.

[8] Strandberg, op. cit., p. xiv.

[9] Kaiser, op. cit., p. 8. The latest date — 1320 — is given by Jakob Schipper, Altenglische Metrik, I. (Bonn: 1881), p. 265.

[10] H. C. W. Hänisch, Inquiry into the Sources of the Cursor Mundi, Breslau Diss., (1884) (EETS, No. 99 OS), pp. 1*-56*.

[11] Hänisch does not suggest any source for vss. 24970-29555, evidently not considering it proper to the Cursor. Morris points out (Preface, p. ix) that this material appears only in the Northern copies. The poet himself remarks (vss. 219-20): "þe last resun of alle þis run/ Sal be of hir concepcion," suggesting that the Additions may be an afterthought or a contribution by a later writer. Strandberg accordingly concludes his investigation at vs. 24968.

Surviving in one or more editions are a total of 29,555 verses of the poem, of which all except a few hundred were probably to be found in the original. The poet ordinarily wrote in "short meter," that is, a pair of rimed verses having four alternating accents each. There are also 1,031 verses in "langer bastune," that is, a verse of seven accents in rimed groups of four or more verses. These begin at vs. 14937. At vs. 23944 begin 135 stanzas of "rime couée" and another 35 stanzas begin at vs. 25403.

1.5. The Cursor Mundi is preserved in a number of manuscripts, of which the most important and most representative is Cotton MS Vespasian A III in the Library of the British Museum. This is the most complete of the several manuscripts and nearly all of it is in a single handwriting, comprehending more than 26,000 verses. Two other hands appear in fragments, vss. 16749-16848, vss. 17289-17316, vss. 20065-21172, but these contrast rather strikingly with the first and have therefore been ignored in this study. The Vesp. manuscript is the specific basis for this dissertation. Unless special indication to the contrary is given, all citations are from the Vesp. and the dialect here described is that of the Vesp. MS. Several other manuscripts are valuable as bases of comparison and occasionally serve to point out revisions which the Vesp. scribe has made.

Of comparable length is MS Theol. 107 in the Göttingen University Library. This and Vesp. sometimes differ in phrasing, but such differences, chiefly lexical, are most pronounced in the first part of Gött. preceding a transition first observed by Barth.[12] This occurs at approximately vs. 10962.[13] Beyond this rift Vesp. and Gött. are usually almost identical. Gött. ends at vs. 27566, in the sixth of the so-called Additions.

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[12]Barth, op. cit., pp. 10-13.
[13]Kaiser, op. cit., p. 7, raises a question about this and suggests vs. 11000 as perhaps more exact.

The third important manuscript, the Edinburgh College of Physicians MS, is actually a fragment which picks up the narrative at vs. 18989. The first part is decidedly more archaic in spelling and other features than other manuscripts, and is presumably more similar to the original than later manuscripts.[14] Edin. is interrupted in several places by defects in the manuscript. The first hand, Edin$_1$, terminates at vs. 22417.[15] The second hand continues to vs. 24802 and is often parallel with Vesp. and Götz$_2$.[16] Edin$_3$ is extremely brief — 158 verses.

Other manuscripts of somewhat incidental interest are: Fairfax MS 14 Bodleian Library (Frf.), written in a Lancashire dialect; MS R 3 8, Trinity College, Cambridge (Trin.), in a Midland dialect.

1.6. The relationship between the several manuscripts is of some interest, chiefly as a guide to comparing various readings. At least five schemes have been published,[17] all based primarily on the evidence of phrasings and none less than 60 years old.

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[14]A complete, though somewhat old, study of the Edin. MS appears in Willy Hörning, Die Schreibung der Handschrift E des Cursor Mundi. Berlin Diss. (1906).

[15]The Vesp. MS is interrupted by an extended insertion by the so-called 'third scribe' from vss. 20065-21173. Because of this and also because of extended gaps in Edin, there are actually only 1630 verses in which Edin$_1$ and Vesp$_1$ are parallel, a rather slender basis for any comparisons.

[16]Characteristic differences are i spelling side by side with e of Vesp. in unstressed syllables (6.14), h for gh, preservation of an earlier t for þ following dentals (7.26), and the lack of distinction between þ and th (7.25). A lexical difference is Scottish bigube where other MSS generally have bigan.

[17]Julius Zupitza, Alt- und mittelenglisches Übungsbuch, 3rd ed. (Vienna, 1882), p. 91. A typographical error has crept into several of the later editions and has been permitted to remain. Zupitza quotes Edin., comparing it first with VG, then FT. The erroneous editions state "Unser text folgt in der schreibung TE." Actually no two MSS are less alike.

Max Kaluza, "Zum Handschriftenverhältnis und zur Textcritik des Cursor Mundi," Englische Studien XI, 235-275; "Zu den Quellen und dem Handschriftenverhältnis des Cursor Mundi," Englische Studien, XII, 451-8. Kaluza's conclusions are usually considered most reliable.

1.7. The Vesp. MS is a relatively consistent piece of work.

It is not an autograph manuscript; it is probably removed from its orig-

inal by as much as a century in time, and by possibly as many as three

or four intermediate copyists.  It does not, however, appear to have any

abrupt transitions.  There are a few instances of mixtures, possibly from

the dialects of one or several of the earlier scribes.  The -u- and -i-

spellings for an unstressed vowel in words like watur or fadir (6.14) are

to be explained in part on this basis.  Occasionally an o spelling occurs

in various words in which the northern dialects consistently have a, for

example, womb 536; foos 7242; so 9, 283, 915; both 40, 42; non 10, 51, 248,

460.  The number is almost insignificantly small.  In womb and foos there

may be some influence from a neighboring dialect, but in so we may have

one of several spellings for a word frequently employed in unaccented po-

sitions in a verse (6.27).  There are a few morphological features too, in-

cluding an occasional hem or ham for the more regular þam.  The total num-

ber of these occurrences is about a dozen.  While sal 'shall' is standard

in the Northern dialects (7.19) a Midland influence is apparent in schal

35, 46, 11205; schalt þou 60.  A relic infinitival -en  is fairly common

(6.18).

1.8.  This study, in brief, analyzes a literary dialect of approx-

imately 1400.[18]  A reasonable guess would assign the place of composition

of the original to Scotland and locate the place of copying of the Vesp. in

or near Durham.

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Heinrich Hupe, Genealogie und Uberlieferung der Handschriften des mit-
telenglisches Gedichtes Cursor Mundi, Göttingen Diss., (1886) ("The Filia-
tion and Text of the MSS."  EETS No. 99 OS, pp. 59*-103*).  Also Anglia
XI, 121-145: EETS No. 99, pp. 113* ff.

Charles Langley Crow, Zur Geschichte des Kurzen Reimpaars im Mittel-
englischen, Göttingen Diss. (1892), p. 18.

[18]The Middle English Dictionary assigns the date ca. 1400 to the Vesp.
MS. Cf. Alois Brandl and Otto Zippel, Mittelenglische Sprach- und Liter-
aturproben, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1927), p. 100: "1st half 14th cent."

1.9.   Like every other study based wholly or in part on <u>Cursor Mundi</u>,[19] this makes use of Rev. Richard Morris' edition.  A number of Morris' renderings have been compared with the microfilm of the Vesp. MS and where changes are called for, these have been noted.  Morris' lineation has been faithfully followed, but punctuation has been altered freely wherever it seemed necessary to make a change.

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[19]<u>Cursor Mundi</u>, edited by Rev. Richard Morris, (E. E. T. S. Nos. 57, 59, 62, 66, 99, 101 OS:  London, 1874-93).  Murray uses his own rendering of a brief portion of Vesp. Hupe, while taking Morris as a starting point, relies largely on his own critical edition and argues from that.

## II. PROCEDURE

[It is assumed: 1) the meter of Cursor Mundi is basic-
ally regular; 2) The end-rimes are true; 3) The spelling
of the Vesp. MS is phonemically relevant.]

2.1. The objective of this investigation is to analyze the

phonemic system of a Northern literary dialect of Middle English and to

establish its relationships with Old English.

2.2. The descriptive statement takes up the phonemes of the

dialect one by one and; in each instance, it covers the following points:

1) The identification of the phoneme, its general phonetic character[1] and

its distribution; 2) The spelling or spellings by which it is indicated;

3) The historical sources of the phoneme.

Wherever it is necessary, the descriptive statement is ampli-

fied by a comment on apparent or actual irregularities in some signifi-

cant feature. After the problem is identified, consideration is given

to the views expressed by the writers of handbooks and other publications

dealing with the Northern dialect of Middle English of ca. 1400. Unless

the evidence of Vesp. is in conflict, these views are accepted. Where a

disagreement remains, the problem is further discussed and a solution or

solutions offered.

2.3. Certain assumptions are implicit in this treatment of the

evidence of the Vesp. MS. Studies of the Cursor regularly make one or more

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[1]Vowels are described in terms of contrasts: long/short, high/low,
front/back, round/unround; consonants are classified as stops, fricatives
or sonorants, and, where applicable, the point or place of articulation and
the presence or lack of voicing.

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of these assumptions, ordinarily without comment. The first of these is
that the Cursor Mundi has a basic metrical regularity. This has been ob-
served from time to time. Schipper remarks:

> Im Gegensatz zu diesen Dichtungen von freierer Structur des Verses
> macht sich eine Gruppe anderer Dichtungen des Nordens durch ein
> entschiedenes Streben, in strengerer Weise die richtige Silben-
> zahl des französischen kurzen Reimpaares einzuhalten, bemerkbar.
> Dahin gehören . . Cursor Mundi . . Im Vergleich zu den früheren
> Versen sind die kurzen Reimpaare dieser Gedichte schon sehr
> regelmässig, ja für einen harmonischen Klang des englischen
> Verses zu regelmässig, so dass in Folge des strengeren, silben-
> zählenden Princips öfters der natürlichen Betonung der Wörter
> Zwang auferlegt wird.[2]

Saintsbury says:

> We certainly cannot take a better example of the more regular
> form from the mighty mass of non-romantic material which exists,
> than the bulk, ingens, but by no means horrendum or informe of
> the Cursor Mundi. Even here there is a frequent monosyllabic
> beginning, and sometimes, if not very often, a trisyllabic
> foot . . . But for the most part the syllabic regularity is
> very great, and in long stretches of lines you shall not find
> a single violation of it.[3]

Hupe[4] agrees to substantially the same thing, but under the influence of
tenBrink's analysis of Chaucerian prosody, he introduces modifications and
qualifications which the bleak metrical system of the Cursor fails to sus-
tain. Thus he is sometimes led to suppose that changes which were intro-
duced later were part of the system of the original.

Although the original is regular, individual scribes make alter-
ations in the meter. This is true too of the Vesp. scribe. Characteris-
tics of an earlier and extremely rigid metrical pattern are still perfect-
ly apparent, but they no longer hold for Vesp. It is perhaps well to

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[2] Schipper, op. cit., pp. 264-5.
[3] George Saintsbury, A History of English Prosody (2nd ed.; London,
1923), I, 129.
[4] Hupe, Cursor Studies, pp. 253*-261*.

remember that, if a choice has to be made between phonological or morpho-
logical regularity on the one hand and metrical regularity on the other,
the scribe is seldom reluctant to sacrifice the latter. At times the
scribe inserts an atonic particle to compensate for a lost syllable, but
this practice is not regularly followed. Reconstructions of an earlier
meter, which one can often make by comparing several parallel manuscripts,
are quite important, for a statement regarding the unstressed vowel in
Vesp. is based primarily on differences which have arisen in this particu-
lar area. Principal attention, however, is directed not to the character
of the original meter, but to its treatment at the hands of the Vesp.
scribe.

2.4. The second assumption is that the end-rimes are true.[5]
Strandberg remarks: "On account of the comparatively small number of in-
correct rimes, we must state that the author of Cursor Mundi was a fairly
good rimer."[6] In reality this is not a conclusion for Strandberg as much
as it is a starting-point. Since much of the analysis of the vowel system
in this investigation makes use of Strandberg's classifications, the assump-
tion is also implicit here.

2.5. The third assumption is that the scribe is trying to re-
present his own dialect and that therefore his spelling is phonemically

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[5]The poet's preoccupation with careful riming is quaintly expressed in
the following:

9237 (Gött.)  Abiud ꝛeit cam of him,
              Of Abiud, Elyachim;
              Of quam asor, sadoch of him
              þat loth er for to lig in rim.

              'Abiud yet came of him;
              Of Abiud [came] Elyachim;
              Of whom [came] Asor; Sadoch [came] of him,
              Who [that is 'whose names'] are loath to lie in rime.'

[6]Strandberg, op. cit., p. xvi.

relevant. In other words, we assume that the spelling of Vesp. represents the sound system of the scribe's dialect. This cannot be proved without using a circular argument, nevertheless it must be understood as fundamental to the statement on the phonology.

**2.6.** The investigation itself falls into three general parts: 1) Long and short vowels and diphthongs in stressed syllables; 2) Unstressed vowels: 3) Consonants. In effect there are three somewhat distinct approaches, one for each part.

**2.7.** Since Strandberg's Rime Vowels of Cursor Mundi represents a cataloguing of all the rimes from vs. 1-24968 and at least a tentative classification of the vowels and diphthongs in rime syllables, this forms a starting point for the first part of the present investigation. The vowel of a rime syllable is by definition an accented vowel (6.2) and a certain measure of identification is provided by the word or words with which it is paired in rime. There are upwards of 12,000 rimes in Vesp. and between eight and ten times as many accented syllables. Strandberg's work must accordingly be considered as an extensive but selective sampling. Strandberg proceeds on the assumption that the dialect of the Vesp. MS has long and short vowels and diphthongs and he works back to their OE, ON and OF etyma.[7] Apparently he sets up the vowels — long and short — which the handbooks ordinarily ascribe to the Northern dialect of Middle English and then proceeds to identify them. This is adequate for a catalog and it is productive of a relatively reliable statement when it is conducted on as large a scale as Strandberg's investigation is.

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[7]Strandberg calls his thesis "a phonological and etymological investigation." One is inclined to question some of his etymologies. Cf. the review of Strandberg's Rime Vowels, by Herbert Kalen in Englische Studien, LIX, 99.

It is possible to determine from <u>Rime Vowels</u> that certain words
are permitted to rime regularly while others are never rimed.  Ordinarily
it may be assumed that accented final syllables which regularly rime have
the same vowel phoneme.  Since Vesp. is a continuation of an OE dialect,
specifically ONorthumbrian, there must be demonstrable a regular corres-
pondence between a given phoneme in Vesp. and one in OE.[8]  The Vesp. dia-
lect has moreover numerous ON borrowings[9] which have been adapted to the
phonological system of the native dialect.  There are also a substantial
number of adaptations of the OF system[10] to the Vesp. dialect.  In every
instance it must be possible to demonstrate, or at least to suggest, the
relationship of OE, ON or OF words to those in Vesp. in terms of the adap-
tation of one sound system to another.

<u>2.8</u>.  The present investigation assumes that both regular and
occasional spellings in Vesp. are significant.  Consequently the spell-
ings of occurrences of various phonemes have been checked not only against
the comprehensive listings in Kaluza's <u>Glossary</u>, which is virtually an <u>in-</u>
<u>dex verborum</u>, but also against occasional spellings observed and catalogued
in the course of several intensive readings of the entire Vesp. MS.  One
result of the latter is the identification of a raising in the long vowels
as a relatively early manifestation of the Great Vowel Shift (3.18) and
possibly also of the monophthongization of /ai/ to /ā/ (5.6).

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[8]The OE phonemes, although not identified as such, are adapted from
Eduard Sievers and Karl Brunner, <u>Altenglische Grammatik</u> (2nd ed.; Halle,
1951).

[9]The sound system of ON used in this study is based primarily on Adolf
Noreen, <u>Altisländische Grammatik</u> (4th ed.; Halle, 1923); also on E. V.
Gordon, <u>An Introduction to Old Norse</u> (London, 1949).

[10]The sound system of OF used here is based on M. K. Pope, <u>From Latin</u>
<u>to Modern French</u> (2nd ed.; Manchester, 1952).

2.9. The description of the vowels of unstressed syllables depends primarily on an accurate analysis of the metrical system of the Cursor and the manner in which the meter has been modified in Vesp. Qualitative identification of various etyma is relatively unimportant since all are merged into a single phoneme which frequently disappears altogether.

Since a preliminary survey indicated that certain recurring environments appeared to correspond very regularly to unconventional prosodic patterns, some 10,000 verses of Vesp. were minutely examined, supplemented by a further survey of particular features at vss. 1-1000, 10000-11000 and 25000-26000. A number of phenomena were catalogued not only with regard to location by verse, but also with regard to the environment within the utterance. The purpose was to isolate and classify all possible conditioning factors. The following were included: 1) "Syllabic" unstressed -e, and its possible morphological functions; 2) Unstressed final -i and -u, 3) The suffixes -er, -el, -es, -ed and -en together with their variant spellings; 4) Metrical gaps (since these appeared to be especially regular following certain words, a separate file was maintained for ilk, quilk and suilk);5) Pretonic unstressed elements, both with regard to spelling variations and loss; 6) Unconventionally spelled unstressed syllables.

Further a classification was made of all of the post-rime elements in the entire poem. These were arranged on the basis of spelling since there was no way of determining in advance whether these might be considered to be syllabic or not.

2.10. The Vesp. scribe and earlier copyists did not merely transcribe, but also revised the material before them, thus one may anticipate oversights and overcorrections. Only rarely does it happen, if it occurs at all, that a given feature has been consistently changed

throughout the poem. Consequently a quantitative statement is given where the evidence points to, but does not conclusively indicate, a certain development.

2.11. The description of the consonantal phonemes rests primarily on an examination of the spelling employed by the Vesp. scribe for the individual consonants. The operational assumption is that this spelling is fundamentally regular and that there is a one-to-one correspondence between symbols and sounds.[11] The procedure employed was that of extensively cataloguing spellings to indicate the distribution of each letter in the spelling. A table of correspondences was set up and checked against etymological evidence to indicate the specific letter used in a given environment to indicate a given sound.

In certain cases, where special problems were involved requiring a quantitative statement, all occurrences of a particular word or form were listed. This was done, for example, with take and make (7.7). All occurrences of a the spelling for Vesp. be (7.25), as well as of the verb thar 'need' were not only noted, but were individually examined on the microfilm of the Vesp. MS. Here a statement of relative frequencies would have been adequate, but actually it was possible to present a statement with no exceptions.

The entire poem was read several times in an effort to find apparently irregular or unconventional spellings which would in turn point to developments concealed by the normal orthography. The mere fact of irregularity, however, was never sufficient to impart significance. Such

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[11]"Symbol" does not necessarily represent "letter." In Vesp. th represents a single sound just as much as þ does.

irregularity had first of all to recur in either the same word, or pref-
erably in analogous words.  These irregularities then had to be covered
by a generalization accounting  for all or nearly all such deviations.
Finally it was necessary to provide a check of some kind on the validity
of the generalizations.  For that reason rather frequent reference has
been made to reverse spellings as an especially reliable kind of control.

# III. LONG VOWELS

[OE had the following long vowels: /ī, ȳ, ē, ǣ, ā, ū, ō/. Except when shortened, OE /ī, ē, ā, ū, ō/ > Vesp. /ī, ē, ā, ū, ọ/ respectively. OE /ȳ/ > Vesp. /ī/; OE (WS) /ǣ?/ = OAng /ē/ > Vesp. /ẹ/; OE /ēo/ > Vesp. /ẹ/. OE /ǣ¹/ > Vesp. /ẹ/ before voiced dentals, otherwise /ẹ/. In open syllables OE /ĭ, ĕ, ă, ŭ, ŏ/ > Vesp. /ẹ, ẹ, ā, ọ, ọ/ respectively; OE /ȳ/ > Vesp. /ẹ/. Subphonemic raising of long vowels occurs primarily before dentals. Mid and low vowels may be long before /ld, nd, st/; before these clusters there is probable shortening of high vowels that were long in OE; before other clusters all vowels are short.]

<u>3.1.</u>  In stressed syllables the dialect of the Vesp. MS has the following long vowels:

| ī | | ū |
|---|---|---|
| ẹ | | ọ |
| ẹ | | ọ |
| | ā | |

The following regular and occasional spellings occur in Vesp.:

| | Usually Written | | | | | Occasionally Written | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| /ī/ | i | wif | 'wife' | 742 | <u>ij</u> wijf | 'wife | 725 |
| | | | | | <u>y</u> wyde | 'width' | 1676 |
| | | | | | <u>ai</u> said (3.18) | 'side' | 23143 |
| /ẹ/ | e | her | 'here' | 549 | <u>ei</u> heir | 'here' | 3296 |
| | | | | | <u>ee</u> sees | 'sees' | 862 |
| | | | | | <u>i</u> hire (3.18) | 'here' | 1626 |
| /ẹ/ | e | bem | 'beam' | 9946 | <u>ei</u> heite | 'heat' | 998 |
| /ā/ | a | mak | 'make' | 87 | <u>aa</u> maa | 'more' | 4690 |
| | | | | | <u>ai</u> laith | 'harm' | 2061 |
| | | | | | <u>e</u> tene (3.18) | 'taken' | 1823 |
| /ū/ | u | abute | 'about' | 995 | <u>ow</u> now | 'now' | 51 |
| | <u>ou</u> | about | 'about' | 677 | <u>uu</u> buu | 'bow' | 14496 |
| | | | | | <u>o</u> abote | 'about' | 192 |

/ǭ/  <u>o</u>  do     'do'    113    <u>oo</u>  doo          'do'    15305
                                                          <u>oi</u>  oiþer      'other'  14859
                                                          <u>u</u>  stud (3.18) 'stood'  1853

/ǭ/  <u>o</u>  chosin  'chosen'  713

    <u>3.2</u>. The Vesp. scribe uses <u>i</u> fairly often as a "length mark" for vowels.[1] It is common with /ẹ̄, ẹ̲/ (5.6) and also with /ī/ where it is written <u>ij</u> almost exclusively. With /ǭ/ it occurs only in the words broiþer, oiþer and noiþer. These words are ordinarily written <u>broþer</u>, oþer and noþer and it is not at all unlikely that the <u>oi</u> spellings are relics or borrowings from another dialect. If it is assumed that the diphthong /ai/ remains in Vesp.,̣ <u>i</u> as a "length mark" for /ā/ is rare. It never occurs with /ū/ since this is indicated by <u>ou</u>. The spelling <u>huited</u> 15833 is irregular, indicating a raising to [ū] of /ǭ/ (3.18).

    <u>3.3</u>. The high front vowel /ī/ is written <u>i</u> or <u>y</u>[2] in an open syllable or before a single consonant.[3] It is occasionally written <u>ij</u>.[4] It is derived (a) from OE /ī/ and /ȳ/,[5] and (b) from OE /ij̆/ and /ȳj̆/.

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   [1]Jordan, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., pp. 12, 36.
   [2]The usual spelling is <u>i</u>. The Vesp. scribe, however, occasionally uses <u>y</u> for <u>i</u>, and there are passages where the proportion of <u>y</u>'s is unexpectedly high. Among these are the Prologue and vss. 28078-28632.
   [3]Although there are a number of exceptions, the Vesp. MS indicates a decided tendency toward using a double consonant to indicate that the preceding vowel is short. In the first 7000 verses, for instance, a spelling <u>godd</u> is used for 'God' 112 times, for 'good' twice, vss. 5070, 5097, both of which may possibly be read as 'God.' The spelling <u>grett</u> 'great', vss. 3967, 4598, 5304, 5536, should also be noted.
   [4]Strandberg, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 166: "<u>ij</u> is often miswritten <u>i</u> in MS V, e.g., <u>wit</u> (sb) is always written <u>wijt</u>." This is quite false. <u>Wijt</u> as both sb and vb does occur in Vesp., but is far from being regular. Moreover there may be reason to question the assumption that it always had a short vowel.
   [5]The symbol <u>y</u> indicates the OE rounded front vowel.

(a)  1338  syth  'time'  (OE sīþ)

 867  hide  'hide'  (OE hȳdan)  :  bide[6]  (OE bīdan)

(b)  6227  hij  'hasten'  (OE hīgian)  :  cri  (OF crier)

 969  nine  '9'  (OE nigon)[7]  :  mine  (OE mīn)

 1234  dri  'dry'  (OE drȳge)  :  forqui  (OE -hwī)

It is also derived (c) from ON /ī/ and /ȳ/.[8]

(c)  8494  tite  'quickly'  (OIc tīt-t)[9]  :  bite  (OE bītan)

 21820  tine  'lose'  (OIc tȳna)  :  mine

It is also derived (d) from OF /i/.

(d)  12283  cri  'cry'  (OF crier)  :  qui

 9068  awise  'advice'  (OF avis)  :  wise  (OE wīs)

In this dialect the rounded high front vowel, OE /ȳ/ or ON /ȳ/, coalesces with CE /ī/.  CE /ī/ or /ȳ/ + OE /j/[10] > /ī/.

3.4.  OF vowels are not contrasted as to length, and syllable-final vowels are probably phonetically short, as in MnF.  In ME dialects, on the other hand, vowels occurring in accented open syllables are regularly phonemically long.  Accented OF vowels in open syllables are rendered in ME by long vowels, in other words, they are phonemicized as long vowels.  Such a word as OF cri /krī/ appears in Vesp. as /krī/.

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[6]The colon is used in this study to indicate that two words rime, in this instance hide and bide.  The verse number designates a particular couplet in which the given rime occurs.  A complete listing of rime words has been made by Strandberg, but the rimes cited here may be regarded as typical.

[7]Jordan, op. cit., p. 110.

[8]Perhaps ON /ig/ should be added.  A single word, sti 'ladder' 3779 (either OIc stigi or OE stige) is ascribed by Strandberg, op. cit., p. 162, to an ON etymon.  This is possible, but not obligatory.

[9]Where OIc forms are presumably identical with, or differ in no significant respect from ON forms, attested OIc forms are regularly given and identified as such.

[10]The OE voiced palatal continuant (7.10), variously indicated by the handbooks as ʒ, ġ, etc., is indicated here as /j/.

$\underline{3.5}$. The close mid-front vowel /ẹ̄/ is written $\underline{e}$ in open sylla-
bles or before a single consonant. It is also written $\underline{ee}$, or $\underline{ei}$. It is
derived from several OE sources:

OE /ē/    (< Gmc /ē/)

      1145    here    'here'    (OE hēr)

OE /ē/    (< i-umlaut of Gmc /ō/)

      5637    fede    'feed'    (OE fēdan)  :  mede    (OE mēd)

OE /ēo/   (< Gmc /eu/)

      5411    lede    'people'  (OE lēod)   :  fede    (OE fēdan)

OAng /ē/   (< i-umlaut of /ēa/ < Gmc /au/), by "smoothing."

      6331    eke    'also'    (OAng ēc)   :  seke    (OE sēcan)

It is also derived from the following ON sources:

ON /ě/

      2    sere    'several'  (OIc sēr)   :  here    (OE hēran)

ON /ø/

      13800    fere    'healthy'  (OIc fœrr)  :  dere    (OE dēor)

ON /ēu/

      23899    mek    'meek'    (ON *mēuk-r)[11]:eke

It is also derived from OF /e/ in accented open syllables:

      1504    cite    'city'    (OF cite)   :  he    (OE hē)

Vesp. /ẹ̄/ is also derived from OAng /ē/ (< Gmc /ǣ/).[12] This is indi-
cated by the rimes.[13]

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[11]Erik Björkman, Scandinavian Loan Words in Middle English (Halle:
1900, 1902), II, 217. This gives O. W. Scand. mjūkr as an etymon for
ME meek. This form scarcely accounts for /ẹ̄/ in Vesp.
   [12]Commonly abbreviated as /ǣ²/.
   [13]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 101-3, 112, 125-7, 140-1. OE /ǣ²/ did
not occur of course before /n/.

| 1746 | dede | 'deed' | (OAng dēd) | : | lede | |
| 437 | sele | 'happiness' | (OAng sēl) | : | wele | (OE wēl) |
| 626 | slepe | 'sleep' | (OAng slēpan) | : | kepe | (OE cēpan) |
| 2152 | ʒere | 'year' | (OAng gēr) | : | here | |
| 19921 | strete | 'street' | (OAng strēt) | : | fete | (OE fēt) |

**3.6.** Also riming with Vesp. /ẹ̄/ are reflexes of OE /ǣ/ (i-umlaut of Gmc /ai/)[14] but only when these occur before the voiced dentals /d/, /l/, /n/, /r/.[15]

| 2401 | lede | 'lead' | (OE lǣdan) | : | fede | (OE fēdan) |
| 1364 | dele | 'deal' | (OE dǣl) | : | wele | (OE wēl) |
| 9793 | clene | 'clean' | (OE clǣne) | : | wene | (OE wēnan) |
| 6882 | lere | 'teach' | (OE lǣran) | : | here | (OE hēr) |

It is also derived from OE /i/ lengthened in open syllables.

| 8291 | seit | 'sit' | (ONth *sita) | : | suete | (OE swēte) |

**3.7.** Lengthening of vowels in open syllables is regular in Vesp.[16] as it is generally in ME dialects: OE /ĕ/ > Vesp. /ẹ̄/, OE /ă/ > Vesp. /ā/, OE /ŏ/ > Vesp. /ǭ/. In disyllabic words this lengthening occurred when the vowel of a stressed initial syllable was immediately followed by a single consonant plus a vocalic element. The time of this lengthening is ordinarily considered to be about the beginning of the 13th century in most dialects and during the 12th century in the North.[17]

In the North the high front and high back vowels are also lengthened in open syllables. Jordan notes:

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[14]Commonly abbreviated as /ǣ/.
[15]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 103-5, 112, 119-20, 127-8.
[16]Jordan, op. cit., p. 44-5.
[17]Ibid.

Später als die bisher betrachteten Dehnungen fällt die von i > ę
und u > ǭ in offener Silbe. Diese ist hauptsächlich nördlich und
fand im Norden im 13. Jahrh. statt.[18]

A few rimes in Vesp. indicate lengthening of OE /ĭ/ > Vesp. /ę̄/
in open syllables. Among these are <u>weit</u> 'know' (OE witan): <u>yeit</u> 'yet'
(OE gēt) 1875;[19] <u>mikel</u> 'much' (OE micel): <u>seker</u> 'certain' (OE sicor)
14066; <u>heven</u> 'heaven' (OE heofon): <u>driuen</u> 'driven' (OE drifen) 22109.
Lengthening also appears in <u>sete</u> 'sit' (ONth *sita):[20] fete 'feet' (OE
fēt) 14734; <u>seit</u> 'sit': <u>suete</u> 'sweet' (OE swēte) 8291; <u>sett</u> 'sit':
<u>strete</u> 'street' (OAng strēt), <u>mete</u> 'mete' (OE mētan) 15002; <u>seit</u> 'sit':
<u>wit</u> 'know' 8359; OE /ў̆/ underwent the same change following unrounding
of the vowel: <u>stere</u> 'stir' (OE styrian): <u>clere</u> 'clear' (OF cler) 6055,
<u>here</u> 'here' (OE hēr) 4959, 8229.

<u>3.8.</u> The open mid-front vowel /ę̄/ is written <u>e</u> and occasion-
ally <u>ei</u>. It is derived (a) from OE /ĕ/ lengthened in open syllables,
(b) from OE /ēa/, and (c) from OE /ǣ/ (i-umlaut of Gmc /ai/), <u>except</u> in
occurrences before voiced dentals.

|      |       |       |          |              |   |       |             |
|------|-------|-------|----------|--------------|---|-------|-------------|
| (a)  | 4910  | stele | 'steal'  | (OE stelan)  |   |       |             |
| (b)  | 11228 | beme  | 'beam'   | (OE bēam)    |   |       |             |
| (c)  | 10049 | het   | 'heat'   | (OE hǣte)    | : | gret  | (OE grēat)  |
|      | 7166  | res   | 'rush'   | (OE rǣs)     | : | les   | (OE lēas)   |
|      | 11221 | reke  | 'attain' | (ONth rǣca)  | : | speke | (OE specan) |

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[18] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 46.

[19] Rimes of <u>wiȝt</u> 'know': <u>yeitt</u> 'yet' 13082; <u>yett</u>: <u>it</u> 20053, seem to
contradict this. Dialect mixture is not at all improbable, considering
the fact that only scant information is available regarding the area in
which OE /ĭ/ > ME /ę̄/ occurred.

[20] Cf. Uno Lindelöf, <u>Glossar</u> <u>zur</u> <u>altnordhumbrischen</u> <u>Evangelienübersetz-</u>
<u>ung</u> (Helsinki, 1897). Under <u>sitta</u> are given the spellings <u>site</u>, imp. sg.;
<u>siteð</u> (2), <u>sites</u> (2) pres. ind. 3d sg.; <u>sitende</u> (3), <u>sitendum</u> (1) pres.
part. Side by side with these are spellings with -<u>tt</u>-.

It is also derived (d) from ON /ǣ/.

    (d)    997    geite    'guard'    (OIc gǣta) : heite    (OE hǣte)

It is also derived from AN /e/ into which the following coalesced:  (e)

OwF /ẹ/ before /l/,[21] (f) OF /ai/,[22] (g) OF /ei/.[23]

    (e)    4909    lele    'loyal'    (AN leel) : stele

    (f)    9825    pes    'peace'    (OF pais) : les

    (g)    12560    des    'dais'    (OF deis) : mes    (OF mes)

    **3.9.** The development of OE /ǣ/ (i-umlaut of Gmc /ai/) > Vesp.

/ē̦/ before voiced dentals side by side with a development of the same

phoneme to Vesp. /ē̦/ in other environments is attested by scores of rimes.

The rimes in Vesp., of course, are not necessarily those of ca. 1400, but

of ca. 1300. In other words, this contrast is a relatively early develop-

ment. Evidently raising of these vowels takes place before dentals, a

phenomenon which occurs again in a general raising of all long vowels in

this dialect, (3.18) although at a somewhat later time.

    3.10. The distinction the _Cursor_ poet makes between del 'deal'

(sb) and del 'deal' (vb), and also between red 'advice' and red 'speech'

(sb) or 'tell' (vb) has been noted[24] but has not been satisfactorily ex-

plained. Del (sb) is regularly rimed with wel 'well' 1364, 1670, 2428,

9522, 10021, etc., the vowel being /ē̦/. Del (vb), on the other hand, is

rimed with meles 'talk' (OIc mǣla) 12249, fele 'many' (OAng feola)

13467, mele 'meal' (OAng meolo) 4679 with what must be considered /ē̦/.

Both are obviously derived from the same root, going back to OE /ǣ/

(i-umlaut of Gmc /ai/) which before voiced dentals is /ē̦/ in Vesp. The

[21]Pope, _op. cit._, p. 440.
[22]Ibid. p. 443.
[23]Ibid. p. 444.
[24]Strandberg, _op. cit._, p. xvi.

environments of both are identical. The only possible explanation —
structurally unsatisfactory though it may be — is that /dḗl/, side by
side with /dḗl/, represents a dialect mixture. It is quite apparent
that raising of this OE vowel before voiced dentals occurred in a limited
and unsatisfactorily defined area of Northern England.[25] Del (vb) is re-
tained as a relic from an older dialect or borrowed from a neighboring
one while del (sb) conforms to the phonemic pattern of the dialect. The
contrast between red 'tell' and red 'advice' is essentially the same as
that of del and del. It is possible that red 'tell' goes back to OE rǣdan
with ē (< Gmc /æ/), related to Goth. ga-rēdan while red 'advice' goes
back to OE rǣdan with /ǣ/ (< i-umlaut of Gmc /ai/), related to Goth.
ga-raidjan. Both of these would, of course, have /ę̄/ before a voiced
dental in Vesp., but may be differentiated in other dialects. Dialect
mixture appears to be the only plausible explanation here also.

    3.11. The low central vowel /ā/ is written a, aa, and ai. It
is derived (a) from OE /ā/ and from OE /ă/ in open syllables.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (a) | 4569 | ban | 'bone' | (OE bān) |
| | 7634 | ban | 'murderer' | (OE bana) |

It is also derived (b) from ON /ā/, and from ON /ă/ in open syllables;
(c) from OF (Lat.) /a/.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (b) | 4447 | bath | 'both' | (OIc baðir) |
| | 3177 | tak | 'take' | (OIc taka) |

   [25]J. P. Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English (Manchester, 1930),
I, 23. "OE æ 1 (WGmc ā) appears in ME as 'ę̄' or 'ę̄'— The former is the
Anglian development. Fogatscher, Ritter, Jordan and Brandl have all done
valuable work with place-names on the basis of strǎt-strēt. From their
work it would appear that the boundary line runs by the Severn Valley, S.
War, Mid. Northants, Mid. Camb and N. W. Norfolk." This line runs some
distance south of the presumed provenance of Vesp. The distance, however,
may account for the paucity of variants of this kind in the Vesp. dialect.

(c)    2475    blame    'blame'    (OF blame)

There is also a long vowel in <u>tan</u> 'taken' and <u>made</u> 'made' and other forms

of these verbs.  The long vowel is the result of lengthening in an open

syllable (7.7) and not of contraction.[26]

　　　　3.12.  The high back vowel /ū/ is written ordinarily <u>u</u> and <u>ou</u>;

sometimes <u>ow</u>, <u>uu</u> and <u>o</u>.  It is derived (a) from OE /ū/, /ūw/ and /ŭg/.

(a)    192    hus    'house'    (OE hūs)

　　　10371    tru    'believe'    (OE truwian)    :    nu    (OE nū)

　　　12801    bu    'incline'    (OE būgan)    :    nu

　　　19949    forhu    'despise'    (OE *forhugian):    tru

It also occurs (b) in Vesp. <u>yow</u> 'you' as a special development from OE

ēow.[27]

(b)    5077    yow    'you'    (OE ēow)    :    now    (OE nū)

It is also derived (c) from ON /ū/, and (d) from ON /ug/.

(c)    6744    bu    'estate'    (OIc bū)    :    cu    (OE cū)

(d)    22566    drune    'drown'    (ON *drugna)[28]    :    dun    (OE dūn)

It is also derived (e) from OF /u/, (f) from OF /ü/, and (g) from OF /üi/.

(e)    10698    vou    'vow'    (OF vou)    :    hu    (OE hū)

(f)    11792    vertu    'virtue'    (OF vertu)    :    tru

(g)    11884    trute    'trout'    (OF truite)    :    ute    (OE ūt)

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[26]Strandberg, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 71-3.

[27]Although rimes with OE -<u>eow</u> in final position are not uncommon in
Vesp., only the pronoun yow (you, yuu) rimes with /ū/.  Furthermore, it
is never rimed with Class II ablaut presents, or reduplicating class
with ēo preterits.  This may be explained, not on the basis of different
vowel quality, but simply the fact that the latter group incorporates
the diphthong /iu/.  In yow this is /ịu/.  MnE you rimes equally well
with <u>few</u> and <u>who</u>, but such a variation does not appear in the <u>Cursor</u>.
This may be a matter of convention.  Luick suggests:  "Ich glaube somit,
dass wir von einem kombinatorischen Lautwandel sprechen dürfen, der
darin besteht, dass me. ū nach Palatalen mit den angegebenen Abstufungen,
nicht zu [ou, au], sondern zu [iu] woraus später [iu] diphthongiert
wurde."  "Beitrage zur englischen Grammatik," <u>Anglia</u> XLV, 173.

[28]Björkman, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 176:  "Scand. *druȝna < *druŋna < druŋkna."

3.13. OF had a rounded high front vowel /ü/ and a rounded high back vowel /u/. Although OE made a similar differentiation, this was lost in the North and East Midland early in the ME period. Borrowings containing either OF /ü/ or /u/ in accented open syllables are regularly rimed with Vesp. /ū/. Rime evidence also shows that OF /üi/ is monophthongized to Vesp. /ū/.[29] The Vesp. dialect has a diphthong /eu/ (5.11) but a reflex of OF /ü/ is never rimed with this.

3.14. The close mid-back vowel /ǭ/ is written o, oo, u and oi (3.2). It is derived (a) from OE /ō/ and (b) from OE /ŭ/ in open syllables.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) | 1779 | fote | 'foot' | (OE fōt) | | |
| (b) | 7937 | gome | 'man' | (OE guma) | : | dome (OE dōm) |

It is also derived (c) from ON /ō/.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (c) | 700 | crok | 'crook' | (OIc krōkr) | : | bok (OE bōc) |

It is also derived (d) from OF (Lat.) /o/ in open accented syllables

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (d) | 12460 | fole | 'fool' | (OF fōl) | : | scole (OE scōl) |

3.15. The development of OE /ŭ/ > Vesp. /ǭ/ is indicated by a dozen or more rimes.[30] Despite the fact that /ŭ/ is regularly written with o preceding m, n, or u,[31] the gome: dome rime is not essentially an eye-rime. The o spelling is used before other consonants: wod (OE wudu) 1727, and dor (OE duru) 1682. Moreover in Vesp. an o spelling for /u/ is not at all consistent before m, n, or u. There are son, sun; love, luue; com, cum side by side in Vesp., indicating that both are current.

3.16. The open mid-front vowel /ǭ/ is written o. It is derived from OE /ŏ/ lengthened in open syllables.

[29]Karl Brunner, Abriss der mittelenglischen Grammatik (Halle, 1948), p. 31; Pope, op. cit., 439-40.
[30]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 181-2.
[31]Jordan, op. cit., p. 32.

713    chosin    'chosen'  (OE coren)

It is also derived from ON /ŏ/ lengthened in open syllables.

6278    score    'score'  (CIc skora)

From rime evidence alone it is difficult to determine the quality of the reflex of OF /o/. A few proper names are, it is true, rimed with words containing /ǭ/, as, Nachore: score 2171. The vowel of Iaiole 'jail' 13174 is rimed with cole 'kill' for which Strandberg constructs OE *colian.[32]

    3.17. A rounded high-front vowel /ǖ/ is a regular development from /ǭ/ in the Northern dialects[33] and it should be expected also in the Cursor. There is no unambiguous evidence, however, that such a vowel actually occurs in the dialect. Where the rounded front vowel does appear in other literary works in the North, it is ordinarily rimed with OF borrowings containing OF /ü/. In Vesp., however, OF /ü/ does not rime with /ǭ/ but with /ū/ (3.12).

    The rimes of the Vesp. MS, as has been observed, do not represent the dialect of ca. 1400, but of ca. 1300. If at this time /ǭ/ has not appreciably developed in the direction of [ǖ], an OF /ü/ in borrowings must be paired with its nearest phonetic equivalent in the native dialect.

    In the Additions there is one rime which seems to be exceptional:[34]

    27628  If þou be riche, þou thanc fortune;
            If þou be fair, it passes sone.

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[32]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 182-3. The NED does not commit itself.
[33]Jordan, op. cit., p. 77.
[34]Since Strandberg carried his investigation only as far as vs. 24968, this rime was not considered.

If /ǭ/ has been fronted, this is, of course, an acceptable rime. Fortune turns up in rime only once and only twice in the entire Vesp. suggesting that it may be a fairly recent borrowing which retains OF /ü/. Such an explanation rests on the assumption that the Additions are later material in which sound changes of more recent appearance may be indicated. This explanation will then also account for the oi spellings which occur now and then (3.2). There is really no reason for post-dating the Additions except the fact that Edin., the manuscript commonly judged to be the oldest, does not include them. Moreover, the assumption that the fortune: sone rime represents the true state of the rimes in Vesp. will demand a completely new explanation for the OF /ü/ rimes. Finally, the occasional oi spellings occur only within a relatively restricted environment and are evidently a scribal peculiarity.

Since the fortune: sone rime occurs only in Vesp., one has to consider another possibility. There is abundant evidence to show a raising of certain of the long vowels, particularly before dentals (3.18). It is possible that raising has proceeded far enough in Vesp. that sone has a [ü̃] vowel, making this rime acceptable.

The following rime should also be noted:

17589  Bot sua did noght þir caitif Iuus
       Sent in-to clinttes and in-to clous

Strandberg says that this "is to be interpreted as a rime ü̃u: iu. This rime is very instructive and worthy of attention, as it proves that OE ō had passed into an ü-sound even before 1300." He concludes that /ǭ/ "was already modified into an ü-sound is shown by the above rime, which cannot possibly be accounted for in any other way."[35]

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[35]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 221.

The last is a rather sweeping statement. There seems to be no difficulty
in the suggestion that /ǭ/ may be raised to [ū] and that this is an [uy̨] :
[uy̨] rime. If other evidence were clear, this would be an instructive
rime. Actually the origin of this word is obscure, the first NED citation
being the one from Vesp. The etymon *cloȝas, which Strandberg gives, rests
almost entirely on conjecture.

    3.18. Occasional spellings, in either rimed or unrimed environ-
ments, indicate that there is a raising of long vowels before dentals.[36]
Limitations of spelling obscure certain aspects of the change, as, for ex-
ample, the probable raising of /ę̄/ to [ẹ̄], or /ǭ/ to [ọ̄]. It is conceiv-
able that /ū/ is diphthongized to [au] but such a change is impossible to
identify because the cu spelling by which it would be indicated is already
used for /ū/.

    The following spellings are to be noted:[37]

/ę̄/ > [ī]

| side | 'seed' | (OAng sēd) | 5230,[38] 10261, 22875 | (sede) |
|------|--------|------------|-------------------------|--------|
| wide | 'be angry' | (OE wēdan) | 13975 | (wede) |
| fite | 'feet' | (OE fēt) | 6083 | (fete) |
| file | 'feel' | (OE fēlan) | 3693 | (fele) |
| dide | 'deed' | (OAng dēd) | 1085 | |
| quil | 'wheel' | (OE hwēol) | 21279 | |

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   [36]Kington-Oliphant, op. cit., p. 397: "In the Cursor Mundi, it is most
important to pay attention to the change in the sounds of the vowels: this
change soon prevailed all over Northern England and Scotland; it made its
way to London about the year 1600, where it altered the sound, but not the
spelling, of English words." Oliphant's evidence is mainly impressionistic,
but he is aware of this significant change.
   [37]A number of the normal spellings are also given here and these appear
in the right hand column under each of the several headings.
   [38]Morris has 'corrected' this to seed.

| stile | 'steel' | (OAng stēle) | 7545 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| bine | 'been' | (OE bēon) | 13596 | |
| hir<br>hire | 'here | (OE hēr) | 7812, 13981, 25914<br>1626 | |
| wynnes | 'weens' | (ONth *wēnes) | 7579 | |
| gli | 'glee' | (OE glēo) | 3588 | |
| dipe | 'deep' | (OE dēop) | 9899, 21531 | |
| thife | 'thief' | (OE ðēof) | 25783 | |
| mike | 'meek' | (ON *mēuk-r) | 4299[39] | |

## /ā/ > [ẹ̄]

| tene | 'taken' | (< OIc taka)[40] | 1823 | (tan) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| sten | 'stone' | (OE stān)[41] | 3836 | (stan) |

## /ọ̄/ > [ū]

| stud | 'stood' | (OE stōd) | 1852, 1853, 26022 | (stod) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| fud<br>fude | 'food' | (OE fōda) | 6594, 7560<br>25285 | (fode) |
| gud | 'good' | (OE gōd) | 25833 | (gode) |
| fludd | 'flood' | (OE flōd) | 1854 | |
| bout<br>boute<br>bute | 'help' | (OE bōt) | 2319<br>2318<br>5957, 21373, 23848 | |
| fut<br>fute | 'foot' | (OE fōt) | 11976<br>4662 | |
| huited | 'hooted' | (OIc hōta) | 15833 | |
| dun | 'done' | (OE dōn) | 7107, 8662, 12578, 14673, 24827 | |

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[39]The passage reads: '. . him mike wit might.' One should not over-look the possibility that the i may be an anticipation of the vowels in the following words.

[40]The OIc past participle was, of course, tekenn. The shortened past participle frequently found in Vesp. is constructed on the infinitive-present form ta which has a vowel lengthened in an open syllable (7.7).

[41]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 75.

| fune | 'few' | (OE hwōn) | 18246 |
| foun | | | 27864 |

| boun | 'prayer' | (OIc bōn) | 13156 |

| sune | 'soon' | (OE sōna) | 1388, 7108 |
| sun | | | 3045, 3418, 3623, 3639, 14672, 17413 |

| dule | 'dole' | (OF doel) | 23975 |

| fule | 'fool' | (OF fol) | 12089 |
| foul | | | 28 |

| dus | 'does' | (ONth dōas) | 5208 |

| pure | 'poor' | (OF pover) | 28586 |
| pur | | | 6798 |

| suth | 'truth' | (OE sōð) | 25836 |
| south | | | 777 |

| buk | 'book' | (OE bōc) | 6041 |

| dum | 'doom' | (OE dōm) | 8652 |

A few spellings appear to point to diphthongization of $/\bar{\imath}/ > [\mathrm{ai}]$, also primarily before dentals:

| said | 'side' | (OE sīde) | 23143 | (side) |

| wais | 'wise' | (CE wīs) | 13726 |

| rais | 'rise' | (OE rīsan) | 21985 |

| ai[42] | 'I' | (OE ic) | 15314 |

The pattern of change is identical to that of the Great Vowel Shift. Jespersen,[43] Luick,[44] and Prins[45] assume that the shift was an

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[42]The verse reads: 'Lauerd, it ai forbede.' In Gött₂ the same passage reads: 'Lauerd, i ai forbede.' Possibly a common original of the two manuscripts manifested this change, but it is more probable that this was a scribal error which made no sense to the Gött₂ scribe but which was reasonable to Vesp.

[43]Otto Jespersen, Modern English Grammar (Copenhagen, 1949) I, 232-3: "At which end of the series did the movement originate? Luick (Untersuchungen) says that as /u·/ was diphthongized in those parts of the country only where /o·/ advanced to /u·/, the inference is conclusive that /u·/ was diphthongized on account of the advance of /o·/ to /u·/; /o·/ as it were drove away /u·/, and there is, thus, a causal nexus between the two

independent sound change. The above evidence makes it clear that in its
initial stages the shift must have been combinative, occurring before den-
tals. Within a relatively short time, presumably, raising also began in
other environments.

3.19. It is impossible, from rime evidence alone, to make a
covering statement regarding the length of vowels before those homorganic
consonant clusters before which at one time or another there was vocalic
lengthening. Analysis rests on the necessarily circular examination of
self-rimes, but wherever spelling evidence and morphological features pro-
vide further clarification, these are considered.

3.20. In Vesp. some seven consonant clusters occur in final
position with some regularity, though not with equal frequency. The

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sound changes. Similarly . . . he thinks the transition $/e\cdot/ > /i\cdot/$
the primary change which caused the diphthongization of $/i\cdot/$. But the
nexus may be equally well established the other way: after $/i\cdot/$ and
$/u\cdot/$ had been diphthongized, there was nothing to hinder $/e\cdot/$ and $/o\cdot/$
from moving upwards and becoming $/i\cdot/$ and $/u\cdot/$; where $/u\cdot/$ subsisted,
$/o\cdot/$ was not allowed to move upwards. And there is some, to my mind,
conclusive evidence that the whole shift began at the upper end."

[44]Karl Luick, Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache (Leipzig,
1914-40, pp. 554-5: "Der erste Impuls setzte bei me. ẹ und ǫ ein, in
Wörtern wie see, too, und bewirkte, dass sie zu den Vokalextremen [ī,
ū] vorrückten. Der Wandel trat wahrscheinlich überall ein, wo diese
Laute vorhanden waren, also bei ẹ auf den ganzen Sprachgebiet, bei ǫ in
denjenigen Landesteilen, welche nicht zu Ende des 13.Jahrhunderts die
Umbildung des ǫ zu einem ü-artigen Laut mitgemacht hatten, also in al-
len südhumbrischen Gebieten ausser Nord-Lincolnshire, ferner im südlichen
Yorkshire, Lancashire und Süd-Cumberland. Dieser Zustand tritt in den
lebenden Mundarten zum grössten teil noch unmittelbar zutage."

[45]A. A. Prins, The Great Vowel Shift (Groningen, 1940), p. 16: "Van
de a: is zonder meer duidelijk, dat wanneer deze tot æ: en e: wordt,
wij hier met 'fronting' te maken hebben . . Doch ook de andere langen
e:, ɛ:, o:, ɔ: worden, als men het nauwkeurig beschouwt, bij de versch-
uiving zoal niet meer naar voren geschoven dan vernauwd, dan toch zeker
evenzeer in beide richtingen verschoven . . Voor de velare vocalen is
dit minder gemakkelijk te constateren, maar voor deze kunnen desnoods de
overgangen verklaard worden uit hun articulatorische en acoustische sam-
enhang met de bijbehorende palatalen." Prins' theory is generally far
from convincing.

cluster /mb/ appears in just one rime, while /ld/ and /nd/ are extremely common. The other clusters are /ng/, /st/, /rd/, and /rn/.

3.21. The /ng/ cluster is probably preceded by a short vowel. Rimes of breng: leng[46] 21587; king: ming (ordinarily meng in Vesp.) 7455; dughti-thing: leng[47] 8181 are examples of rimes of reflexes of OE /y/ : OE /ě/ + nasal + consonant (4.2). Such rimes are possible only if the vowels are short. Rimes with -ang are regularly derived from OE or ON /ā/ + /ng/. The quantity is indicated in two occurrences of assonance: lang: 'long': land 'land' 2491; and strang 'strong': land 2395. Land probably has a short vowel (3.26). The quantity of the vowel in hingand 'hanging': thrang 'throng' 13704 is not clear.[48] Cross-rimes with strang and lang[49] show that all -ang rimes have /ā/. There are only three -eng rimes in Vesp.[50] Clearly falling together with -ing rimes are leng: meng 19271, 19875. There is also a rime of geing 'company' (OE genge): weing 'wing' (ON vǣngr) 18301. Ging, so spelled, rimes with king 6125, showing that the vowel is short. The ei spelling[51] may be a relic of an earlier long vowel.

3.22. The /rd/ cluster is also presumably preceded by a short vowel. There are three couplets in which part 'part' (OF parte) is rimed with -ard: hiderward 261, efterward 21513, bastard 3027. Strandberg[52]

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[46]Both Frf. and Gött. recast this couplet.
[47]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 173, observes that leng occurs only in Vesp.
[48]This may be an error by an earlier copyist: hingand for hang.
[49]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 87-9.
[50]There is also one in Edin.: vs. 24030.
[51]In the same passage with the spelling ging 6126 occurs a spelling geing 6119. The verse reads 'þat o þat geing left he nan.' One may venture a guess that the original had genge or ginge, but that the Vesp. scribe, who regards final -e primarily as a length mark for a preceding vowel, simply omits it.
[52]Ibid.,p. 90.

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[52]Ibid.,p. 90.

calls these assonantal rimes. In this cluster in final position /d/ has

a voiceless variant [d̥] (7.11), which seems to be what the scribe is try-

ing to indicate with the spelling of partd 3028, in this case an inverted

spelling. Since OE /ĕ/ + /r/ > Vesp. /ă/ (4.6), we may also assume that

/ă/ occurs in words like herd 'hard' 14904, 19181, 19378, 19483, 21343,

23735; orcherd 'orchard' 11696. The a spelling is even more common in

words like fard 'fared' 2820, 12763, 24885; misfard 866; ansuard 'answered'

1304, 1735, 4143, 13887, 19665; warld 'world' 91. This vowel is also short.

The -ord ending appears in only a few words, and although it is derived

from both OE and OF sources, there is only one instance in which an OE and

an OF word are rimed: word: comfortd (sb) 7817. The vowel of comfortd

is certainly short and the rime word: fortd 'forth' 11083 also shows that

the vowel is short. Word is cross-rimed in all the other couplets.

3.23. The -ern ending is consistently written a in 23 couplets,

the OE /ĕ/ + /r/>Vesp. /ă/ development occurring here also. From the rimes

alone Strandberg hesitates to make a decision[53] but this development pre-

cludes the possibility that the vowel may be long before /rn/. There are

only a few -urn words, all of which rime with turn or skurn 'hesitate,'

making /ŭ/ certain here.

3.24. Evidence of Vesp. rimes and spellings indicates that

both long and short vowels occur before /st/. The -ast rimes include

gast 'ghost' and mast 'most', both of which had OE /ā/. They are regu-

larly interrimed and rime with hast 'haste' an OF borrowing.[54] But gast

also rimes with fast 'fasted' (OE fæstte) 169, and mast rimes with last

'last' (OE lætest) 22231, 22259.[55] Hast is rarely written with final

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[53]Ibid., p. 91. After giving arguments for both long and short vowels,
he concludes, "We cannot state any certain results."

[54]Ibid, p. 91-2.

[55]These rimes were overlooked by Strandberg.

-e, "a length mark", perhaps indicating that the scribe's dialect has a short vowel here. Actually there is no clear signal regarding vocalic length of a before -st. A few rimes which have -est spellings are differentiated into /ẹ/ and /ę/ rimes. Those with breist 'breast': neist 'next' 12709: prist 'priest' 12896, 17721, 26108, undoubtedly have /ẹ/. The consistency of the ei spelling points to this, as does the spelling prist in several rimes. This also occurs in non-rime environments and is probably an instance of raising of the vowel before a dental (3.18). There are moreover couplets in which reflexes of OF /e/, OE /ēa/, and OE /ǣ/ (< Gmc /ǣ/) are interrimed before /st/, for example, lest (OE lǣst): best (OF beste) 1660, 6003, 6739, 6773. The spelling beist which occurs in 6003, 6773 may be orthographic to avoid confusion with best 'best.' Best 'beast' also rimes with -est of superlatives 737, 5955, 6039, 22207.[58] It is possible that est 'east' and lest 'least' are rimed with either a short or long vowel — est: mightiest 3383 beside est: best 'best' 2473; lest: yongest 4849 beside lest: west 2119. Nearly all of the rimes in -ist have the name Christ or Crist 'Christ' which in OE has /ī/. Such rimes as those with the weak preterite wist 'knew' (OE wiste) 8923, 11463, 13612, 14028, etc., however, point to /ī/ before /st/ in the Vesp. dialect.

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[58] Ibid.,p. 140: "Note. The rimes point to short e in the following cases:

be(i)st s. : brest s. [OE brēost] 893
: e(i)st adj. [OAngl ēst, Orrm. has esste] 3610."

It is difficult to follow this argument. The evidence does not indicate a regular rime, but /ẹ/ : /ę/ which is occasionally permitted by the Cursor poet.

3.25. Evidence also indicates that Vesp. has both long and short vowels before /ld/. Spellings like taald 'told' 8765, caald 'cold' 15910, unbaald 'unbold' 15914 are clearly indicative of a long vowel. Some other spellings seem just as positively to indicate a short vowel: alld 'old' 12578, 23873; yalld 'yielded' 12329; calld 'called' 2651, 23131. The preterite and past participle of call (ON kalla) rime, for instance, with hald 'hold' 10263, 10741, 23195; with tald 'told' 319, 5455. Cald 'called' undoubtedly has /ă/ and hald and tald quite probably have /ă/ too. Caald 'cold' and calld 'called' represent a contrast of /ā/ and /ă/. Since hald, tald, and perhaps a few more words in -ald[57] rime with either of these words, it must be concluded that some words have /ā/ before /ld/, others have /ă/, and still others have either. There is an analogous situation in the words with -eld. Rimes and spellings, for example, in eild 'age' (4.5): weild 'control' 585, 10327, 10893 make it clear that /ē̦/ occurs here. The vowel /ĕ/ is also possible before /ld/ in the preterits and past participles of weak verbs, and the spelling feldd 'felled' 17461 seems to be an attempt to indicate it. A single preterit, beheld or beheild has double forms, riming with either /ē̦/ or /ĕ/.[58] In nearly all of the -ild rimes child (OE cild) occurs as one of the rimewords. The quantity of the vowel is uncertain. Although it may have been lengthened earlier to /ī/ before /ld/, this cannot be proved. The spelling chilld 'child' 25959 points to /ĭ/. On the other hand a child: wiļld 'willed' rime 11293 may indicate /ī/. Strandberg dismisses the spelling of wiļld as incorrect[59] but the iļ spelling may be an attempt to compromise. There are only four rimes with -old and no inferences are possible.

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[57]Ibid., pp. 79-81.
[58]Ibid., pp. 115-6.
[59]Ibid., p. 166.

**3.26.** Rimes with -and contrast /ā/ and /ă/ in a limited number of words. Strandberg catalogues the following rimes:[80]  faand 'tempt': sand 'message' 5769, 6009, seand 24793; saand 'message':  faand 'tempt' 3953, 7459, fand 14846, faand 'temptation' 711, land 5099, 5855; aand 'breath':  faand 'tempt' 541; waand 'hesitation' 8465. All of these, with the possible exception of land, have /ā/.  These in turn rime with the -and of present participles in which half-stress normally occurs. In all probability the vowel is short. It should be noted that the -and of present participles rimes with words like seruand 'servant' (OF servant)3118,[81] 5883. In addition it is probable that a few words like hand and land may have either /ā/ or /ă/. A few words with /ā/ may be relics.[62] The vowel /e/ before /nd/ may be either long or short. Spellings like freind 'friend' (OE frēonde): heinde 'gracious' (OE gehende) 13388, 13868 point to /ȩ̄/ before /nd/. There are also evidences in i spellings:  hind 2337, 2539; wind 'go' 24777, in which /ȩ̄/ is raised to [ī].[83] Preterits and past participles of weak verbs are crossrimed and themselves rime with a limited group of words including OF borrowings, for instance, descend:  kend 22639; mend: blend 18841. These words have /ĕ/. The distinction is apparent in Strandberg's cataloguing.[64] A few words, as freind, heind, sceind 'dishonor,' wend, are rimed in both lists and may have either long or short vowels.

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[80]Ibid., pp. 81-3.

[61]The possibility of an internal rime raises an interesting question: 3117 Herkens o godd þat all weldand/  How he wald faand his lel seruand.

[62]Barth, op. cit., p. 14. Aand 'breath' appears in V, G and T; p. 30, waand 'hesitation' appears in V and G, is changed in T. These words appear to be current only in the North.

[63]This may be raising before a dental (3.18), assuming that the vowel is long. It may also be /e/ > /i/ before /n/ + consonant (4.2). In this case the vowel must be short.

[64]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 121-4.

Little can be stated about -ind rimes without circularity. A rime find 'find': brind 'burned' 9205, may have a short vowel, but there is no certain evidence to support this. In the -und rimes the word grund 'ground' is rimed with stund 'stunned' 12279, 12962, 22481. A spelling stunt occurs in one rime, 19613, indicating that the vowel is /ŭ/. Grund is crossrimed with most of the other words in -und. Nothing can be concluded regarding bunden: funden 8825, 11253, 12117. The same is true of under: wunder 377, 6595, 8259, 8897 and other rimes of this group.

3.27. The following are apparent: 1) Long vowels may occur before /st/, /ld/ and /nd/; 2) Only /ē̦/, /ȩ̄/ and /ā/ can be shown to be long in these environments. Occurrences of several other vowels are either rare or non-existent. Before the clusters /st/, /ld/ and /nd/ the Vesp. dialect has no long high front or long high back vowel, but does have long mid or low vowels. Gold 'gold' 13265, 21317, 22178, 23862 probably has a long vowel, although neither rimes nor spelling indicate it; 3) A number of words have two forms, one with a long vowel, the other with a short vowel, probably as the result of dialect mixture. Little reliable evidence exists regarding lengthening and shortening before clusters in ME and there is every possibility of a mixture in such a dialect as that of the Vesp. MS.

## IV.   SHORT VOWELS

[OE had the following short vowels:  /ĭ, y̆, ĕ, ă, ŭ, ŏ/.
OE /ĭ, y̆/ > Vesp. /ĭ/; OE /ĕ/ + /n/ + cons., + velar, +
labial, after /g, j/ and before dental > Vesp. /ĭ/, other-
wise /ĕ/; OE /ă/ + /l/ + cons. i-umlauted > Vesp. /ĕ/,
otherwise /ă/; OE /ĕ, eo/ + /r/ > Vesp. /ă/; OE /ŭ, ŏ/ >
Vesp. /ŭ, ŏ/.  When shortened OE /ī, y/ > Vesp. /ĭ/, OE
/ē, ā, ū, ō/ > Vesp. /ĕ, ă, ŭ, ŏ/ respectively; OE /ǣ ,
ēo, ēa/ > Vesp. /ĕ/.]

4.1.  In stressed syllables the dialect of the Vesp. MS has the
following short vowels:

| i | | u |
|---|---|---|
| e | | o |
| | a | |

4.2.  The high front vowel /ĭ/ is written i or y and is derived

(a) from OE /ĭ/ and /y̆/, (b) from OE /ī/ and /ȳ/ when shortened, (c) from

OE /ĕ/ after /g/ or /j/ and before a dental,[1] (d) OE /ĕ/ before /n/ + con-

sonant,[2] (e) OE /ĕ/ + velar consonant,[3] (f) OE /ĕ/ + labial consonant.[4]

| (a) | 2460 win | 'win' | (OE winnan) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 4251 did | 'did' | (OE dyde) |
| (b) | 13352 bitidd | 'happened' | (OE getīdde) |
| | 9279 hid | 'hid' | (OE hȳdde) |
| (c) | 7462 togidder[5] | 'together' | (ONth togeðre) |
| | 795 yitt | 'yet' | (ONth gett) |
| (d) | 23236 hint | 'sieze' | (OE hentan) |

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[1]Jordan, op. cit., p. 54.
[2]Ibid.
[3]Ibid., p. 55.
[4]Ibid.
[5]This is rimed with hidder (OE hider)

(e)   233 Inglis      'English'      (OE englisc)

(f)  6754 thifte      'theft'        (OE ðïefþ)

It is also derived (g) from ON /ĭ/ and /y̆/, and (h) from ON /ī/ and /ȳ/

when shortened.

(g)  7157 rin        'run'          (CN rinna)

     1081 dil        'conceal'      (OIc dylja)

(h) 19093 nitt       'denied'       (OIc nĭtta)[7]

     1587 tint       'lost'         (< OIc tȳna)

It is also derived (i) from CF /i/ when shortened (3.4).

(i) 21431 unquitt    'unpaid'       (< OF quiter)

4.3.  The development of OE /ĕ/ > Vesp. /ĭ/ before a velar falls

together with a number of occurrences of a long or short front vowel in OE

or ON before /ht/ or /hþ/ which become Vesp. /ĭht/ = [ĭxt].  Vesp. /ĭht/

is derived (j) from OAng[8] /ī/ + /ht/, (k) from OAng /ĕ/ + /ht/, /ē/ + /hþ/,

(l) from OAng /y̆/ + /ht/, (m) from ON /ī/ + /ht/, /œ/ + /hþ/.

(j)  8396 plight     'guilt'        (OE pliht)

     8207 light      'lighten'      (OAng līhtan)[9]

(k)  8545 night      'night'        (OAng neht)[10]

     3286 hight      'promised'     (OE hēht)

      704 light      'light'        (ONth lēht)

     2272 hight      'height'       (OAng hēhþo)

    [6]Jordan, op. cit., p. 55.
    [7]Noreen, op. cit., p. 195.
    [8]For the sake of convenience these are simply listed as OAng.
    [9]"Eine Sonderentwicklung trat im Anglischen vor Palatalen ein, die
bei der Länge völlig deutlich ist und zu i̯ führte . . . līhtan, līxan
'leuchten.'"  Luick, Historische Grammatik, p. 178.
    [10]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 41, suggests ON /e/ + /ht/ for slight,
4562, 9887, 9975, 18840, setting up ON *slehtr > OIc slēttr.  There is
an OE sliht, cited once in Bosworth and Toller, An Anglo-Saxon Diction-
ary (London, 1898), and also mentioned by Holthausen, Altenglisches Etymo-
logisches Wörterbuch (Heidelberg, 1934).

(1)    621 flight     'flight'    (OE flyht)

(m)    6952 wight     'strong'    (OIc vīg-r)

        6662 slight     'sleight'    (OIc slœgþ)

The forms __maledight__ 'cursed' 2478, and __benedight__ 'blessed'
18705 turn up with some regularity, also as rimes with words of the above
groups.[11]  These two words represent a relatively early adaptation of a
Latin consonant cluster to the English sound system, that is, Lat. /kt/
> OE /ht/ = [xt].  The same development appears in __dight__ 'prepared' (OE
dihted < Lat. dīctum) 11887.

The spelling of -__ight__ in Vesp. is relatively consistent.  __Higt__
'promise' 21507 rimes with __night__ and is clearly a scribal error.  __Hiht__
5723 is an editorial insertion from Gött.  Occasional alternations in
spelling between -__gh__- and -__f__- or -__th__- indicate that -__gh__- was not simply a
"length mark" for the preceding vowel, but a fricative, in this environ-
ment [x], the velar allophone of Vesp. /h/ (7.20).  Among such spellings
are:  __tifted__ = __tight__[12] 'disposed' 19425, __tift__ 1761, 5089; __knytht__ = __knight__
'knight' 2135, __knitht__ 12898.  Inverted spellings include __light__ = __lift__
'sky'[13] 2571; __pight__ = __pith__ 'pith' 18173.

The vowel of Vesp. /íht/ is regularly short as the rimes indi-
cate.  In the dialects where the velar allophone of OE /h/ is lost, there
is compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel.[14]

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[11]__Ibid.__, p. 39.

[12]Hupe, __Cursor Studies__, p. 167*-8*.  Hupe engages in an involved dis-
cussion about __dight__ and __tight__ which he imagined the Vesp. scribe had con-
fused with each other.  Morris, __Preface to Cursor Mundi__, p. xxii, fails
to support this argument.

[13]The verse reads:  "þan sterns on light and sand in see,"  that is,
'stars in the sky.'  Another reading is possible, namely, ". . sterns
o light . ." meaning, 'stars of light,' or possibly, 'stars alight.' In
any case there is evident a confusion between [x] and [f].

[14]Jordan., __op. cit.__, p. 250.

The development of OE /ĕ/ > Vesp. /ĭ/, particularly before cer-
tain consonants, is indicated by a number of rimes[15] and it is possible,
though by no means certain, that some instances of this change are con-
cealed under conventional spellings. A rime like <u>scrift</u>: <u>eft</u> 26402 may
be an /ĭ/ : /ĭ/ rime, but <u>eft</u> is ordinarily rimed with <u>left</u>, which does
not appear to be confused by the scribe with <u>lift</u> as it should be if /ĕ/
before /ft/ regularly develops to Vesp. /ĭ/. Nothing certain can be con-
cluded.

    4.4. The mid-front vowel /ĕ/ is written <u>e</u>. It is derived (a)
from OE /ĕ/.

    (a)  1311 tell     'tell'     (OE tellan)

It is also derived as a result of the shortening of the following:  (b)
OE /ē/; (c) OE /ǣ 1/; (d) OAng /ē/;[16] (e) the diphthongs /ēo/ and /ēa/;
(f) Gmc /æ / + /l/ + consonant, by i/j-mutation.

    (b)  3722 fedd    'fed'    (OE fēdde)  :  bedd    (OE bedd)

    (c)  2549 ledd    'led'    (OE lǣdde)  :  bedd

    (d)  4360 dredd   'dreaded'  (OAng drēdde):  bedd

    (e)   503 fell    'fell'    (OE fēoll)

          3754 reft    'robbed'  (OE rēafode)

    (f)  2043 elder   'older'    (OAng ældra, eldra)

It also occurs in ordinarily unaccented words when these are in accented
positions:

      1021 es       'is'      (OE is)

It is also derived (g) from ON /ĕ/, and (h) from ON /æ / when shortened.

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[15]Strandberg, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 44.
[16]<u>Ibid</u>, p. 20.

(g)   2327 neuen      'name'      (OIc nefna)

(h)   1067 melt      'spoke'      (OIc mǣlti)

It is also derived (i) from OF (Lat.) /e/.

(i)   6469 dett      'debt'      (OF dette)

4.5.   It is apparent that both OE /ē/ from whatever source and OE /ǣ/ are shortened to Vesp. /ĕ/.  The diphthongs OE /ēɔ/ and /ēa/ which normally give Vesp. /ę̣/ and /ę̣/ respectively, give Vesp. /ĕ/ when shortened.

Some uncertainty exists with respect to words like heuen, seuen, elleuen, euen.[17]  There may be lengthening of the vowel in open syllables, giving /ę̣/; or there may be a regular shortening, also in words which had an OE long vowel, as neuer (OE nǣfre).

A few words, particularly wes and es, ordinarily occur in unaccented surroundings and the vowel is presumably [ə].  Rime evidence points to the probability that in accented surroundings this vowel becomes phonemicized as a mid-front vowel /ĕ/ and as a result there are possible such rimes as es 'is': gress 'grass' 24475; wes (spelled was): gress 2845; moneth 'month': Elizabeth 10997.  On the other hand, there are also the rimes es 'is': blis 'bliss' 25762; or es: o-mis 'amiss' 25974,[18] which offer the doubtful possibility that phonemicization as /ĭ/ also occurs.  Actually rimes of es with /ĕ/ are quite common in Vesp. and may be considered acceptable.  Rimes with /ĭ/ are apparently impure.

There is a single rime: mell 'mallet' (OF mail): fell 'cruel' (OE fel) 23239.  Regarding this Strandberg remarks:

_____

[17] Ibid., p. 26.
[18] These rimes do not occur in Strandberg's Rime Vowels.

> This is an interesting rime, as it shows the quality of
> the vowel a in the northern dialects compared with the more
> palatalized sound of a in the southern regions, where this
> OF word mail < Lat malleum was represented by mall. Thus
> the palatalized OF a was rendered in the south by a but in
> the north by e. That proves that the southern a was more
> or less 'fronted' and the northern a a more back vowel.[19]

Whether this can be gathered from a single rime is open to some question.

It is also to be noted that Gmc /æ/ + /l/ + consonant with i/j-mutation in this dialect very consistently gives /ĕ/.[20] This is lengthened before /ld/ in the substantive eld 'age' 3556 (3.25). The positive degree of the adjective appears as ald 117, or as old 3507.

4.6. The low central vowel /ă/ is written a. It is derived from Gmc /æ/ which in OE has several positional variants. These coalesce into Vesp. /ă/. The allophones of OE /æ̆/ are as follows: (a) [a] before a nasal; (b) [a] before /l/ + consonant, except /d/;[21] (c) [a] or [æɔ], written ea, before /r/ + consonant; (d) otherwise [æ].[22]

(a)   360 man      'man'      (OE mann)

(b)   538 all      'all'      (OAng all)

(c)   3183 arm     'arm'      (OE  e(arm)[23]

(d)   972 smal     'small'    (OE smæl)

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[19]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 18.

[20]Eilert Ekwall, Contributions to the History of Old English Dialects, p. 64: "OE æ before l + consonant does not denote exactly the same sound in West Mercian and in other Anglian texts. West Mercian æ denotes a real [æ] which became ME a. In other Anglian texts æ denotes an open e sound, something like [ɛ] which was distinct from e in set and æ in hætt, yet sufficiently like the latter to be usually written æ; this open e was later on merged with the e-sound pronounced in OE bed, fell. Occasionally this open e sound was written e (OE wella, fellan, etc.)"

[21]Luick, op. cit., p. 145: "Vor langem l und l + Kons. ist in den englischen Dialekten urengl. æ durchaus zu a geworden." Before /ld/ the Vesp. dialect has /ā/ (3.25).

[22]In addition to these there is, of course, OE /æ/ + consonant + back vowel > /ă/ which becomes /ā/ through lengthening in an open syllable.

[23]Sievers-Brunner, op. cit., p. 56.

It is also derived (e) from OE /ĕ/ or /eo/ + /r/

   (e)   112 warc        'work'       (OAng werc)

       506 farr        'far'        (OE feorr)

It is also derived (f) from OE /ā/ and /ǣ/[24] and (g) from ON /ā/ and /ǣ/
when these are shortened.

   (f) 22232 mast     'most'     (ONth māst)

     1537 last      'endure'   (OE lǣstan)

   (e) 18075 blast    'blast'     (OIc blāstr)[25]

     9748 thral     'thrall'    (OIc þrǣll)

It is also derived (h) from OE /ā/, /ǣ/ + /ht/.

   (h)  6719 aght    'owed'      (OE āhte)

    22679 maght   'might' (sb)(OAng mæht)

     1461 aght    '8'        (ONth æhto)

     5962 raght   'extended'  (OE ræhte)

It is also derived (i) from ON /ā/, and (j) from ON /ā/ + /ht/.

   (i)   267 call     'call'     (ON kalla)

   (j)  7654 saght    'reconciled'(ON *saht-)

It is also derived (k) from OF /a/.

   (k)  6581 fals     'false'    (OF fals)

      4.7. The spelling of Vesp. gives evidence of a development of
OE /er/ > Vesp. /ar/.[26] All of the rimes are, of course, self-rimes, con-
sequently no clear conclusion is possible. Words like warc and farr
(4.6) also appear with e spellings. A few words are never spelled with

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   [24]OE /ǣ1/. Last (OE lǣstan) is written with e, but only in Edin₂
and possibly in Gött., since it rimes with brest, and only in a single
rime, vs. 22553. Here Vesp. and Frf. have /a/. This is an instance of
dialect mixture. Cf. Jordan, op. cit., 72-3.

  [25]Cf. Björkman, op. cit., p. 84.

  [26]Jordan, op. cit., pp. 232-3.

e,[27] particularly native words in which /r/ is followed by a labial. Two
spellings may appear for a reflex of Gmc /æ/, for instance, barn 1051 ~
bern 7 'child' (OE bearn); hard 12761 ~ herd 906, 9326 'hard' (OE heard);
farli 4263 ~ ferli 3469 'wonderful' (OE fæger + lice). The frequency of
e spellings can be explained as a persistence of traditional spelling
forms in this dialect. Since the er spelling in Vesp. quite regularly
indicates /ar/, there are likewise double spellings of OF borrowings, both
of those with historical OF /er/ and with OF /ar/, parel 24852 ~ peril
4050 'peril' (OF peril); parson 28143 ~ persun 19944 'person' (OF person);
barbicans 9903 ~ berbikans 10033 'barbicans' (OF barbacana); charite 32 ~
cherite 10043 'charity' (OF charite); marbul 8288 ~ merbul 1534 'marble'
(OF marbre).

    4.8. The high back vowel /ŭ/ is written u and o.[28] It is de-
rived (a) from OE /ŭ/, and OE /ū/ when shortened.

   (a) 22027 sum       'one'      (OE sum)

      9110 dust      'dust'     (OE dūst)[29]

It is also derived (b) from ON /ŭ/

   (b)  2300 runnen    'run'      (OIc runninn)

It is also derived (c) from OF (Lat.) /u/.

   (c) 19517 Magus    'Magus'    (Lat. Magus)

The words in the last group are entirely from Lat. sources and very lit-
tle can be concluded. There are either self-rimes with Lat. words or
with us and þus, both of which are commonly inter-rimed. It is clear

   [27]Strandberg missed this point and set up two lists of rime vowels.
Op. cit., pp. 5, 12.
   [28]Luick, op. cit., pp. 83-4.
   [29]The rimes are very infrequent — only three in all. Cf. Strandberg,
op. cit., p. 49.

that þus (OE þus) has a short vowel.  The pronoun us (OE ūs), with which

it rimes, also has /ŭ/ since it ordinarily occurs in unaccented surround-

ings.

4.9.  The mid-back vowel /ŏ/ is written o.  It is derived (a)

from OE /ŏ/ and from OE /ō/ when shortened.

(a)  1341 toppe        'top'        (OE topp)

    23457 soft        'soft'        (OE sōfte)

    It is also derived (b) from OE /ō/ before /ht/ (4.3).

(b)  4623 boght        'bought'      (OE bohte)

    4240 broght        'brought'     (OE brōhte)

    It is also derived (c) from ON /ŏ/ and (d) from ON /o/ before

/ht/.

(c)    532 loft        'on high'     (OIc lopt)

(d) 14157 soght        'sickness'    (ON *soht)

    It is also derived (e) from OF /o/.

(e)  2457 sot          'sot'        (OF sot)

# V. DIPHTHONGS

[OE, OAng /ē/ + /j/ > Vesp. /ei/; OE /ĕ, ̄ǽ/ + /j/ >
Vesp. /ai/; OE /ǎ/ + /g/, /āw/ > Vesp. /au/; OE /ŏ/
+ /g/, /ōw/ > Vesp. /ou/; OE /ē, ēa, ēo/ + /w/ > Vesp.
/eu/; OF /oi/ > Vesp. /oi/.]

<u>5.1.</u>  In stressed syllables the dialect of the Vesp. MS has the
following diphthongs:

| ei | ai | oi |
|----|----|----|
| eu | au | ou |

<u>5.2.</u>  The diphthong /ei/ is written <u>ei</u> or <u>ey</u> and is derived (a)
from OE /ē/ or OAng /ē/ + /j/.

(a)   952 dei        'die'        (OE *dēgan)

23621 flei      'fly'        (OAng flēgan)

It is also derived (b) from ON /œ/ + /g/.

(b)   4312 slei      'sly'        (OIc slœgr)

<u>5.3.</u>  The diphthong /ai/ is written <u>ai</u> or <u>ay</u> and occasionally
<u>ei</u> or <u>ey</u>.  It is derived (a) from OE /ǽ/ and /ĕ/ + /j/.

(a)   510 day        'day'        (OE dæg)

402 clai       'clay'       (OE clǽg)

1765 rain      'rain'       (OE regn)

It is also derived (b) from ON /ei/; (c) from ON /y/; (d) from ON /eg/;
(e) from ON /eig/.

(b)   1708 graid     'prepared'   (OIc greidd-)

(c)   1549 lain      'conceal'    (OIc lyna)[1]

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[1]Björkman, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 67:  "M. E. <u>leinen</u>, <u>lainen</u> 'to hide, conceal'
(O. Scand. <u>lyna</u> 'to hide, conceal'), which, as far as the form goes, can-
not be discriminated from the related native <u>leinen</u>, <u>lainen</u> 'to deny' <
OE (Angl.) lēgnian 'to deny';  . . . But the unmistakable Scand. sense
'to hide' proves, in many cases, Scand. origin."

(d) 12401 gain     'befit'     (CIc gegna)

(e) 11814 lai     'reward'     (CWN leiga)[2]

It is also derived (f) from CF /ai/; (g) from OF /ei/.[3]

(f) 14041 pai     'pay'     (CF paier)

(g) 13248 fai     'faith'     (CF fei)

5.4. There are two questions with regard to these diphthongs: 1) Are they actually in contrast? 2) Are they still diphthongs, or have some of them been monophthongized in the Vesp. dialect?

5.5. Rime evidence with respect to /ei/ is not very productive since this group of words is closely interrimed.[4] There are, however, no couplets which rime /ei/ and /ai/. Occasional spelling confusions are to be accounted for by OF influence; earlier /ei/ and /ai/ coalesced into Vesp. /ai/, as a result of which there are inverted spellings. There are, for instance, waited 'waited' 3056 and weited 1848.[5] Feir 'fair' (OE fæger) 2924 is perhaps a scribal slip.

5.6. With respect to the question of monophthongization of /ai/ > /ā̧/, /ei/ > /ȩ̄/, the evidence is somewhat complicated. It must be remembered that the rimes of Vesp. are almost wholly those of ca. 1300, consequently a monophthong and a diphthong will not rime, even though such a rime may have become quite acceptable at 1400. If the

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[2]Ibid., p. 61.

[3]OF /ai/ and /ei/ had already coalesced in AN. Cf. Pope, op. cit., p. 444.

[4]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 215-7.

[5]Weited may simply be an attempt on the part of the scribe to repair a faulty reading, since the passage from vss. 1844-64 manifests a number of irregularities. Vesp. has: "Noe and his loked ai don/ And weited ai quen þai suld drun." Gött. has: "To drenkil wend þai had ben bun" and Frf., "and wende ay þan and þan to droun." There seems to have been a blunder in an intermediate copying, the original perhaps reading, "Noe and his sonis lokid dun/ And wenid þat þai al suld drun."

contrast between /ai/ and /ā/ has been lost in Vesp., one cannot then fail to be impressed by the faithfulness with which the scribe adheres to the spelling tradition. Instances of confusion are rare.[6] Frequent ei spellings in words like biheild, beild, feild, weild, leist, preist, feind, freind, seind, heind, weind in which /ē̦/ is regular, indicate that i serves as a "length mark" (3.2). It must be noted that ei spellings are rarely confused: followed by a consonant or consonant cluster ei presumably indicates /ē̦/ but in an open syllable it may still indicate the diphthong /ei/.

There are such rimes as twai '2': sai 'say' 12699, 21756; grai 'gray': ai 'aye' 18849; sai 8287. Assuming that the OE forms of twai and grai were, as Strandberg suggests,[7] twegen and OAng grēg, we should have Vesp. *twei and *grei. Actually the rime is not /ai/: /ai/ at all, but /ā/: /ā/. Tua rather than twai is regular in Vesp. and appears in more than four dozen rimes.[8] The etymon of grai is evidently ON grā, the rime with Vesp. ai corresponding not to ON ei but to OE ā. The spelling gra occurs in rime with fra 'from' 25459-62, in which instance it is clearly /ā/. From this we may conclude that monophthongization of /ai/ > /ā/ must have proceeded far enough to make such rimes as those above possible.

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[6]A few rare examples are: 5518 And we ma sua our landes tin (And we may so lose our lands); 27697 Of this behoues þe mai þi scrift (Of this it behooves thee to make shrift). Significantly vs. 5518 is paraphrased by all the parallel manuscripts, the reason being that ma, which crept into an earlier manuscript, is unrecognizable. The Vesp. scribe, often uncritical, simply accepts it. One is less inclined to accept vs. 27697 since what Morris renders Of this is a garble, osthus in the MS. Mai, in fact, is probably copied from the following line.

[7]Strandberg, op. cit., 211-2.

[8]Ibid., p. 51 ff.

There are occasional spellings which appear to indicate some
confusion of /ai/ and /ā/, although little conclusive evidence can be
gathered. For instance:

18426  Sa him þou has ful gode warand          'Say to him . . '

This may have been a scribal error. The MS has no space between sa and
him.

4142   His liue dais i tell gain

5171   Thriti yeir es siþen gain

The first of these is plainly defective. Gain is a variant spelling of
gan 'gone', but both are in turn rimed with slain which is written either
slan or slain.[9] Gan and slan may very well be intended.

   5.7.  Spellings are also of relatively little assistance in the
matter of /ei/ and /ē/.

7446   And semed sathan on to sei      'And seemed Satan to see'

446    þat hee drightin þat him had wroght  Frf: hey 'high'

7945   Of he drightin stod þe nan au.[10]   Frf: hey

Both sei and se(e spellings occur in Vesp., sei only in rime.[11] Sei
'see' is identical in spelling with sei 'saw' (OAng sēgon). Luick[12]
suggests that analogy with flei (inf): flei (pt) may have been opera-
tive here. As far as the Cursor original is concerned, this explanation
disposes of the possibility that sei and see were phonetically identical.

_____
   [9]Ibid., p. 55: "Slan p.p. [New formation — by the side of slain <
OE slaȝen — from the inf. sla on the analogy of ga—gan]." The dis-
tinction may be simply graphic.
   [10]Morris misses the point of this, punctuating it:  "Of he, drigh-
tin, stod þe nan au."
   [11]Sei appears 16 times in Vesp., all of them in rime. See appears
42 times, 27 times in rime; se 268 times, 144 in rime. Se is also
rimed with drei, dei and wrei 16460; and ei 18499.
   [12]Luick, Studien zur englischen Lautgeschichte, p. 147.

The dialect simply had allomorphs, possibly largely for rime purposes. We cannot conclude from this, however, that /ei/ and /ẹ̄/ have coalesced in Vesp. Evidence of the Vesp. MS suggests only that, while monophthongization of /ai/ > /ā/ and /ei/ > /ẹ̄/ is under way, the diphthongs and monophthongs are still phonemically distinctive.

5.8. The diphthong /au/ is written au, aw, or agh and is derived (a) from OE /ă/ + OE /g/; and (b) from OE /āw/.

(a)    792 saw        'saying'    (OE sagu)

    3281 thrau       'while'     (OE þrāg)

(b)    210 saul       'soul'      (OE sāwol)

It is also derived (c) from ON /ăg/.

(c)    1774 lau       'low'       (OIc lāgr)

    1636 au          'awe'       (OIc agi)

It is also derived (d) from Lat. /au/.

(d) 25169 paule       'Paul'      (Lat. Paulus)

5.9. The diphthong /ou/ is spelled ou and is derived (a) from OE /ŏ/ + /g/; (b) from OE /ōw/.

(a)    2190 inou      'enough'    (OE ge-nōg)

    1882 flou         'flew'      (< OE flogen)[13]

(b)    385 grouand    'growing'   (OE grōwende)

5.10. Persistence of a -gh- spelling in Vesp. deserves notice since it occurs occasionally following a back vowel as the reflex of OE

_____

[13]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 219. On the other hand, flou may have developed from OE flugon (pt. pl.) and so contain /ǭu/ as the result of lengthening of /u/ in an open syllable.

/g/. We find, for example, _aghen_ 'own' side by side with _aun_;[14] _inogh_ 'enough' and _inou_; _foghul_ 'bird' and _fouul_. It is possible, of course, that the _gh_ spelling is a device to obviate confusion with _ou_ = /ū/. One cannot overlook a number of _gh_ spellings in the earlier verses of Vesp., for instance, _draghus_ 'draws' 28, _inogh_ 'enough' 92, _sagh_ 'saw' (vb) 218, 447, 713, suggesting that the Vesp. scribe is making a regular change here which he occasionally overlooks at the beginning of the poem. The development is perhaps not entirely complete, as the absence of inverted spellings appears to indicate. Rimes cannot be used as a check, since they are regularly self-rimes.[15] The following couplet, however, is interesting:

1253  In þat way sal þou find forsoth
      þi moders and mine our bather slogh

This simply means 'Thy mother's and my [both of ours] track.' Kaluza has glossed this correctly, but Strandberg reads _slogh_ as the preterit of _slān_, considering the rime assonantal.[16] Actually this is merely bad copying on the part of the scribe in writing _slogh_ for _sloth_ 'track' (cf. OIc _slōð_). The fact that such a confusion is possible sustains the argument that [x] rather than [w] occurs here. Phonetically there is perhaps an incomplete development from a fricative [x] to a continuant [w], but the _ou_ spellings indicate that /ou/ is to be regarded as a diphthong just as /au/ is. In the latter a spelling development is more fully carried out.

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[14]Aun 'own' (OE āgen) occurs 182 times with the spelling _aun_, 16 times with _auen_, five times with _aune_ and twice _auin_. It also appears as _aghen_ six times. It is clear from the meter that _aun_ in any of its various spellings is ordinarily disyllabic, suggesting that _aghen_ was the regular form in the original.

[15]Strandberg, op. cit., p. 220.

[16]Ibid.

**5.11.** The diphthong /eu/ is written <u>eu</u>, <u>ew</u> and occasionally <u>u</u>. It is derived from OE /ēw/, /ēow/ or /ēaw/.[17]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2150 neu | 'new' | (OAng nēwe) |
| 118 brew | 'brew' | (OE brēowan) |
| 13275 theu | 'custom' | (OE þēaw) |

The Vesp. scribe nowhere rimes /eu/ with /ū/ (3.13). The reason for this is that /eu/ is a falling diphthong, as is evidenced by the loss now and then of the final element in a word like <u>gle</u> (OE glēow): <u>he</u> 17873. The rather frequent occurrence of <u>tru</u> 'true' (OE trēow) with a -<u>u</u> spelling is evidently the result of confusion with <u>tru</u> 'trust' (OE trūwa). In a single couplet this results in a peculiar misunderstanding:

> 11431 þis king we sal be offrand nu
> And honur him wit truthes tru

As it stands, the first verse reads '(To) this king we shall be offering now.' The parallel MSS have <u>bere</u> for <u>be</u> so that it reads '(To) this king we shall bear a <u>new</u> offering.'

**5.12.** The diphthong /oi/ is written <u>oi</u>, <u>oy</u>, or <u>o</u>[18] and occurs only in borrowings from OF:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 11885 oyle | 'oil' | (OF oile) |

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[17]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 218. This is set up as a separate diphthong but there is actually no reason to suggest that the reflex of OE /ēo/ + /w/ is a different diphthong from that of OE /ēa/ + /w/. Actually they rime, <u>deu</u> 'dew': <u>heu</u> 'hue' 22463, but Strandberg labels the rime as incorrect.

[18] In this connection one should note the couplet vss. 24353-4: Witvten <u>croice</u> þe <u>cros</u> i bare/ þat croiced was, was al mi care. An <u>oi</u> spelling appears for /ǫ/ in <u>broiþer</u>, <u>oiþer</u> and the spelling of <u>cros</u> is undoubtedly a spelling inversion. There is no evidence that <u>this</u> diphthong is monophthongized, as Jordan suggests, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 36.

# VI.  UNSTRESSED VOWELS

[Metric accent, ordinarily corresponding to linguistic
stress, points to a distinction between full-stressed,
half-stressed and unstressed syllables.  Written final
-e, designating an unstressed syllable retained in the
Cursor Mundi original but lost in Vesp, serves only to
indicate length of a preceding vowel.  A final element
consisting of unstressed vowel + consonant is non-syl-
labic before a vowel-initial word, is non-syllabic al-
so in other environments when the consonant is /s, d/
and probably /r, n, l/.  Final -i or -u in unstressed
final syllables is phonemicized as /y, w/ before a vow-
el-initial word.  Pretonic syllables are levelled to
/ə/; monosyllables frequently unaccented are also lev-
elledto /ə/, occasioning graphic confusion.

6.1.  The dialect of the Vesp. MS has a vowel /ə/ which occurs
in unstressed syllables.  Ordinarily it is written e, but it may also be
written i, y, a, u, or o.[1]

6.2.  In order to identify the surroundings in which this vowel
occurs, we must distinguish linguistic stress from metric accent.  Stress
is a phonemic feature in any word of more than one syllable.  Accent is a
metrical feature, being a position in a verse; thus a verse may be said
to have accented or unaccented positions.  In the Cursor these simply al-
ternate.[2]  Native words of more than one syllable regularly stress the
root syllable, ordinarily the initial syllable.

6.3.  In complex words, half-stressed as well as full-stressed
syllables can occupy the accented position in a verse.  This is illu-
strated by the following:

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[1]Morris sometimes inserts a bracketed vowel in such a phrase as ilk-
[e] dai 'each day.'  There is no clear system to his restorations, con-
sequently they have been regularly dropped here.

[2]In Vesp. the metrical pattern is evident, but the scribe has permit-
ted himself extensive liberties, especially in discarding unstressed
vowels.  The basic pattern is still one of alternation, and any devia-
tions must be explained with this as a starting point.

912   It sal be beit wit a wòmmán;
       O man sinles þan mad i þe
       In wómmàn sal mi wonning be.

2987  Yeild hir to hir húsbànd schet,
       For hir hùsbánd es a prophet

4285  And to bi put in sli prísún,
       þat reues man might and als resun?
       In prísùn hald i þat licam.

In phrases, any monosyllable can occupy the accented as well as the unaccented position in a verse.  For example:

447   For ilhail sagh hé þat tide
      Agains him hè tok a pride
      Hetlik hè lette of ilk[e] fere
      To godd self wald hé be pere.

1012  þe gresse ès ever ilik[e] grene,
      Wit alkin blis þat þar ès elles;
      Flours þar és wit suete smelles;
      Treis o frut þan és þar sett

1376  þai sál til mani man be bote;
      þai sál be cedre, ciprese, and pine,

      O þam sàl man haue medicen.
      þe fader in cedre þou sàl take.

There is a limited list of words either syllable of which can bear the verse accent.  Among these are proper names,[3] present participles of verbs; compounds with -ness, -hede, -rike, -dom, -ing, -man, -scip, -ward, -mare, -mast, -les, -lik/-li; with agentive -er, with adjectival -er and -est; and OF borrowings.[4]  The latter are, of course, adapted to

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[3]Of 49 occurrences of Adam, 18 are accented on the first syllable and 31 on the second.

[4]Henry Dexter Learned, "The Accentuation of Old French Loanwords in English," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XXXVII (1922), 710:  "The usage of the Middle English poets as to the accentuation of French words seems to be based solely on metrical convenience.  From the Owl and the Nightingale to Chaucer and even later, literally countless examples of wavering where the real accentuation cannot be doubted, since it conditions the vowel changes, as in dívers : divérs, mérci : mercí, sésun : sesún.  Chaucer's víctorie : victórie cannot represent a popular variation.  The Middle English poets had on the other hand, plenty of

the English stress pattern. Verse structure ordinarily preserves the pat-

tern of linguistic stress, as is illustrated by present participles in non-

rime surroundings:

4026 In boke es cald þe <u>lastand</u> seed

4086 Amang þaa felles <u>duélland</u> ware

4145 For man þat <u>líuand</u> es, ne wijf

4176 þan sagh þai <u>cúmand</u> be þe stret

4329 And for sco <u>fóluand</u> fand a spurn

For this reason metric accent gives indications by which it is possible to

determine linguistic stress, since, as a rule, the accented position is oc-

cupied by a full-stress syllable.[5] This is not always true. The accented

position may also, as indicated above, be occupied by a half-stressed syl-

lable, and it is even possible that due to a scribal oversight an irregu-

lar verse may turn up now and then. On the whole, it is apparent that in

certain words either syllable may be accented while other words never show

such alternation. <u>Kingrike</u>, for example, may be accented ╱ ╲ or ╲ ╱, but

<u>kinges</u> is always accented ╱ _.

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precedents in French poetry for free accentuation of French words . . .
The Middle English poets felt at liberty to place a French word in any
convenient position in a line, regardless of its accentuation in prose,
hence with an accent anywhere, since they saw, or thought they saw,
French poets doing just this." Also p. 717: "From this grouping of
our loan-words it appears that those beginning with a <u>consonant</u>, when
free to follow popular laws, <u>have consistent first-syllable</u> accent; but
that <u>among those beginning with a vowel</u>, and free to follow popular
laws, a strikingly large proportion, I believe a considerable majority,
<u>appear with second syllable accent</u>."

[5]"Full" and "weak" are used by Jespersen, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 150; "loudest,
ordinary, less loud," by Leonard Bloomfield, <u>Language</u>, p. 91-2; "loud,
reduced loud, medial, weak," by Bernard Bloch and George L. Trager, <u>Out-
line of Linguistic Analysis</u>, p. 48. To these may be added many other
terms, all indicating the same type of contrast. "Full-stressed, half-
stressed and unstressed" are used here.

· 6.4. The metric pattern indicates that there are three levels of contrastive stress to be identified, thus all syllabic elements may be described as being full-stressed, half-stressed, or unstressed. Full stress is normally the property of a root syllable, half stress of compounding elements. With few, if any, exceptions, only full-stressed and half-stressed syllables have the metric accent. Unaccented metric positions may be occupied by full-stressed, half-stressed, or unstressed syllables.

## Final -e

6.5. Evidence of both spelling and meter in the Vesp. MS indicates that final /ə/ which occurred in the Cursor original has been regularly lost before either the initial vowel or the initial consonant of a following word.

6.6. In the spelling of the several related parallel manuscripts there is little consistency in the treatment of post-rime -e. As indicated in Table 1, all manuscripts have couplets in which one verse has a final -e and the other not, indicating that in such couplets final -e has no syllabic function. Further, as the table also shows, the relative number of couplets in which final -e is paired with itself varies greatly, in contrast to couplets in which written final -e indicates /ē/. This latter number varies little, especially where the manuscripts are quite similar. It may be concluded that post-rime -e is purely graphic and does not represent /ə/. This is further shown by spelling inversions:

285 And he þat ordaind wit his witte
   He multiplis and gouerns itte

9289 Honi sal he ete and milke
   Wel sal he cun knau quilk es quilk

TABLE 1[3]

FINAL -E IN SELF-RIMES

| | Couplets with -e = /ȩ̄/ self-rimed | Couplets with spelling -e (not /ȩ̄/) self-rimed | Instances of written -e unpaired |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vss. 5000-6000 | | | |
| Vesp. | 56 | 164 | 23 |
| Gött. | 58 | 245 | 28 |
| Vss. 10000-11000 | | | |
| Vesp. | 64 | 191 | 32 |
| Gött. | 56 | 310 | 31 |
| Vss. 19000-20000 | | | |
| Vesp. | 32 | 191 | 14 |
| Gött. | 31 | 274 | 22 |
| Edin₁ | 17 | 248 | 86 |
| Vss. 23300-24300 | | | |
| Edin₂ | 31 | 186 | 15 |

6.7. In the _Cursor_ original, as the meter indicates, a final unstressed vowel occurring in non-rime position was normally preserved before the initial consonant of a following word, but was lost when the following word had

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[a]These figures represent a sampling. The extensive Vesp. and Gött. MSS are represented by samplings at vss. 5000-6000; 10000-11000; 19000-20000. No count was made at vs. 15000 since the verses here are in "langer bastune," that is, a seven-stress line. Edin₁, a short and defective MS, was sampled from 19000-20000; Edin₂, also short, from 23300-24300.

an initial vowel or /h/ in an unaccented syllable. If this were faith-
fully preserved in Vesp., all occurrences of final -e in spelling (with
the exception of those in accented position) must represent /ə/ before
consonants, but must be non-syllabic before vowels. As the evidence
(see Table 2) clearly indicates, this correspondence is lost in Vesp.

TABLE 2

FINAL -E BEFORE CONSONANTS AND VOWELS

|  | Final spelling -e non-syllabic be- fore consonants | Final spelling -e before vowels and unstressed /h-/ | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vss. 1-1000 | 11  (47.0%) | 109 | 226 |
| Vss. 5000-6000 | 80  (54.0%) | 68 | 148 |
| Vss. 10000-11000 | 102  (60.7%) | 66 | 168 |
| Vss. 25000-26000 | 78  (57.9%) | 72 | 135 |

6.8. Side by side with the above are a number of verses in
which the final -e appears to be syllabic:

39  þat i speke o þis ilke tre

88  And luue hir suette sun amang

190  Com for to was our lorde fete

312  All things quen þai ware notght

388  Bath ware made sun and mon

397  þe fifte dai þat failld noght

958  Lauerd þat i ne had troude þe

1014  Flours þar es wit suete smelles[7]

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[7]Further examples: vss. 1312, 2016, 2912, 3004, 3113, 3246, 3252,
3279, 3326, 3341, 3374, 3523, 5126, 5135, 5147, 5205, 6055, 6123, etc.

Even more common, however, are verses in which the meter calls
for an unstressed syllable, but in which there is no final letter -e to
indicate it:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | O grece and troy þe strang[e] strijf | F: grete | T: | longe |
| 116 | þat done were in þe hald[e] law | FG: alde | T: | olde |
| 170 | Was fondid wit þe wik[e] gast | F: wikket | G: | wicked |
| 231 | Efter haly kyrc[e] state | F: kirkis | G: | kirkes |
| 238 | Communlik in ilk[e] sted | F: iche a | G: | ilka |
| 301 | Bot ilk[e] wis[e] man it watte | F: iche wyse | | |
| 339 | Bot said wit word, and als[e] son | T: also | | |
| 379 | þe thrid[e] day þat drightin did[8] | T: þridde | | |

In the above groups of verses there is an extensive correspon-
dence between a historical final syllable and either a written final -e
or a metrical gap.[9] The occurrence of þe fifte dai 397 and þe thrid dai
379, or lorde fete 190 and kyrc state 231 reflects a divided spelling us-
age in Vesp. If the final -e serves a function, it should be possible to
demonstrate what it is.

6.9. We must not overlook the possibility that final -e may
retain its function as a morphological element in Vesp. If this is the

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[8]Further examples: vss. 450, 496, 506, 579, 715, 991, 994, 1008,
1028, 1030, 1045, 1088, 1109, 1229, 1259, 1316, 1338, 1340, etc.

[9]A complete statement on this is given by Z. M. Arend, Linking in
Cursor Mundi, in Transactions of the Philological Society, 1925-30
(London, 1931), pp. 208-9: "The neutral vowel is often kept in the
Cursor Mundi in those places where there was an unstressed vowel-suf-
fix in OE. The correct observation of the Cursor poet's usage in this
matter is essential to the proper scansion of his lines. The scribes
lost this tradition. It can be shown that in the dialects of the
scribes of all the extant copies the neutral vowel had disappeared, es-
pecially at the end of words. Correct scansion being essential to the
right interpretation of many sandhi facts, especially in the matter of
hiatus, we shall have to adduce certain groups of cases where final -e
is either preserved or elided." There follow some thirteen categories,
most of them inflectional.

case it will be possible to demonstrate a close correspondence between the occurrence of this letter and a historical inflectional or derivational element. Further, if the morphological function remains, a metrical gap cannot occur in this position. But as Table 3 demonstrates, any correspondence between final -e and an inflectional element must be regarded as a coincidence. There is a somewhat better than even chance that a historical inflection will not be indicated at all in Vesp.

TABLE 3[10]

FINAL -E AS A MORPHOLOGICAL ELEMENT

|  | Final letter -e | Metrical gap |
| --- | --- | --- |
| OE weak adj | 31 | 28 |
| OE -a (e.g. ðridda) | 4 | 34 |
| ON -a | 1 | 1 |
| OE dative sg | 8 | 14 |
| OE preterit (wk vb) | 3 | 3 |
| Compounds | 4 | 13 |

6.10. It is also possible to examine unaccented positions in the meter and to determine where such positions correspond on the one hand to a written final -e, and on the other hand to a metrical gap. The one of these appears most frequently — as Table 4 shows — with certain words, the other with other words.

The distinguishing characteristic of the words of the first group compared with those of the second is a long vowel in the stressed

_____

[10]This sampling simply covers all occurrences from vss. 1-10000.

TABLE 4

"SYLLABIC" FINAL -E RETAINED AND LOST

| 14 times | 3 times | 2 times | 1 time | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| riche | suete<br>wreche | gode<br>time<br>grene<br>mare | made<br>hide<br>troude<br>clene | wine<br>bete<br><br>dipe | huse<br>pine<br>stede<br>liue | hare<br>spouse<br>smale | wode<br>quile<br>dere |

| 11 times | 8 times | 5 times | 4 times | 3 times | 2 times | 1 time | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| thrid | first | erth | wik<br>king<br>suet | hard<br>fals<br>als<br>eild | strang<br>hand<br>hert<br>herd<br>fress<br>quik<br>ferth<br>form | wers<br>hald<br>lang<br>calf<br>hend<br>hund<br>fijft | thyng<br>hell<br>self<br>well<br>salt<br>lamb<br>mast | win<br>ass<br>wist<br>best<br>skil<br>hill<br>gret |

syllable. Words in which there is a long stem vowel are likely to have final -e; those with a short vowel normally do not have final -e. This is not completely consistent, for to the first group may be added ilke,[11] thride, fifte, and forme, all of which represent relic occurrences of OE -a, and lorde, a genitive singular. The second group also contains rich, rod, god, freind, wok, fair, ald, brad, wijf, ham, son. These are

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[11]There should also be included ilk (OE ilca), but this word is perhaps better considered separately in view of special problems it involves. In the first 8000 vss. of Vesp. there are 75 occurrences of ilk. Of this number 50 appear to have lost an unstressed element; ilk-[e] dai. In eight instances ilke or ilka remains. In two instances final /ə/ is lost before a vowel. Ilk man occurs six times, very likely a recasting of ilkan and consequently there is no irregularity in the meter. Ilk appears twice before a following initial /k/, perhaps coincidence. The remaining six instances are in doubt. They seem to be recastings, but this is difficult to prove.

instances of complete loss of final -e in spelling, even where final -e
should ordinarily be anticipated.  Such loss is fairly common in Vesp.[12]

6.11.  The above evidence demonstrates that in the dialect of
the Vesp. MS final -e in the spelling is simply a graphic indication for
a preceding long vowel.  That is its only function.  Since occurrences
of various words turn up in analogous and even identical surroundings
either with or without final -e it is highly probable that in the Vesp.
dialect final /ə/ is completely lost.  From the evidence of the manu-
script this cannot, of course, be conclusively proved.

6.12.  Polysyllabic words of native origin are relatively un-
common in the Cursor, except for compounds carried over from OE.  The
stress pattern in these is regularly ⟋ _ ⟋.  Often this appears in what
was OE noun + noun compound.  Sometimes the historical stress pattern
seems to remain unaltered:

28006  Or wiche-craft or charmes soght

28310  And folud wiche-crafte and frete

29255  þat wiche-craft or soceri

29311  All þaa þat dos wiche-crafte

Sometimes a medial syllable apparently developed analogically in words
not regarded in OE as compounds:

16604  þai sett þis rode-tre

16941  And thoru þis hali rode-tre

6.13.  The Cursor original exhibited only limited loss of a me-
dial unstressed syllabic vowel, and this loss is ordinarily limited also

_____

[12]A count of all occurrences of certain verbs in Vesp. gives some in-
dication of the extent of the loss:  ches, chese (inf), 3 occurrences
each; com (inf) 21, come (inf) 8; mad (pt ppl) 50, made (pt ppl) 64.

in the parallel manuscripts. In Vesp. on the other hand, a complete loss
seems to have occurred, suggesting that wiche-craft and rode-tre cited
above may be nothing more than traditional spellings. It is quite normal
for the spelling in Vesp. to indicate a disyllable, even where the meter
calls for a trisyllable:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1525 | Scho was þe formest webster | G | webister |
| 3586 | Baldlik þat dar i sai | T | boldely |
| 5730 | All his eildfader scepe | G | elde fadris |
| 6191 | Son be a mikel wodside | F | wode side G wodis |
| 7005 | Aloth was þan þe dempster[13] | G | demister |
| 7171 | Thoru chance he fand an assban | F | asse ban |
| 7159 | þair oliues wit þair wintres | F | vyne-trees |

The loss of a medial vowel is apparently extended occasionally to borrow-
ings.[14] This may be inferred from the following, where als has been in-
serted:

   609  He gaf it him, als in heritage

### Final -e + consonant

   6.14. The pattern of final unstressed syllables in Vesp. is /ə/
~ /-/ + /d, n, l, s, or r/. The vowel is ordinarily written -e-, although
both -i- and -u- occur. The -i- spelling is a relic[15] from an from an ear-
lier transcription,[16] and a comparison of several manuscripts shows that the

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   [13]The Vesp. scribe seems to have found this word especially troublesome.
The spellings demester and dempster are fairly common, and apparently as a
kind of blend, he also writes demmepster 5585.
   [14]This also occurs in names: 213, Of antecrist com þat sal be kene; al-
so: 4447,þe spenser and þe botelar bath; also 4459, 4497, 4501
   [15]Jordan, op. cit., p. 126.
   [16]Actually this spelling is not common, appearing only about 55 times
in the first 8000 verses. In the post-rime elements of 427 couplets in
Vesp. where /ə/ + consonant occurs, only 28 have an -i- spelling. In 44
such post-rime elements in Vesp.₁, an -i- spelling occurs in all but five.

Vesp. scribe has tried to level earlier -i- spellings to a uniform -e.
There is also an occasional -u- spelling.[17] Side by side with -i- spell-
ings in an "e- area," this is evidently a mixture of dialect influences.
In general, -u- is rather narrowly distributed, appearing primarily in
words in which a labial consonant, that is, /w, f, b, p, m/ is initial
or medial. The frequent occurrence of watur 'water' suggests that these
may be alternate spellings, but there is little other evidence to support
it.

    6.15. In post-tonic position the Vesp. dialect has the follow-
ing variants: /əs/ ~ /s/; /əd/ ~ /d/; /ən/ ~ /n/; /ər/ ~ /r/; /əl/ ~ /l/.
Since -es and -ed are almost exclusively inflectional syllables, quite

    [17]Jordan, op. cit., pp. 126-7: "Im westlichen Mittelland aber ent-
stand ein dunklerer Laut, der in der Schreibung mit u wiedergegeben wird.
. . . Mit Einschränkung auf Liquide und Nasale (ur, ul, on, un) erscheint
u wohl auf weiterem Gebiet, vgl . . C.M. Hs. V." The distribution in Vesp.
should be noted. By thousands of verses, -u- spellings appear in the fol-
lowing frequencies: 1st, 21; 2nd, 21; 3rd, 15; 4th, 5; 5th, 8; 6th, 8;
7th, 8; 8th, 2; 9th, 2; 10th, 3. This diminishing frequency suggests that
-u- may be a feature of an earlier MS which is normalized by the Vesp.
copyist. Of the 93 occurrences of -u- spelling in the first 10,000 vss.,
63% have an initial labial consonant: bettur 68, 3365, 4321, 4388, 6539;
bittur 697; buttur, 2715; bibul 1900; bolnud 4726; fabul 2349; fundun 77,
1040; mengud 2259; micul 593; mikul 283, 451, 674; merbul 1534; modur 78;
watur 357, 398, 399, 519, 1532, 1537, 1652, 1885, 1997, 2868, 3277, 3289,
4779, 4784, 5687, 5701, 5924, 5925, 6249, 6274, 6332, 6616, 6617, 6625;
wattur 5685; wexus 3563; wickud 1227; wigurs 2303; wikcud 6822; wikudli
4376; wikkudhede 1641; wintur 1191, 3888; wissud 1540; wittur 698; witutun
1572; wonnus 2371; wundur 6596; wydur 64; wygur 2290; wynus 289; wynturs
1554. In addition, 18% have a labial consonant in medial position: appuls
2878; appul 1112; comun 9709; commun (sb, vb, adj) 236, 1371, 2445, 2532;
communlik 9792; dubul 1528, 7644; stabul 2350, 8372; stapul 8288; samun
7151. The above number also includes occurrences of a labial in a medial
cluster: eftursons 4241; liftud 4767; saumpul 47. The residue consists
of the following: drightun 1598; draghus 'draws' 28; heghur 2232; hur
'her' 1898; litul 530; lichur 31; liggus 2033; neddur 1336; quedur 2251;
rengud 2285, 5491; saulus 1822; tonus 5528; tellus 9160; vndur 452. Jor-
dan's explanation appears plausible in that of the 93 occurrences of -u-,
48 precede r, 16 precede l, and 11 precede n. No explanation is given
for ten preceding d and eight preceding s.

possibly /s/ and /d/ are allomorphs of /əs/ and /əd/. In some instances this may also be true of /n/ ~ /ən/. It must be noted, however, that /əd/ ~ /d/ and /əs/ ~ /s/ are not exclusively allomorphs. For example:

523 His <u>heued</u> with ín has eíen tuín

910 þou sál haf euer þi <u>heued</u> híd

9715 Or <u>élls</u> agh dóm be cáld agáin

9802 Moght nán tak <u>élles</u> þís empríse

There is no evidence to suggest that -<u>ed</u> or -<u>es</u> inflections developed differently from the others or that this phase of the problem breaks into a morphological aspect and a phonological aspect, each with an exclusive list of words. It is actually far simpler to make the entire description in terms of phonology.

6.16. The various Cursor Mundi manuscripts point to a regular alternation of /ə/ + consonant before consonant-initial words, and loss of /ə/ before other vowels, that is -/əC/ before C- ~ -/C/ before V-.

5362 Thritte yeir es siþ<u>en</u> gan
þat i mi sun had los<u>en</u> dere;
Ioseph þat i haue fund<u>en</u> here,
þat he es funden ithanc drightin;
He sceild him fra his wiþ<u>er</u>-win!

8241 Quen all was closed a-boute þat tre,
A siluer cercle son naild he
þat was þe stou<u>en</u> for to strength
And knau þe wax o gret and length

If we are to assume that this type of alternation prevails also in Vesp., then it must be possible to demonstrate: 1) From metrical evidence, that post-tonic /əC/ occurs only before consonants; 2) Also from metrical evidence that /C/ occurs only before vowels; 3) Since presumably the letter -<u>e</u>- in spelling stands for either /ə/ or /-/, a written -e<u>C</u> may occur either before words with initial vowel or initial consonant; 4) The spell- -<u>C</u> may occur only before words with an initial vowel.

## TABLE 5[18]

### UNSTRESSED SYLLABLES BEFORE VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

| | 1-1000 | 10000 11000 | 25000 26000 | | 1-1000 | 10000 11000 | 25000 26000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **-es = /əs/** | | | | **-es = /s/** | | | |
| + vowel | 19 | 12 | 20 | + vowel | 7 | 1 | 12 |
| + cons | 64 | 48 | 62 | + cons | 17 | 8 | 8 |
| total | 83 | 60 | 82 | total | 24 | 9 | 20 |
| **-s = /əs/** | | | | **-s = /s/** | | | |
| + vowel | 5 | 5 | 2 | + vowel | 7 | 2 | 8 |
| + cons | 19 | 8 | 11 | + cons | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| total | 24 | 13 | 13 | total | 12 | 10 | 21 |
| **-ed = /əd/** | | | | **-ed = /d/** | | | |
| + vowel | 8 | 8 | 1 | + vowel | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| + cons | 19 | 32 | 13 | + cons | 2 | 9 | 6 |
| total | 27 | 40 | 14 | total | 8 | 15 | 12 |
| **-d = /əd/** | | | | **-d = /d/** | | | |
| + vowel | 0 | 0 | 2 | + vowel | 3 | 7 | 7 |
| + cons | 2 | 6 | 4 | + cons | 9 | 14 | 4 |
| total | 2 | 6 | 6 | total | 12 | 21 | 11 |
| **-en = /ən/** | | | | **-en = /n/** | | | |
| + vowel | 4 | 13 | 6 | + vowel | 1 | 9 | 8 |
| + cons | 27 | 56 | 21 | + cons | 3 | 11 | 6 |
| total | 31 | 69 | 27 | total | 4 | 20 | 14 |
| **-er = /ər/** | | | | **-er = /r/** | | | |
| + vowel | 4 | 3 | 4 | + vowel | 11 | 12 | 23 |
| + cons | 17 | 33 | 53 | + cons | 3 | 4 | 9 |
| total | 21 | 36 | 57 | total | 14 | 16 | 32 |
| **-el = /əl/** | | | | **-el = /l/** | | | |
| + vowel | 0 | 1 | 2 | + vowel | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| + cons | 8 | 27 | 9 | + cons | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| total | 9 | 28 | 11 | total | 6 | 4 | 4 |

18This sampling includes the first thousand verses, to catch any early readjustments; from 10000 to 11000 for the scribe's "normal style" and from 25000-26000 for any newer features that may not have occurred in the original, assuming that the Additions are later. Actually there is considerable consistency in the language.

The evidence of Table 5 shows that /əC/ appears actually to be fairly common before vowels, occurring about one-fifth of the time; final -/C/ is likewise common before consonants, accounting for about one-third of the total number of occurrences; final written -C̲ is regular before either consonant-initial or vowel-initial words. From this evidence we may conclude that the correspondences of the Cursor original have become meaningless in the Vesp. dialect. The fact that -s̲ or -d̲ written in word-final position may correspond to a syllabic element suggests that the loss is even more general, that in actual utterance this syllabic element does not exist at all but is carried over as a relic from the Cursor original. This further suggests the possibility that an older -/əC/ has regularly given way in Vesp. to -/C/ before a word with either an initial vowel or initial consonant. It cannot, of course, be proved since the evidence is largely concealed under traditional spelling.

6.17. As has been mentioned (6.15), the Vesp. dialect may have allomorphs -d̲ and -ed̲, -s̲ and -es̲, occurring primarily in verbs and substantives. Both the meter and spelling, particularly spellings like things̲, mans̲, failld̲, fulfild̲, clearly indicate that the allomorphs -s̲ and -d̲ are common in Vesp. There is a possibility of variants /ən/ ∼ /n/, /ər/ ∼ /r/, /əl/ ∼ /l/ in word-final position, regardless of whether the following word has an initial vowel or consonant. Perhaps spellings like ordre, mumbre and duble point to this tendency.

6.18. A specific instance of /ən/ ∼ /n/ turns up from time to time in infinitives[19] which have been preserved in Vesp.

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[19]Under no condition must it be assumed that the -en inflection is completely lost. This is the conclusion reached in D. W. Reed, The History of Inflectional N in English Verbs Before 1500 (Berkeley, 1950), pp. 186ff. Using a statistical method, Reed concludes that there were no -en infinitives in Cursor. The error is the result of taking too small a sample (vss. 1-785).

5299  I sal <u>askin</u> yow sum recett

13892  He and his lare will <u>lasten</u> ai

22196  To <u>hiden</u> us <u>fra</u> þis felun

22283  He-self sal do to <u>rasen</u> him

24241  Quils þou sal <u>lengen</u> here

Ordinarily the scribe recasts verses in which an infinitive occurred, as is apparent from a comparison of Vesp. with other manuscripts.[20]  In this dialect it is probable that -<u>en</u> and -<u>n</u> were variants and that side by side with these there is complete loss of the inflection.

     <u>6.19</u>.  The meter shows that a final sonorant may occasionally be syllabic, that is, there are probably the variants /l/ $\sim$ /əl/, /n/ $\sim$ /ən/, /r/ $\sim$ /ər/.  This is suggested by the verses:

7  O brut þat ber<u>n</u> bald of hand

375  þe light wit ster<u>ns</u>, gret and smale

528  And mans hefd has thir<u>ls</u> seuen

2945  For moght we any bar<u>ns</u> brede

4680  Wit wyn and cor<u>n</u>, fless and mele

5484  Siþen bor<u>n</u> til his erth was he

8486  Godd self reg<u>n</u> in þat tre

---

    [20]Many such infinitive -<u>en</u> inflections have been discarded by the Vesp. scribe, but they must have been common in the original, as comparison with other MSS shows:

22092 Chese him stede o birth iwise      E₁ Chesin stede . .
22931 Sua haali sal þai þan rise þare    G₂ rise þan þar E₁ risin
23417 Rise þat he ne freli ras        E₂ Risin þat he ne freli ras

Also 22102, 23027, 23660, 23984, 24054, 24090, 24139, 24724.  A few are simply to be conjectured:

64 Wydur to wende ne wat he noght    Read: Wydur to wenden . .
139 Sythen sal i tell yow               Sythen sal i tellen yow
604 A luiesum land at lenger in      . . at lengen in

Occasionally this is reflected in a reverse spelling:

11532  þe morun quen þai risen ware

It seems likely that the dialect of the <u>Cursor</u> poet contained such variants as /berən/, /sterən/, /thirəl/, /korən/, /borən/ and /reyən/.  In the dialect of the Vesp. scribe /ə/ has almost certainly been lost, as the consistent spelling of these words indicates.

    <u>6.20.</u>  Post-rime elements cannot be tested on the basis of meter, nevertheless non-metrical approaches are possible.  The general assumption appears to be that post-rime syllables — that is, feminine rimes, occur in Vesp.[21]  By actual count there are 427 couplets in Vesp. whose post-rime elements are written -<u>eC</u>.[22]  These are presumably the only elements which can constitute a post-rime syllable, since final -<u>e</u> is never syllabic (6.6).  These endings comprise 3.2 percent of the total, a rather small figure for a feature which apparently serves as a stylistic variation.  A comprehensive analysis of all these endings would prove to be too extensive for the scope of this study, and would still fall short of a conclusive answer.

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    [21]This is argued by Hupe, <u>Cursor Studies</u>, p. 253*:  "The ending of the line is either masculine — i.e., the line terminates in the lift or stress — or feminine, i.e., the last lift is still followed by an unstrest syllable, as:

    O lonek and of Ysambras         19
    Storijs als o serekyns thinges   21
    Wið heye note and lude steven   22467

Hupe's illustrations, it must be noted, are from his own critical edition of a part of the <u>Cursor</u> and therefore represent his recasting of the lines. It is difficult to imagine a more circular argument.  Hupe's statement has apparently never been challenged.

    [22]The count of the endings has been relatively liberal since it includes rimes like <u>vnknauin</u>: <u>aun</u>  11809; <u>lers</u>: <u>messagers</u>  12782; <u>plaies</u>: <u>ways</u> 28146. The net number of verses in Vesp. used as a basis for comparisons is figured at 26,488.  The only material checked is that in the handwriting of the Vesp$_1$ scribe.

The 427 -eC pairs of rime-words are further divided as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| -en | 192 | 45.0 percent |
| -es | 133 | 31.1 percent |
| -er | 72 | 16.9 percent |
| -ed | 21 | 4.9 percent |
| -el | 9 | 2.1 percent |

The relative frequency of these endings appears to be somewhat different from that of words in non-rime environments, but this may be a matter of choice of suitable rimes.

Post-rime -en, the largest classification, may be further differentiated on the basis of types of stems:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vowel + /v/ + -en | (heuen, neuen, giuen, steuen, etc.) | | 99 |
| " /þ/ + -en | (queþen, þeþen, heþen, beneþen) | | 3 |
| " /m/ + -en | (samen, gamen, commen, nommen) | | 35 |
| " /z/ + -en | (-losin, chosen) | | 5 |
| Cl 3 ablaut verb past participles | (suonken, funden, suongen, etc.) | | 18 |
| V'less stop + -en[23] | (forgeten, cropen, spoken, etc.) | | 25 |
| /lv/ + -en | (seluen, tueluen, deluen) | | 4 |
| /au/ + -en | (knauin, auen, etc.)[24] | | 3 |

Still further examination of these individual groups raises the possibility that post-rime -en is only rarely, if ever, syllabic. Of the above endings, 102 (53%) occur following voiced fricatives. Both spelling and meter show a frequent loss of the fricative: giuen > gin, þeþen > þen (7.29). Another 68 (35%) are ablaut verb past participles in which there is undoubtedly some loss of the inflection,[25] but the precise extent is difficult to determine. The losen: chosen rime, actually an instance of

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[23]These are all past participles of ablaut verbs and most of them occur only once in rime.

[24]The aun spelling is the one normally occurring in rime. Cf. Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 212-4. Aun (OE āgen), while it is often pronounced disyllabically, according to the meter, rarely has a spelling to indicate it.

[25]Examples are: bigun, 12726; begun 28545; bedd 'offered' 6069, 17824; comme 'come' 2832; gin 'given' 3938, 5238, 6964, 7792, 9639, 13861, 16944, 1717 , 19008, 23601, 27829, 28466; gine 'given' 9819; giue 'given' 4371, 6950, 26140; nom 'taken' 12730; rune 'run' 1548.

a stem-final voiced fricative as well as ablaut verb past participle, may
have an entirely different explanation. Losen and its compounds occur
nine times in Vesp., five of them in rime. A variant, lorn, occurs elev-
en times, all of them in rime, suggesting that losen may be merely a rel-
ic spelling for a monosyllabic /lǫzn/. Seluen and tueluen are patently
relics, since -n-less spellings are common, even in rime. The same is
probably true of samen and gamen[26] as well.

A comparable study of -es, er and -ed[27] endings yields analog-
ous results, namely, fairly solid circumstantial evidence that loss of
/ə/, but preservation of the distinctive consonant, and even loss of both
vowel and consonant, is regular in Vesp. The evidence at hand, however,
fails to give conclusive proof (6.11).

### Final -i and -u

6.21. Final /ĭ/ has an allomorph /y/ in Vesp. and final /ŭ/
has an allomorph /w/, occurring in unaccented syllables.

6.22. In the Cursor original, as Arend, using other terms,
points out,[28] the allomorphs -li, and -lik occur respectively before
consonants and vowels:

488  þar he badd noght fullik an vre

555  A gastli light man sais it es

1145  Openlik i tell þe here

1157  For hou sal ani herthli flesche

1559  Namlik amang kaym kyn

---

[26]There is one same: game rime 10563; and in two couplets the letter -n
has been lost from one of the rime-words, 12553, 22751.

[27]The limited number of /əl/ endings makes any statement open to ques-
tion.

[28]Arend, op. cit. pp. 236-41.

In Vesp. this has become free variation, -lik occurring frequently before consonants,[29] and -li before vowels.[30] This is a half-stressed syllable, appearing in rimes,[31] and there is no indication that the vowel ever becomes consonantal, that is /y/, before the initial vowel of a following word.

Final -i (OE -ig, -yg, ON -ig) in such words, however, as ani, mani, honi, bodi, redi, worthi, and some cardinal numbers, e.g., thritti, fourti, is phonemicized as /y/ before vowels:

244 For mánį er pai herof to spede

1268 For í haue líued so mánįa yere

1733 He táld resún til mánįa man

2270 Now ér þar spéches séxtįa tua

4297 Hért o stéle, and bódįo brass

5793 A land rinnand bath honįand milk

There is a rather common -e spelling for this final -i in Vesp. It is possible that final -i, which in unaccented environments is very likely [ĭ], is occasionally lengthened to /ẹ/ in an open syllable (3.7). But this happens only in half-stressed or full-stressed syllables. It is more probable that since final -e is frequently lost in Vesp., and before vowels final -i is likewise non-syllabic, these are merely instances of scribal confusion. The following are typical:

4912 Bot thing þat we ha lele boght

4928 þaa sorful now, þaa sare men

5270 þair mete to þaim i rede broght

---

[29]Vss. 2322, 2606, 3586, 4143, 5190.
[30]Vss. 626, 733, 973, 3414, 3742.
[31]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 146-64.

8514  Was king and regn four<u>te</u> yeir

8596  þair moders selli ne<u>de</u> war

9520  He had an anlep<u>e</u> son

6.23.  Final -<u>u</u> in such words as <u>moru</u>, <u>folu</u>, <u>soru</u>, <u>boru</u>, <u>thoru</u>
and <u>halu</u> is regularly phonemicized in Vesp. as /w/, as is evidenced by
its regular monosyllabic occurrences.  These words are monosyllabic be-
fore either the initial vowel or initial consonant of a following word:

56  Todáy it és, to móru away

743  And thórw þe wíjf to wýn þe mán

904  In soru þou sal þi berns ber

4322  þan folu þi prai þat es bot tint

10212  þe Iues war wonto halu þi yere

13103  Boru þe bunden folk o bale

6.24.  A French borrowing, <u>vertu</u> 'virtue,' illustrates what are
evidently several of the intermediate stages in the development of final
-<u>u</u>.  It occurs in rime several times,[32] indicating that the syllable here
is half-stressed, rather than unstressed.  This is supported by these
verses:

34  O quát vertú is ilka tre

1016  þat serekin vértu hás at ette

6258  Swilk és þe vértu óf þis wand

In these occur both the original accent pattern and an adaptation to the
English system: _ ˊ and ˊ ˎ.  The latter is maintained even before a vowel.
A third stage, ˊ _, occurs prevocalically.

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[32]<u>Ibid</u>. p. 194.

8012  Of hu gret vertu and grace ar þai

This is quite clearly /vertwand/ to judge from the meter.  The final stage,

/vertw/ before consonants, does not seem to occur in Vesp.

### Pretonic Vowels

6.25.  In pretonic position the Vesp. dialect has an unstressed

vowel which is derived from various OE and ON enclitic particles.  These

were levelled to /ə/ at a relatively early period.  Just as /ə/ has a

standardized -e- spelling in final position, with -i- and -u- variants,

so /ə/ occurring initially has certain standardizations:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4252 | emid ⎫ | | |
| | ⎬ | 'amid' | (OE āmiddan) |
| 11629 | imid ⎭ | | |
| 995 | abute | 'about' | (OE on būtan) |
| 927 | again ⎫ | | |
| 1537 | egain ⎬ | 'again' | (OE on gegn) |
| 2633 | ogain ⎭ | | |
| 10210 | emang ⎫ | | |
| 10293 | amang ⎬ | 'among' | (OE onmang) |
| 10213 | omang ⎭ | | |
| 2704 | beside ⎫ | | |
| | ⎬ | 'beside' | (OE be + sīde) |
| 2380 | biside ⎭ | | |
| 571 | iwis | 'truly' | (OE gewis) |
| 532 | o loft | 'aloft' | (OIc ā lopt) |

6.26.  There is a certain degree of regularity here.  When the

vowel of the tonic syllable is a front vowel, the pretonic vowel is writ-

ten e- or i-; when it is a back vowel, the pretonic vowel is written a- or

o-; when it is /a/ or /ai/[33] the pretonic vowel is written e, a, or o.

Phonemically the pretonic vowel is /ə/, but it probably has positional vari-

ants [əʿ], [ə] and [əʾ] respectively before front, central and back vowels

in the tonic syllables.

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[33]This may already have coalesced with /æ/ in Vesp. (5.6).

The pretonic syllable is by definition regularly unstressed and like unstressed vowels in medial and final position it is frequently lost. In Vesp. there are the allomorphs: amang ~ mang; again ~ gain; abute ~ bute; emid ~ mid.

4955  Yee said him þan gain mi consent

6570  Qua held þe fast mang oþer men?

17482  Sittand his disciplis mid

21695  Quen strijf was bute þe preisthede

Loss occurs occasionally in French borrowings:

9722  Blithli wald i cord þam sua

2237  þat ai quen we se ani chesun

6723  Sal man giue þe lord to mend

Loss of the vowel is to be explained in part perhaps by the final vowel of the preceding word, but the existence of these allomorphs in Vesp. makes it apparent that unstressed OF /a/ > Vesp. /ə/.

## Unstressed Particles

6.27.  A few enclitic particles, particularly those which ordinarily appear in unstressed environments, have a common allomorph /ə/ in Vesp. Arend[34] demonstrates that o and of alternate, or in other words that they are allomorphs, o occurring before consonants and of before vowels. The same thing is true occasionally of o and on. Phonemically we have /ə/ which falls together with Vesp. a 'a' and a few other regularly unstressed syllables. Ordinarily these words are represented in writing by conventional symbols and thus a and o present no difficulties to the reader. An effort to restress /ə/, or more commonly, to represent /ə/

_____

[34]Arend, op. cit. pp. 228-35.

by a conventional symbol may result in confusion on the part of the scribe.

For example:

10494  Qui was i born o moder geld?  'Why was I born of a barren mother?'
Frf. and Trin. apparently realize the biological absurdity of this and
substitute bold for geld.  Gött. standardizes the spelling with of.  The
context of the verse makes it perfectly clear that what was intended is
'Qui was i born a moder geld?'  Some typical examples of this are the fol-
lowing:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 271 | Of all men agh þat drightin dride | Read o 'O!' |
| 1779 | Bot al for noght þai suanc a fote | F on |
| 1889 | Forþi men sais on messager<br>þat lengs lang to bring answare | F a; read of |
| 2202 | Mikel he cuth o sin a scham | GFT and schame |
| 2727 | þat godd ne may his will of do | G all; F to; read at |
| 5028 | And eue þat wroght was on his side | GFT of |
| 5726 | His ei on reuth he on þam kest | GFT of |
| 6629 | All þat er o godds pa[r]tie | F of GT in |

The more common of these particles are of, a, on, O, in, at, and and haue.
These have the common allomorph /ə/.  The difficulty lies not in reading,
but in assigning the appropriate standard spelling to a given word.[35]

     6.28.  The article þe 'the' and negative adverb ne 'not,' which
are quite regularly pretonic and therefore in unaccented position in the
meter, may be expected to have the following variants:  /þe/ ~ /þ/ and /nə/
~/n/.  Arend gives the following explanation:

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[35]An extended description of the mechanics of transcription and an ex-
planation of the process by which such confusions are possible is found
in H. J. Chaytor, From Script to Print (Cambridge, 1945), pp. 5-21.

In the definite article 'þe' the vowel is, as a rule, elided before vowels or <u>h</u>.  Sometimes þ- is then written together with the following noun or adjective.  This spelling is frequent in Edin.  When the last sound of the preceding word is also a vowel, þ- may be regarded as an intervocalic link consonant.  Examples:

   1115  And he will þat he biiþe‿yttrage   (link!)

   1302  To send himþe‿oile þat he him hight

   1367  aþe‿appel tre   (link!)

  10950  VG vnto þe‿auter   (link!)[36]

Whether there was regularly an allomorph /þ/ before vowels is quite doubtful.  The meter makes it evident that the allomorph /þə/ occurs in the following:

  299  And íf þe érth awái be tán

  349  þat és þe eleméntes to sái

  353  þe eleméntz first ín dais thrín

  412  He wróght þe ángels áll of héuen

On the other hand, the allomorph /þ/ must be assumed in:

  4276  Luken luue at þe‿end wil kith

 10373  Quer þe angel had his errand don

 10984  O þe‿haligast fulfild be

It is apparently quite regular too before <u>apostels</u> 'apostle,' 18870, 18912, 18952, 19034, 19039, etc.  It is also spelled <u>þaapostels</u> 19015.

    <u>6.29</u>.  Such spellings are not at all rare in Edin., but quite uncommon in Vesp.  One apparent instance of a spelling elision is in fact merely a bad scribal reading:

  1677  Fiueten on heght, þat es þentent
          Fra grund vnto þe tabulment

Gött. and Trin. render this as <u>þe entent</u> and Frf. as <u>myne entent</u>.  Kaluza glosses it as 'the intention.'  Careful reading discloses the fact that

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[36]Arend, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 212

the phrase makes no real sense. It must be remembered that in the origi-
nal, usually in Edin., and sometimes in Vesp., initial /þ/ following a
word ending in a dental is written t̲ (7.27). Most of such spellings have
been normalized in Vesp. The above verse represents an attempt by an ear-
ly scribe to normalize a perfectly acceptable word, t̲e̲n̲t̲e̲n̲t̲ 'stretching,
extending' (< ME tenten < OF tenter). The passage simply meant 'Fifteen
[ells] in height, that is extending from the ground to the rafters.'

It is possible that the C̲u̲r̲s̲o̲r̲ original regularly manifested
spellings like þ̲a̲p̲o̲s̲t̲e̲l̲s̲, þ̲a̲n̲g̲e̲l̲s̲ and the like. Such a spelling as
þ̲o̲r̲t̲h̲ 'the earth' 3757 seems to bear this out. The Vesp. scribe's care-
ful effort to separate þ̲e̲ in every instance in the writing may indicate
that the allomorph /þ/ does not occur in his dialect. It may be merely
a scribal convention. Clear-cut evidence appears to be wanting.

6.30. The negative adverb n̲e̲ clearly has allomorphs /nə/ and
/n/ in Vesp. Arend remarks:

> Another monosyllable is the negation 'ne.' Its vowel is like-
> wise elided before vowels and h̲, e.g.,:
> 5630  Of hebru childer þat þis ne̲es an[37]
> 8329  þat he ne it thoght   (link!)
> 9080  we ne au to brek   (link!)[38]

There are a few verses in which the spelling appears to indicate that the
allomorph /n/ occurs before e̲s̲ in Vesp.

55  Hit neys bot fantum for to say FGT, also Laud, Bedford: i̲s̲

929  For þou nees bot a pudre plain

These spellings are anything but typical. In general, as Arend did not
notice, the /n/ allomorph is not indiscriminately employed as a "linking

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[37]Why Arend should have selected this verse as an example is puzzling.
Neither Gött. nor Trin. have n̲e̲ here and the sense of the passage does n̲o̲t̲
require it.

[38]Arend, op. cit., p. 212.

element," but between certain pronouns: I, we, he, þai, yee (ȝee), qui, qua (and possibly þou and me) and a word with an initial vowel, the /n/ allomorph is regular. In such environments the /n/ is postclitic as appears from a number of spellings:

8157   Sua hale qu_in_ ware i and sua light?

17223   Qu_in_ suld i, iesu, do þi will?

17392   Qu_in_ had yee broght þam wit yow þeþen?

25884   Man, he sais, qu_in_ cuth þou fele?

25901   To do penance þat h_en_ had ned

The /n/ allomorph may also precede words with an initial consonant[38] and cannot be enclitic with the following word, as Arend supposes. Prevocalic occurrences are approximately three times as frequent as preconsonantal. The above patterning was noted by Hupe[40] but was confused with an entirely different phenomenon to which it bore little relation.

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[38]Cf. vvs. 5138, 10762, 11575, 12056, 15309, 16106, 16305, 17223, 18960, 19416, 19945, 24750, 25004, 25358, 25884, 25899.
    [40]Hupe, op. cit. pp. 177-8.

# VII. CONSONANTS

[OE had a series of voiceless stops: /p, t, ć, k/; a
series of voiced stops /b, d, ɉ, g/; (/g/ having an al-
lophone [w] medially and [x] finally). Stops occurred
initially, medially, finally. Medially and finally OE
also had a series of voiced and voiceless geminate stops:
/pp, tt, ćć, kk, bb, dd, ɉɉ, gg/. Long and short pho-
nemes fell together, giving Vesp. /p, t, č, k, b, d, ǧ,
g/ with these exceptions: OE /ɉ/ > Vesp. /y/; OE /ɉɉ/
> Vesp. /ǧ/ medially; OE /g/ > Vesp. /g/ initially only;
OE /gg/ > Vesp. /g/ finally only. Occurrences of Vesp.
/ǧ/ and /g/ in other positions derived from OF, ON or
both.

OE had a series of voiceless fricatives /f, þ, s,
š, h/ in all positions, and geminates /ff, þþ, ss, hh/
medially. Voicing of OE /f, þ, s/ in voiced surround-
ings remained in Vesp., becoming phonemic when contras-
tive duration medially became non-distinctive. Vesp.
has the phonemes /f, th, s, š, h/ in all positions, al-
so /v, þ/ in all positions, initial /v/ being an OF bor-
rowing, initial /þ/ a special development of words fre-
quently occurring in unstressed positions. OE /hh/ >
Vesp. /h/ = [x] medially; OE /g/ > Vesp. /h/ = [x] fin-
ally.

OE had a series of sonorants /m, n, l, r, w/ in
all positions; medially and finally geminates /mm, nn,
ll, rr/; initially the clusters /hn, hl, hr, hw/. The
geminates and clusters coalesced with the former to
give Vesp. /m, n, l, r, w/. OE /g/ > Vesp. /w/ medi-
ally; finally with loss of an inflection.]

7.1. The dialect of the Vesp. MS has the following consonant

phonemes:

| Stops | p | | | t | | č | k |
| | b | | | d | | ǧ | g |
| Fricatives | | f | th | | s | š | h |
| | | v | þ | | z | | |
| Sonorants | m | | | n | | | |
| | | | | l,r | | | |
| | w | | | | | y | |

## The Voiceless Stops

**7.2.** The voiceless bilabial stop /p/ is regularly written p. It occurs initially, medially and finally. In all positions it is derived (a) from OE /p/,[1] medially and finally also from OE /pp/.

(a) Initial    5125   pall    'pall'     (OE pæll)

     Medial     7572   wapen   'weapon'    (OE wǣpen)

               795   appel    'apple'     (OE æppel)

     Final     14308   wep      'wept'      (OE wēp)

            13402   cupp    'cup'      (OE cuppe)

It is also derived (b) from ON /p/ medially, and /p/ and /pp/ finally.[2]

(b) Medial    4457   drupand   'drooping'   (OIc drūpande)

     Final     25439   rape     'hasten'    (OIc hrapa)

          7532   scrip    'scrip'     (OIc skreppa)

It is also derived (c) from OF /p/ initially and medially.

(c) Initial    262   part    'part'     (OF part)

     Medial    8504   pepin   'kernel'   (OF pepin)

**7.3.** The voiceless dental stop /t/ is regularly written t. It occurs initially, medially and finally. In all positions it is derived (a) from OE /t/, medially and finally also from OE /tt/.

(a) Initial    2724   tale    'number'   (OE talu)

     Medial    737   littel   'little'    (OE lȳtel)

         2767   sitand   'sitting'   (OE sittende)

     Final     782   at      'at'      (OE æt)

         4100   mett    'met'     (OE mētte)

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[1] "Sie (i.e. /p/) ist im Anlaut selten, dagegen häufig im Inlaut und Auslaut." Sievers-Brunner, op. cit., p. 163.

[2] "Anlautendes p kommt, soweit die etymologischen Verhältnisse klar sind, fast nur in Lehnwörtern vor." Noreen, op. cit., p. 237.

It is also derived (b) from ON /t/ in all positions; medially also from
ON /tt/.

(b)  Initial   3364  tak      'take'      (OIc taka)

     Medial   22792  roten    'rotten'    (OIc rotinn)

              2015  flitting 'stripping' (OIc fletting)

     Final     6262  gat      'path'      (OIc gata)

It is also derived (c) from OF /t/ in all positions.

(c)  Initial  14040  term     'term'      (OF term)

     Medial    348  mater    'matter'    (OF matere)

     Final     5540  frut     'fruit'     (OF fruit)

     7.4.  The voiceless palatal continuant /č/ is regularly written
ch.  It occurs initially, medially and finally.  In all positions it is
derived (a) from OE /č/³ and finally also from OE /čč/.

(a)  Initial    156  child    'child'     (OE cild)

     Medial    6685  lechyng  'remedy'    (OE lǣcung)

     Final      994  rich     'rich'      (OE rīce)

               3051  wreche   'wretch'    (OE wrecca)

It is also derived (b) from OF /ch/⁴ in all positions.

(b)  Initial     57  chaunce  'chance'    (OF cheance)

     Medial    2883  licheri  'lechery'   (OF licherie)

     Final     6390  roche    'rock'      (OF roche)

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   ³The palatal developed as an allophone of Gmc /k/.  It occurred ini-
tially before front vowels and before long diphthongs, medially between
/i/ and a front vowel, finally immediately following /i/.  Cf. Sievers-
Brunner, op. cit., pp. 183-4.  The palatal remained simply an allophone
of /k/ until, as the result of i-umlaut, front vowels also appeared fol-
lowing the velar allophone, producing a phonemic split.  Cf. Herbert Penzl,
"The Phonemic Split of Germanic k in Old English," Language, XXIII (1947),
42.

   ⁴This phoneme, spelled ch, arose from Gallo-Roman /k/ before /a, au, e,
i/ and was palatalized.  Later it was assibilated to [tš].  It was intro-
duced into ME by way of Anglo-Norman.  Cf. Pope, op. cit., pp. 127-8, 430.

7.5. The voiceless velar stop /k/ is represented as a rule by

c before back vowels and by k before front vowels[5] or at the end of a syl-

lable. It is derived (a) from OE /k/ in all positions, finally from OE

/kk/.

(a) Initial    416  king     'king'      (OE cyning)

    Medial   9196  spekand  'speaking'  (OE spæcende)

    Final      87  mak      'make'      (OE macian)

           2041  nec      'neck'      (OE hnecca)

It is also derived (b) in all positions from ON /k/.

(b) Initial    103  call     'call'      (OIc kalla)

    Medial    649  mikel    'great'     (OIc mikill)[6]

    Final    1661  tak      'take'      (OIc taka)

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /k/.

(c) Initial   9933  castel   'castle'    (OnF castel)[7]

    Medial   9711  record   'record'    (OF record)

    Final    6513  relik    'relic'     (OF relique)

      There are relatively few irregularities in the consonants of

the voiceless stop series. Some obvious scribal blunders occur, partic-

ularly the graphic confusion between c and t, for example delites (FT

delices) 1027; tald (G cald) 23219. Two special problems, however, de-

serve some attention:  1) The /č/ phoneme; 2) Loss of final /k/.

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[5]The k spelling is sometimes used before back vowels. A purely graph-
ic distinction as mikel 596 ~ micul 593 is in accord with this system.
In unstressed words c may appear:  ic, tac.

[6]This may have been either OE or ON.  OE mikel was undoubtedly rein-
forced by ON mikill.

[7]"The northern traits that appear to have had some vogue in insular
speech are . . The retention of the velar articulation of k and g ini-
tial before Latin a . . castel."  Pope, op. cit., p. 428.

<u>7.6</u>. The phonemic split of Gmc /k/ into OE /č/ and /k/ took place in all OE dialects. Consequently there is phonemic contrast between /č/ and /k/ in all ME dialects as well. There are differences in the incidence of /č/ and /k/ in the various dialects; the problem consists in part of accounting for such differences.

The Northern dialects, including Vesp., show a number of occurrences of /k/ in words in which the Midland dialects ordinarily have /č/. Among these are <u>breke</u> 'trousers' (OE brēc) 2048; <u>dik</u> 'ditch' (OE dīc, OIc dīk) 9899; <u>mak</u> 'match' (OE gemæ c, OIc maki) 100; <u>mikel</u> 'great' (OE micel, OIc mikill) 596, 649; <u>pike</u> 'pitch' (OE pic, OIc bik) 1673; <u>rike</u> 'rich' (OE rīce, OIc rīkr) 9.

Since the split in Gmc /k/ which took place in PrOE did not occur in ON, it is possible that occurrences of the velar stop in the above words in Northern dialects may be explained as borrowings. Bülbring[8] claims to find evidence of a spelling contrast between OE /č/ and OE /k/ in ONth but his evidence is inconclusive and even contradictory. Not until the introduction of AN orthography is there reliable spelling evidence. Examination of place names in England[9] points to a Northern and North-Eastern area having a different development from that of the dialects of other areas, but this type of evidence may be pushed too far. Evidence of geminate consonants — which includes

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[8]Karl D. Bülbring, "Was lässt sich aus dem Gebrauch der Buchstaben <u>k</u> und <u>c</u> im Matthäus-Evangelium des Rushworth-Ms. folgern?" <u>Anglia Beiblatt</u>, IX, 289-300.

[9]Olga Gevenich, <u>Die englische Palatalisierung</u> von k > c, in <u>Studien zur englischen Philologie</u>, No. 57; Alfred Ritter, <u>Die Verteilung der ch und k-Formen im Mittelenglischen</u>, Marburg Diss., 1904; G. VanLangenhove, "The Assibilation of Palatal Stops in Old English," A <u>Grammatical Miscellany</u> Offered to <u>Otto Jespersen</u>, pp. 69-75.

OE /gg/ — indicates the same areal distribution as the above with respect to lig ~ lie, brig ~ bridge.[10] Both lig and brig occur in Vesp.

It is apparent that /k/ of words like dik or mak may have come from ON. This is the view expressed by Jordan:

> Die k-formen beruhen hauptsachlich auf skandinavischem
> Einfluss, d.h. Verdrängung durch das skandinavische
> Wort: . . Wo im Altnordischen keine Entsprechung vor-
> leigt, ist doch mit Lautersatz im Munde der skandi-
> navischen Ansiedler zu rechnen, der auf die englische
> Aussprache überging.[11]

Luick favors the idea that this is a native development:

> Doch es gab ein kleines Gebiet, das im wesentlichen
> Cumberland, Westmorland, Nordlancashire, Yorkshire,
> Lincolnshire und Norfolk umfasste, in welchem c vor
> æ nicht zu c weiterschritt: me. kaf 'Spreu,' ne.
> dial. kaff und -caster wie in Lancaster. Hierher
> gehört wohl auch der Verschlusslaut in again 'weider.'[12]

Nearly every word in Vesp. in which /k/ occurs side by side with Midland /č/ has not only an OE etymon but one in ON as well. In the latter /k/ is regular and Jordan's suggestion appears to be correct. Jordan does not, however, attempt to explain how in instances where [č] must certainly have appeared in the North the Scandinavians regularly substituted their own phoneme. On the other hand no substitution occurs in words like child, chese and chin. The clearest indication appears in the morpheme -lik in words like dughtilik 'stoutly' 3673; fellik 'fiercely' 4143; hastelik, 'hastily' 5190; straitlike 'straitly' 6105. This morpheme is regularly /lič/ in the Midland dialects. The OE form is -līc in all dialects. Whether this OE spelling indicated a velar stop in ONth cannot be determined. It is apparent, however, that the ON cognate

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[10] Karl Luick, "Zur Palatalisierung," Anglia, LX, 274-286.

[11] Jordan, op. cit., p. 161.

[12] Luick, Historische Grammatik, p. 902.

is -līg.[13] This cannot give Vesp. /līk/ but may, however, appear as the

rather common allomorph /lī/ (3.3). Vesp. /līk/ must then be explained by

assuming that PrŌE /k/ in ONth remained unpalatalized in some environments

in which it was palatalized in Midland dialects.

The Vesp. MS gives evidence that /č/ variants tend to displace

/k/ forms which must have occurred in the original. Beside reke 'reach'

11221, 22375, 24452; spek 'speech' 12197, 13260, 13348; rike 'rich' 9,

2091, occur the forms reche 1840, 2232; speche 243; and riche 1797, 2127.

The /k/ variants are regular in rime. Of /č/ variants only reche occurs

in rime, and that twice, 3649, 5308.[14] The rike/riche variants are rela-

tively common in Vesp. Rike is the only form appearing in rime[15] and ap-

pears some 20 times, but it is found only occasionally out of rime.[16]

In non-rime environments riche is regular. The reason for the contrast

may be that Vesp. has few words, if any, to rime with riche. If riche

represents a normal phonetic development in the Vesp. dialect, the /č/

phoneme ought to turn up occasionally in words like ilik, like and others.

Actually, it never does. Rike is evidently not an unfamiliar variant and

is permitted to remain in rime to avoid the difficulty of recasting a

score of verses. Elsewhere riche has been substituted. For example:

[13]Noreen, op. cit., p. 184: "Das schon in der ältesten zeit auftret-
ende -ligr, -legr in adj. wie dagligr 'täglich,' u. dgl. beruht wohl
wesentlich auf analogischer umbildung von -likr 'gleich' durch anschluss
an adj. wie aubigr, -egr, ntr. aubikt, -ekt 'reich.'"
[14]In addition, only teche 'teach' 13251, 18710, 21203; leche 'heal'
176; leche 'physician' 21204, 24465; and preche 'preach' 175, 13250,
18709 occur in rime. Cf. Strandberg, op. cit., p. 100.
[15]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 148-9, 151. For some reason rik 12492
was overlooked.
[16]Rynell, Rivalry of Scandinavian and Native Synonyms in Middle
English (1948), p. 118. His totals give: "rike 2 r(imed) 2 u(nrimed)."
This figure is difficult to explain.

1796  All tok a right, bath pouer and Rike;
      All hade a dom, bath riche and pour

7918  Tua men, a pouer and a rike,
      þe riche he had sua mikel fee.

The related kingrike 'kingdom' occurs 22 times in Vesp. It appears in
rime seven times, with the following words: rike 416, 7598, 8575; slik
4616; relike 8272; suik 11460, 13147. The spelling kingriche, which
does not appear anywhere in Vesp., occurs 12 times in Gött. Kingrike
rimes in 8272 with relike and from 11460 on is regular in Gött., cor-
responding precisely with Barth's rift (1.5), and demonstrating that
rike is the original form, riche a later one. Vesp. merely shows that
riche is the preferred variant. It is substituted only where it is con-
venient and suggests a borrowing from a more southerly, possibly more
prestigious dialect.

      In the case of rike and riche there is a clear phonemic con-
trast and these contrasting forms must accordingly be interpreted as
variants. An analogous contrast appears in some of the OF loans:

22002  Or clerk, or munk, or canun

29284  Als munk, or frer, nun, or chanun

These variants reflect a double borrowing from two French dialects.[17]
There are additional variants, all apparently semantically identical:
arche 1843 ~ arke 8273;[18] calanged 19148 ~ chalenged 28766; carked
13747 ~ charked 23994; calice 15633 ~ chalice 15237; canel(s 1866 ~
chanel 22563.

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[17]Jespersen, op. cit., p. 25; also Jordan, op. cit., p. 197.
  [18]It is possible that the scribe is making a distinction between
the ark of Noah (Gen. 6-9) and the ark of the covenant (Exod. 25:10ff).
Both are consistently referred to as arca in the Vulgate. There seems
to be a more reasonable distinction between cart(es 'wagon' (Vulg.
plaustrum) 6220 and chare 'chariot' (Vulg. currus) 5184.

7.7. Loss of final /k/ occurs in certain words subject to frequent unaccenting, that is, words which through their grammatical function occur rather commonly in unaccented metrical environments (6.2). Typical of such words are ic 'I,' take 'take,' make 'make,' and lik '-ly' of adverbial and adjectival suffixes.

The variants ma ~ mak, mas ~makes, mad ~maked, ta ~ tak, tas ~ takes, tan ~ taken are well attested in Vesp.[19] Two factors are to be considered, namely, stress and sandhi.

TABLE 6

TAKE AND MAKE WITH VARIANTS

|  | Unrimed | | Rimed |  |
|  | Accented | Unaccented | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ta | 8* | 27 | 9 | *0 prevocalic |
| tac | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| tak | 56* | 15 | 20 | *30 prevocalic |
| take | 3 | 2 | 34 | |
| ma | 14* | 12 | 0 | *0 prevocalic |
| mak | 109* | 30 | 26 | *53 prevocalic |
| make | 7* | 0 | 18 | *7 prevocalic |

Certain regularities make it apparent that ta ~ tak and ma ~ mak occurred before consonants and vowels respectively at a somewhat earlier stage of the Northern dialect. According to Arend, this alternation was at one time extremely regular and may have been so in the lost original of the Cursor. Arend remarks:

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[19]Instances of -k-less forms are comparatively rare in Gött. and the Edin. Mss are so fragmentary in this respect as to be almost useless. Frf. and Trin. have been "normalized" by their respective scribes.

The final <u>k</u> of the verbs 'take', 'make' is unstable in
C.M., being frequently omitted before the initial con-
sonants of subsequent words.  It is also frequently
dropped before consonant endings.  The <u>k</u>-less forms even
appear in rime with words having no <u>k</u>.

The following are a few examples:

   1980  o þam sal i ta my iustice, FG take
   9793  c sin ma clene   G ma, T make
   2360  þou ma þe bune   FGT make
  24250  VE ta to,   FG take to
     .  .  .

On the whole it seems that the full forms were preferred
by the Cursor poet himself, though the rimes show that
the apocopized forms were not unknown to him.  We may say
perhaps that the <u>k</u> of 'tak,' 'mak' was in the beginnings
of the stage of lability.[20]

One is not convinced that the <u>Cursor</u> original manifested the neat regular-

ity Arend would like to reconstruct for it.

    <u>Tak</u> and <u>mak</u> are rather common in set phrases in <u>Cursor</u> and in

these phrases <u>tak</u> and <u>mak</u> tend to have half stress in contrast to the

other word of the phrase which has full stress.  <u>Ta</u> rather than <u>ma</u> is

usual here, as a number of citations from Vesp. illustrate:

   197  His faas stilli sco badd <u>ta</u> kepe

  1034  Hu [he] þan delt <u>ta</u> mi god kepe

  1498  Bot þat i sai, <u>ta</u> yee god kepe

  2534  þou cristen man!  forþi <u>ta</u> kepe

  26260  þe sext case, þou preist <u>ta</u> kepe

  27014  For-þi bes war, and tak god kepe

  27450  And sai:  Sere biscop, ta god kepe[21]

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[20]Arend, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 240.
  [21]The phrase 'take keep' was obviously used by the <u>Cursor</u> poet him-
self.  The first two of the above verses have <u>ta</u> in both Vesp. and Gött.,
but in the remaining (and later) verses the Gött. scribe has evidently
restored <u>tak</u>.  <u>Ta</u> is given twice in the Edin₂ fragment:
  24146  <u>Ta</u> me to þe apon þi rod     Vesp.:  same
  24250  Bot <u>ta</u> to Iohan kep         :  Bot ta to iohn mi kepe
Evidence that <u>ta kepe</u> occurred in the original is circumstantial but is
sustained by the rimes.

To assume that loss of /k/ came about through such set combinations as these is not entirely out of the question. From tak kepe a reduction in stress brings about ta kepe which is presently separated by an adjective or pronoun, as appears to have occurred in the above verses. It is unlikely, however, that a few such phrases could have been primarily responsible for a widespread remodelling of several words.

The tabulation (Table 6) of tak and mak forms shows that the ta and ma variants originally appeared in unaccented surroundings before consonants while tak and mak generally remained in accented environments, often prevocalically. The same kind of variation must be assumed for i ~ ic and the suffix li ~ lik, both of which are also often unaccented. At one time, as evidence of the Vesp. demonstrates, i was regular before consonants and ic before vowels and before unstressed words with initial h.[22] Once the distinction became lost or obscured, ta and tak, ma and mak became free variants. Consequently both full and k-less forms may occur in rime and clearly did so in the Cursor original.[23]

The emergence of ta and ma side by side with tak and mak brings into the dialect two somewhat similar pairs of variants. The vowel, probably long in take and make, is certainly lengthened in ta and ma. The further development of these forms is the construction, by analogy, of a

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[22]The Vesp. scribe is apparently familiar with the tradition but runs into all sorts of contradictions because the tradition has become meaningless. I is common before vowels: i o 9616, 24034, 24429; i are 870; i agh 1168; i in 24107, 24629, 28806; i an 23881; i am 1167, 12118, 15531; i ar 26858; i it 28325. On the other hand, the scribe uses ic preceding initial h of stressed words: ic hope 2036, 23920, 28053; ic herd 7360; ic hatt 9683, 12814. It also occurs before other consonants: ic spak 26895; ic forsoke 28246. The i ~ ic distinction is simply a relic in Vesp.

[23]The poet rimes ta with fra, ga, alsua, baa, wa; and tak with make, sak, spak, wrake, sake, slake. Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 71-5.

new inflected present, imperative, and past participle. In the latter,

_ta_ significantly takes on the inflection of the strong verb and _ma_ of

the weak. Variant past participles are apparent in rime evidence:

989 Adam was out don nars and naked
    In-to þe land quar he was maked

1259 Vn-to þis wreched warld slade
     þar i first me-self was made

25736 To brek his lagh þat we ha taken
      Wit sin we haf him þan forsaken

18575 þai sagh him rise fra vnder stan
      And þat þai had fals giftes tan

The problem of the loss of medial /k/ in make(d and take(n

has been discussed a number of times. Jespersen[24] describes it as a

loss of /k/ before a point consonant in some words used frequently in

unaccented positions. Mossé simply says "Il y a chute de _k_ dans le

preterit et le participe passé de mǎke(n) . ."[25] Wright offers this

explanation:

> For mǎken, tǎken the northern and north Midland
> dialects had mak, tak through early loss of the fi-
> nal -n, and these forms are still preserved in the
> modern dialects of this area. The pret. and pp.
> mǎde, mǎd (maad) for older mǎkede, mǎked arose from
> the loss of intervocalic _k_. From the new pret. and
> pp. was then formed a new present mǎ(n), after the
> analogy of which was formed a new present tǎ(n) for
> tǎken.[26]

Horn[27] suggests that the past participial forms have been constructed on

the imperative singular. In taking issue with this explanation, Luick[28]

[24]Jespersen, _op_. _cit_., pp. 25-6.
[25]Fernand Mossé, _Manuel de l'Anglais du Moyen-Age_ (_Moyen Anglais_) (1949) I, 60.
[26]Jos. and E. M. Wright, _An Elementary Middle English Grammar_ (1928) p.41.
[27]Wilhelm Horn, _Sprachkörper und Sprachfunktion_ (_Palaestra_ No. 135) p.38.
[28]Luick, "Sprachkörper und Sprachfunktion," _Anglia_, LXV, 200.

states that lenization of a medial k̲ produced a velar fricative which even-
tually served to produce the diphthong in ma̲u̲d̲e̲ (a well-attested ME form)
and finally ma̲d̲e̲. One obvious difficulty with this explanation is the fact
that ma̲u̲d̲e̲ is not Northern, but distinctively Southern, appearing in S̲o̲u̲t̲h̲-
e̲r̲n̲ E̲n̲g̲l̲i̲s̲h̲ L̲e̲g̲e̲n̲d̲a̲r̲y̲. Still another suggestion comes from Flasdieck[29]
who comes to ma̲k̲t̲e̲ by ordinary linguistic processes and then "(uber *mā̆ȝde?)"
to mā̆d̲e̲. Luick also has this explanation:

> Ahnlich sind wie es scheint auch mā̆de 'machte' (y)mā̆d
> 'gemacht' nördlich mā̆s, mā̆ 'macht, machen,' für makede
> usw. zu erklaren. Synkope wie Konsonantenschwund waren
> wohl an mindere Betonung (in der kausativen Verwendung
> des Verbums) gebunden. Die ursprünglich nordenglischen
> Formen tā̆n, tā̆s, tā̆ 'genommen, nimmt, nehmen' sind wohl
> jüngere Analogiebildungen dazu . . . .[30]

The evidence of Vesp. fails, of course, to corroborate Luick's explanation.

It is apparent that all of the above explanations ignore the ex-
tensive currency in the North of t̲a̲ and m̲a̲ which evolved from a stress and
sandhi combination. On these variants other inflectional forms developed
analogically.

### The Voiced Stops

7̲.̲8̲. The voiced bilabial stop /b/ is written b̲ and it occurs in-
itially, medially and finally. It is derived (a) from OE /b/ initially;
finally from OE /bb/.[31]

(a)  Initial  8783  bind    'bind'   (OE bindan)

    Final    628   rib     'rib'    (OE ribb)

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[29]H. M. Flasdieck, "Zur ME made." E̲n̲g̲l̲i̲s̲c̲h̲e̲ S̲t̲u̲d̲i̲e̲n̲ LVII, 139 ff. Also
Jordan, o̲p̲. c̲i̲t̲., pp. 158-9.
    [30]Luick, H̲i̲s̲t̲o̲r̲i̲s̲c̲h̲e̲ G̲r̲a̲m̲m̲a̲t̲i̲k̲, p. 374.
    [31]Sievers-Brunner, o̲p̲. c̲i̲t̲., p. 164: /b/ "begegnet in germ. Wörtern
nur anlautend." There are no reflexes of OE /bb/ medially in the C̲u̲r̲s̲o̲r̲.

It is also derived (b) from ON /b/ initially;[32] medially and finally from ON /bb/.[33]

(b)  Initial  2879  bal      'ball'       (OIc böllr)

    Medial   5176  gabbing  'scoffing'  (< OIc gabba)

    Final   26233  snib     'reprove'   (OIc snubba)

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /b/.

(c)  Initial   692  best     'beast'     (OF beste)

    Medial  12218  gebet    'gallows'   (OF gibet)

    Final    9072  rob      'robe'      (OF robe)

    7.9. The voiced dental stop /d/ is written d̲. It occurs initially, medially and finally. In all positions it is derived (a) from OE /d/, medially and finally also from OE /dd/.

(a)  Initial   390  dai      'day'       (OE dæg)

    Medial   5265  blodi    'bloody'    (OE blōdig)

          8003  midel    'middle'    (OE middel)

    Final    1106  dede     'deed'      (OE dǣd)

          5198  bidd     'request'   (OE biddan)

It is also derived (b) from ON /d/ initially; finally from ON /dd/.

(b)  Initial   660  dei      'die'       (OIc deyja)

    Final     726  stad     'placed'    (OIc staddr)

It is also derived (c) initially and medially[34] from OF /d/.

(c)  Initial  1908  doute    'doubt'     (OF doute)

    Medial  11796  idel     'idol'      (OF idele)

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[32]Noreen, op. cit., p. 238: "b̲ kommt nur anlautend und nach m̲ vor."
[33]Ibid., p. 239: "bb̲ ist im ganzen selten."
[34]Final /d/ did not occur in OF. Cf. Pope, op. cit., pp. 219-221.

| Medial | 6204 | nagat | 'in no wise' | (OIc nan + gata) |
| | 23453 | bigging(es | 'habitations' | (OIc bygging) |
| Final | 13448 | gleg | 'clever' | (OIc gløggr) |

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /g/, and (d) finally from OIr /g/.

| (c) | Initial | 11825 | gutte | 'gout' | (OF goute) |
| | Medial | 13662 | beggar | 'beggar' | (OF begard) |
| | Final | 265 | proloug | 'prologue' | (OF prologue) |
| (d) | Final | 9885 | crag | 'crag' | (OIr crag) |

7.12. The only special problem in this series is that of the unvoicing of /d/ in final position. While evidence indicates that un-voicing of /d/ as the inflection of weak verbs in the preterit and past participle was general in many ME dialects,[42] the evidence in Vesp. does not support this.

In Edin$_1$, as Hörning observes,[43] /d/ is frequently written t in words like wonderit 19082, 19084, 19699; gaderit 19136; hungrit 19851; handlit 19206; ordanit 23745; lengit 19798, 19805; langit 20141; mangit 19710; heuedit 20990. Parallel forms in Vesp. are spelled with final -d, except wonderit which Vesp. renders as wonder.[44]

This may have been purely a spelling convention in Vesp. In riming monosyllables final -t spellings are preserved in words like fast, past, lent, sent, brent.[45] In non-riming surroundings a -d spelling

[42]Cf. A. H. Marckwardt, Origin and Extension of the Voiceless Preterit and the Past Participle Inflections of the English Irregular Weak Verb Conjugation, in University of Michigan Publications in Language and Literature, XIII, 151-171.

[43]Hörning, op. cit., p. 51.

[44]Morris has "restored" d in Vss. 19082 and 19699. In 19084 it may be read as a substantive.

[45]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 8, 15, 16, 17.

frequently occurs: __passed__ 1466; __fasted__ 12943; __leued__ (left) 2846; __send__

206, 711; __brend__ 3105; __cursd__ 2071; __dueld__ 4260. The possibility that some

of these spellings may represent a kind of mechanical substitution of

one letter for another seems to be borne out by occasional spellings.

__Coverled__ 'coverlet' 11239 may be a confusion with a final -__ed__ of the

preceding verse, but it may also be that the scribe mistook a spelling

__coverlit__ (which can be inferred from the rime-word __tapit__) for a dental

suffix and altered it to his own -__ed__ spelling. This is evidently the

explanation for a spelling __pouerd__ 'poverty' 17117 which appears instead

of the more regular __pouert__. There is also the following:

> 19534  Bot for he wend at come þar to    'But since he wished to receive it
> þar-for tok he baptim faint    Therefore he took __feigned__ baptism'

The narrative in Acts 8 refers to the institution of simony and the dissim-

ulation of Simon Magus who received not a diluted, but a sham baptism.

$Edin_1$ is consistent in spelling this __fainte__. Vesp., whose dialect presum-

ably distinguishes between final /nd/ and /nt/, is also consistent in fail-

ing to recognize this.

It is possible that final -__d__ in Vesp. is a standardized spelling

which may include /d/ and a variant [đ] in final position. It is also

possible that the few words with double spelling forms have either [đ] or

[d] (also [ əd]) as the result of dialect mixture.

### The Voiceless Fricatives

__7.13__. The voiceless labiodental fricative /f/ is written f and

occasionally in borrowings __ph__. It occurs initially, medially and finally.

Initially and finally it is derived (a) from OE /f/, medially from OE /ff/.[48]

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[48]There are no examples of OE /ff/ as such except in Latin loanwords. Cf.
Sievers-Brunner, __op. cit.__ (p. 202): "Expressive, bzw. dynamische Geminaten
sind germanisch ff, hh . ." It was perhaps more clearly expressed in Sie-
vers-Brunner (1942) (p. 193): "Selten und dem Ursprung nach zweifelhaft
sind auch germanisch ff, hh. ."

| (a) | Initial | 3935 | far | 'go' | (OE faran) |
|-----|---------|------|-----|------|------------|
|     | Medial  | 10768 | offer | 'offer' | (OE offrian) |
|     | Final   | 887 | draf | 'drove' | (OE drãf) |

It is also derived (b) initially from ON /f/[47]

| (b) | Initial | 1831 | fare | 'conduct' | (OIc far) |
|-----|---------|------|------|-----------|-----------|

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /f/.

| (c) | Initial | 7205 | fin | 'end' | (OF finir) |
|-----|---------|------|-----|-------|------------|
|     | Medial  | 4960 | suffer | 'suffer' | (OF sufrir) |
|     | Final   | 29281 | cheif | 'chief' | (OF chef) |

    7.14. The voiceless interdental fricative /th/ is written <u>th</u> and <u>t</u> and it occurs initially, medially and finally. Initially and finally it is derived (a) from OE /þ/. Its occurrence medially is the result of compounding.[48]

| (a) | Initial | 3302 | thing | 'thing' | (OE þing) |
|-----|---------|------|-------|---------|-----------|
|     | Medial  | 560 | nathing | 'nothing' | (OE nã + þing) |
|     | Final   | 1091 | wrath | 'wrath' | (OE wraþ) |

It is also derived (b) initially and finally from ON /þ/.

| (b) | Initial | 5803 | thra | 'eager' | (OIc þrãr) |
|-----|---------|------|------|---------|-----------|
|     | Final   | 2632 | brath | 'violent' | (OIc brãðr) |

It is also derived (c) finally from OF /th/.

| (d) | Final | 5145 | faith | 'faith' | (OF feid) |
|-----|-------|------|-------|---------|-----------|

    7.15. The voiceless dental fricative /s/ is written <u>s</u> initially and finally, <u>c</u> initially and medially before front vowels, and <u>ss</u>

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[47] Noreen, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 240: "f kommt nur anlautend und im inlaute vor k, s, t, þ vor."

[48] OE /þþ/ is relatively rare and appears ambiguously in Vesp. It is possible that Vesp. /th/ is derived from this as in <u>sithen</u> 'since' (OE siþþan) 132, or <u>wreth</u> 'wrath' (ONth wræþþo) 32. Any conclusions, however will raise a circular argument.

medially. It occurs initially, medially and finally. It is derived
initially and finally (a) from OE /s/, medially and finally from OE /ss/.

(a)  Initial    3456  se        'see'         (OE sēon)

     Medial    11942  wissing   'direction'   (OE wissung)

     Final         9  was       'was'         (OE wæs)

               3109  i-wiss     'truly'       (OE ge-wiss)

It is also derived (b) initially and finally from ON /s/.

(b)  Initial     350  samen     'together'    (OIc saman)

     Final      7747  ros       'praise'      (OIc hrōs)

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /s/.

(c)  Initial    3237  sargant   'servant'     (OF sergant)

     Medial    15287  basin     'basin'       (OF bacin)

     Final       436  pris      'value'       (OF pris)

7.16. The voiceless palatal fricative /š/ is spelled sc initi-
ally; medially and finally it is spelled sc, sch, ss, x, xs.[49] It oc-
curs initially, medially and finally. In all positions it is derived (a)
from OE /š/.

(a)  Initial     685  schepe    'sheep'       (OAng scēp)

     Medial    13323  fissar    'fisher'      (OE fiscere)

     Final     13373  flexs     'flesh'       (OE flæsc)

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[49]The following will illustrate the variety: wessen 'wash' 17334,
bransches 'branches' 26363; biscopphede 'bishop-hood' 19330; flexsli
'fleshly' 18743, flessli 22804, flessely 26364, flesli 28627; fixses
'fishes' 22571. In final position: fleche 10103, flexs 13373, fless
1953, flex 15547, flesse 1472, flesche 1669, flesch 25730, flexss
26564, fles 28475, flexse 28679. The spelling beseeten 'beshit' 22397
may be a scribal blunder. The xs spellings may be the result of influ-
ence of ON fiskr and flesk with metathesis of the final consonant clus-
ter. The variety of spelling is in part to be explained by the fact
that /š/ appears in relatively few words in ME, and little ambiguity
is possible, even within a wide range of spellings.

7.17. The voiceless velar fricative /h/ is spelled h[50] initially and gh medially and finally. It occurs initially, medially and finally. It is derived initially (a) from OE /h/, medially from OE /hh/, finally from OE /g/.

| (a) | Initial | 419 | hale | 'whole' | (OE hāl) |
|-----|---------|-----|------|---------|----------|
|     | Medial  | 7366 | laghand | 'laughing' | (OAng hlehhand) |
|     | Final   | 92  | inogh | 'enough' | (OE genōg) |

It is also derived (b) initially from ON /h/.[51]

| (b) | Initial | 734 | hap | 'fortune' | (OIc happ) |
|-----|---------|-----|-----|-----------|------------|

It is also derived (c) initially from OF /h/.

| (c) | Initial | 487 | honur | 'honor' | (OF honour) |
|-----|---------|-----|-------|-----------|-------------|

There are several special problems involving the phonemes of the voiceless fricative series.

7.18. Vesp. /th/ has a variant [t] in final position, which is evidently a development in unaccented surroundings since it occurs either in such surroundings or in words often found there. The spelling t is most commonly found in wit 'with' and its compounds, forwit, wituten, witin, witstand; also selcut 'marvel,' hundret '100,' and a few other words. This feature is peculiar to Vesp. All the other manuscripts, except Gött., in which wid is standard, have with (wiþ) which has been

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[50] Under the influence of OF spelling practice, h is often omitted where it may be expected, and inserted where it has no historical reason for occurring. Initial omissions include: ost 'host' 6273, anure 'honor' 3922, vnger 'hunger' 4717, es 'his' 9318, ert 'heart' 5163, ale 'hale' 2533. It has been inserted initially in: haks 'ask' 975; hee 341, hei 'eye' 15952, his 'is' 1046. It also occurs medially: murþerhed 'murdered' 1116, alhas 'alas' 24113, werhaid 'warred' 727.

[51] Noreen, op. cit., p. 241 "Der hauchlaut h kommt nur anlautend vor sonanten vor."

transmitted from the Cursor original. It must also be observed that in
end-rimes in Vesp. wit is always rimed with words like grith, kith, smith
and frith[52] and never with words like it or witt. Also it deserves no-
tice that a count of occurrences of wit ~ with from vss. 1-1000 gives a
ratio of 49 to 9; from vss. 1000-2000 a ratio of 60 to 11 (seven of these
between vss. 1711-56, perhaps indicating a scribal lapse); from vss.
2000-3000 a ratio of 66 to 3; from vss. 9000-10000 a ratio of 47 to 0.
This suggests that the scribe was here engaged in making a regular spell-
ing change which he sometimes overlooked in earlier verses, but scarcely
ever in later verses. Wit hin 'within' 807, bears this out.

7.19. Vesp. /š/ in unaccented environments has a variant [s].
This is sometimes explained as a change of /š/ > /s/ in unaccented sur-
roundings.[53] Inglis 'English' 233, 234, 235, Frankis 'French' 237, 239,
240, and danis 'Danish'[54] are the standard forms in Vesp. A few other
words, among them peris 'perish' 15309,[55] turn up occasionally. Initial
occurrences are evident only in sal 'shall' and suld 'should'. Very
likely schall and sal were at one time differentiated on the basis of
contrastive accenting. In a number of words it is apparent that the form
once characteristic of unaccented positions has become standardized in all
environments.

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[52]Strandberg, op. cit., pp. 30, 33, 37.
[53]Jordan, op. cit., p. 166; Wright, op. cit., pp. 125-6.
[54]Danis 'Danish' is identical in spelling and probably in pronunciation
with Danis 'Dan's' 21975. Here a real confusion results, since Antichrist
is identified as a Dane rather than as a member of the Jewish tribe of Dan.
[55]This is actually a scribal blunder by the Vesp. scribe. Peris 'perish'
is addressed to Peter and the copyist understandably mistakes this for Pers,
'Peter.' This appears (15313, 15357, 15364) in place of Petre. Such an er-
ror suggests that peris may not be the form normally used by the scribe.
Worsip, felausip are typical of Northern Mss but Vesp. has wirscipe, felau-
scip. Apparently -ish forms are standard in Vesp. in all but a few cases.

7.20. Vesp. /h/ has two allophones, [h], written h̲, initially, and [x], written gh̲, in other positions. The latter is a coalescence of OE /hh/ medially, OE /h/ before /t/ and OE /g/ finally.[56] In the last there appears to be a double development. Since OE /g/ medially > Vesp. /w/, a word often used in phrases may develop final /w/ side by side with forms with final /h/. This has happened in the case of inogh̲ 'enough' (OE genōg) 4468, which also occurs as inou 2190. The spelling foghul 'bird' 3506 beside fouul 1660 is quite likely a spelling inversion.

## The Voiced Fricatives

7.21. The voiced labio-dental fricative /v/ is written v̲ (and sometimes w̲) initially; v̲ or f̲ medially and finally. It occurs in all positions. Medially and finally it is derived (a) from OE /f/.

| (a) | Medial | 11828 | feuer | 'fever' | (OE fefer) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Final | 3400 | liue | 'life' | (OE līfe) |

It is also derived (b) medially from ON /f/.

| (b) | Medial | 4326 | heuen | 'avenge' | (OIc hefna) |

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /v/.

| (c) | Initial | 24977 | virgine | 'virgin' | (OF virgine) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Medial | 5012 | deliver | 'deliver' | (OF delivre) |
|  | Final | 2915 | caue | 'cave' | (OF cave) |

7.22. The voiced interdental fricative /þ/ is written þ̲ and occurs in all positions. Initially, medially and finally it is derived (a) from OE /þ/.

| (a) | Initial | 7 | þat | 'that' | (OE þæt) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Medial | 13 | oþer | 'other' | (OE ōþer) |
|  | Final | 827 | kiþe | 'make known' | (OE cȳþan) |

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[56]Jordan, op. cit., pp. 176-7.

It is also derived (b) initially and medially from ON /þ/.

(b)  Initial        6    þer      'their'      (OIc þeira)

      Medial       6190  þeþen    'thence'     (OIc þaðan)

     7.23. The voiced dental fricative /z/ is written s and occurs medially and finally. It is derived from OE /s/.

      Medial      25285  husel    'housel'     (OE hūsl)

      Final        5378  ches     'choose'     (OE cēosan)

It is also derived medially from OF /z/.[57]

      Medial       4174  prisun   'prison'     (OF prisun)

     7.24. Old English had three voiced fricatives [v, ð, z], which were positional variants of /f, þ, s/, occurring intervocalically. In intervocalic position it also had three long voiceless fricatives /ff, þþ, ss/ which contrasted with [v, ð, z] in respect to length and also voicing. Quantity lost its phonemic status during the early ME period with lengthening of vowels in open syllables and shortening in closed syllables. Accordingly, in ME either voiced or voiceless fricatives may occur medially. Since consonant length is no longer distinctive, Ch. III, fn. 3, voicing becomes distinctive. The number of native words in which this type of contrast appears is relatively small. The introduction of French borrowings, however, in which there are /f/ ∿ /v/, /s/ ∿ /z/ contrasts,

[57]There are some ten Biblical names with initial z: Zabulon, Zachari, Zamaxima, Zeb, Zebedei, Zebee, Zechin, Zelote, Zorobabel. These are not necessarily pronounced, being primarily literary. The spelling z also occurs in a few French loans: sariantz 'servants' 4670, baptiz 'baptize' 12854, 19017, elementz 'elements' 353, 355, vertuz 'virtues' 21222; but these words are also spelled sariants 2516, baptis 12846, 12847, elements 366, vertus 9990. Hörning, op. cit., p. 54, has assumed on the slender basis of a scant dozen z spellings that Edin. has a voiced fricative here. Pope, op. cit., p. 276, makes it clear that this was the spelling for the affricates [dz] and [ts] in OF. This is apparently carried over into ME.

substantially augments the number of occurrences of such contrasts. The Vesp. scribe carefully distinguishes /f/ and /v/, and /s/ and /z/. In medial position the spelling v is almost completely regular, such forms as waifand 'waving' 13121 and saufand 'saving' 11232 probably being relics. In medial position s is the regular spelling for /z/. The only exceptions appear to be an occasional z in foreign words like baptiszing 12776 and hazardour 26854. Medial c never and medial ss very rarely occur as spellings for Vesp. /z/.

7.25. An orthographical distinction between a voiced and a voiceless interdental fricative is rigidly maintained in Vesp. (also in Gött.) through the symbols þ and th respectively, in contrast to the other Cursor MSS in which the symbols are interchangeable.[58] Clear evidence of a phonemic distinction, correlating precisely with distinctions in the use of these symbols is difficult to produce. The only OF borrowing in which the interdental fricative occurs is faith, a very early loan.[59] Consequently OF cannot be used as a basis of comparison. The rare instances of OE /þþ/, e.g. sibþan (OE sīþ + þan), are given ambiguously in Vesp., either as sithen 132, or siþen 952. The reflex of OE and ON /þ/ in voiced environments, which is a voiced fricative, is consistently written þ: broþer 'brother' 1219; oþer 'other' 1220; raþer 'rather' 21516; queþen 'whence' 3826; forþer 'further' 4107; bineþen 'beneath' 1681.[60] There are, on the other hand, a few words in which

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[58] The symbol þ is used almost exclusively in Edin., Trin. and Frf., almost never in Laud. Th is verse-initial in BM 10036 and þ is used elsewhere.
[59] Pope, op. cit., p. 448.
[60] Usage is divided in a few instances: birthin 27310, birþin 4179, and birthþin 5520 (< OE þyrþin and perhaps OIc byrðr); murþer 4130 and murther 19716, the latter evidently constructed on murth, a well-attested form. Worþi 1148, worthi 44, and worthþi 1647 appear to reflect the same kind of double borrowing (< OE veorþ, worþig).

the symbol þ never appears: <u>nathing</u> 'nothing,' <u>erthing</u> 'burial,' <u>hething</u>

'mockery.'[61] If <u>nathing</u> were considered as two words by the scribe, he

would normally permit metrical accent to fall on the second element. If,

however, it were considered a single word, English stress patterning would

require the accent on the initial syllable. The latter occurs with consider-

able regularity (560, 644, 853, 2543, 2847, 4139, 4234, 5965, 10014, 10869,

13077, 13999 . .). The same accent pattern occurs in <u>hething</u> (1735, 2028,

2730 . .). Where these words occur in rime the pattern, of course, is re-

versed. Since neither <u>nathing</u> nor <u>erthing</u> presumably have a voiced inter-

dental fricative, although it is intervocalic, the Vesp. scribe is endeav-

oring to make a strict distinction here between the consonant of <u>brother</u>

and that of <u>nathing</u>.

It is clear from the Edin. MS and from the nature of some of

the scribal slips which occur in Vesp. that the original must have used

the symbol þ consistently to represent the interdental fricative, voiced

or unvoiced. It is difficult to assume that the scribe of the Vesp. MS

makes a distinction with perfect conformity to OE and presumably ME

voicing practice wholly on the basis of coincidence.

<u>7.26</u>. Phonemic voicing of the interdental fricative in ini-

tial position was completed by the time the Vesp. MS was written and is

clearly indicated by the spelling. Initial þ in the spelling is regular

in roughly a score of commonly unstressed words and their variants: <u>þa</u>,

<u>þan</u> 'then,' <u>þai</u> 'they,' <u>þair</u> 'their,' <u>þam</u> 'them,' <u>þar</u> 'there,' <u>þas</u> 'those,'

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[61]A spelling <u>heþing</u> 11540 in Morris' edition is simply a guess. The
manuscript is almost completely illegible. <u>Hething</u> appears to be reason-
able on grounds of consistency.

þat 'that,' þe 'the,' þe 'thee,' þider 'thither,' þeþen 'thence,' þi 'thy,' þir, þis 'these,' þu 'thou,' þus 'thus,' for-þi 'therefore.'

The amount of irregularity is infinitesimal.[62]   The Vesp. scribe makes several precise distinctions:

1029   Qua lenges þar, thar þam noght lang        'Who lingers there need not want'

3941   þe maister sinu of his the        'The master sinew of his thigh'

Vesp. consistently differentiates between þar 'there,' and thar 'need' (2553, 2730, 5219, 7069, 9025, 10461, 13554, 23028).  That the original made no such distinction is apparent from a few verses:

3371   Wit mikel mirth, thar naman wene        'With much mirth, need no one wonder'

Frf. has misread þar of the preceding manuscript as þar 'their' and is forced to make an almost unrecognizable paraphrase:  "Wit squete wordis þaire wai þai went".

13796   Rise, thar þe lij na langer[63]        'Rise, you need lie no longer.'

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[62]The regularity of this contrast has been overlooked by nearly everyone examining the EETS edition.  One of the sources of the oversight is unquestionably the spelling the for þe which appears in vss. 5, 33, 146, 192, 221, 234, 495 . . . Comparison of the EETS version with a microfilm of the Vesp. MS plainly shows that all the spellings should read þe. Careful examination of scores of th and þ spellings makes it seem unlikely that the Vesp. scribe ever interchanged the two.  An interesting instance of oversight is that of Heinrich Hupe, who collated Morris' edition with the manuscript, and thus had no excuse for overlooking Morris' incorrect transcription.  Hupe (Cursor Studies, p. 245*) remarks of a critical edition which he attempted:  "I have made a difference between þ (sharp) and ð (soft).  I find great difficulty in finding the right way.  I have spelt ð between vowels, and taken final ð when there was a close connection with the following word beginning with a vowel or semi-vowel in quað and wið, because the MSS readings vary in these words between th, t, d; and the softer pronunciation decidedly suits our dialect. In some words I have adopted th from the MSS."

[63]Thar is the correct reading.  The EETS edition gives it as þar.

Trin. has recast this as "Rise and lye no longer þere."

It should be noted that <u>thoru</u> 'through' appears nowhere in Vesp. as <u>þoru</u>[64] which would be the normal consequence if the <u>þ</u> symbol were used indiscriminately in relatively unstressed words.[65] The pronoun <u>þe</u> 'thee' which may be accented in certain surroundings, occurs 93 times in rime in Vesp. but is consistently written <u>þe</u> in distinction to <u>the</u> 'thigh' 3941 and <u>the</u> 'prosper' 5150, both of which also occur in rime.

Phonemic voicing of the interdental fricative in initial position had probably occurred — or had at any rate become a recognized feature — between the time of the <u>Cursor</u> original and Vesp.

<u>7.27</u>. In Edin₁ and also in various other early ME manuscripts initial /þ/ of words like <u>þe</u>, <u>þat</u> and the like is regularly written <u>t</u> following the final dental of a preceding word,[66] indicating an assimilation

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[64]Actually a spelling <u>þoru</u> appears in the EETS edition in vss. 22078, 27974. According to the microfilm this should be <u>thoru</u>.

[65]This is what Jespersen <u>op. cit</u>., pp. 44-5, suggests "Some ME manuscripts use both <u>th</u> and <u>þ</u>, though they do not, as is sometimes said, distinguish them systematically, using <u>th</u> for the unvoiced and <u>þ</u> for the voiced consonant (Heuser [see below] wrongly says <u>th</u> for the voiced and <u>þ</u> for the unvoiced sound). So far as I have been able to see, they do what we should rather much expect from medieval scribes, namely use <u>þ</u> in the small constantly recurring (pronominal) words, in which orthographical conservatism is quite natural, and <u>th</u> in nearly all other cases, whether the sound was unvoiced as in <u>thing</u> or voiced as in <u>brother</u>." Heuser (Review of "Die älteste mittelenglische Version der Assumptio Mariae", <u>Eng-lische Studien</u> XXXIII, 257) states: "Beiläufig möge endlich noch eine hübsche beobachtung Hackauf's über das MS Göttingen des Cursor Mundi, welches eine der unsergen nah verwandte fassung enthält, erwähnt werden, dass nämlich hier <u>th</u> stets die stimmhafte, <u>þ</u> die stimmlose spirans bedeute." This is, of course, the precise opposite of what the evidence indicates, and Heuser's statement must be regarded as a slip of the pen. Emil Hackauf, <u>Die älteste mittelenglische Version der Assumptio Mariae</u>, Breslau Diss., 1902, p. xxxii, footnote: "Interessant ist dass in diesem (i.e., Gött.) Ms. <u>th</u> stets die stimmlose, <u>þ</u> die stimmhafte Spirans bedeutet. Hackauf's observation, correct as it is, is undocumented and undoubtedly impressionistic.

[66]This is actually a kind of dissimilation. Cf. Jordan <u>op. cit</u>., p. 182; also 'Th' in <u>NED</u>.

to the dental.   There are a few relics of this spelling in Vesp., amount-
ing to about thirty in all.  The Vesp. scribe ordinarily restores þ but
makes a few errors:

   319  Minning es <u>to</u> fader cald

Here the original clearly had <u>te</u> <u>fader</u> which the scribe misread as <u>to</u>.

  4908  Haue we noght <u>þan</u> o þe kinges

  9203  Iurselem was struid an <u>þan</u>

In both of these the correct word <u>tan</u> 'taken' has been overcorrected by
the scribe (6.29).

     <u>7.28</u>.  Rime evidence presents a rather unresolved picture with
respect to the fricative series.  Rimes of <u>gafe</u>: <u>haue</u>, or <u>kiþe</u>: <u>blithe</u>
turn up fairly often.  Somewhat more common, however, is the occurrence
of different forms in what seems to be the identical environment:

  11065  Quen iohn was born in þat ilk siþe
        His frendes was ful gladd and bliþe

  14214  For þan es i nu gladd and blithe
        þat i was noght wit þaim þat sithe

   1191  A hundrith wintur of his liue
        Fra þan forbar adam his viue

  2975  "þou king," he said, "loses þi lijf
        þou has anoþer mans wijf"

Actually this is probably more of a morphological than phonemic problem.
Despite the loss of infinitive inflections in verbs and case endings in
singular nouns, the Vesp. dialect retains a double set of stems for
many of these words, corresponding to earlier inflected and uninflected
stems.  In this dialect they are by and large interchangeable.  Where a
standard form has become established, as, for instance, <u>rijf</u> 'rife' 1594,
7695, 8531, 13350, 14364, 18662 there are no exceptions.  But both <u>wijf</u>

and wiue are common. There appears to be a tendency on the part of the
Vesp. scribe to use the morphologically indicated form in the first
verse of a couplet and simply to rime on this. In general stem level-
ling is still incomplete and little can be said with certainty regard-
ing fricative phonemes in final position.

7.29. In Vesp. there is evident a tendency toward loss of an
intervocalic fricative which appears in such variants as siþen ~ sin,
giuen ~ gin, queþen ~ quen, þeþen ~ þen, lauedi ~ ladi, lauerd ~ lord.
The scribe occasionally plays on these words:

25490  And suffer siþen for vr sin

26863  Sin he fra sin him will noght were

26920  And sin his sinn was neuer forgiuen

The loss of the medial fricative appears to take place only before den-
tals. Whether it came about by lenization of the medial consonant or
by an assimilation to the following dental is unclear. Several stages
of the development are represented by the spellings: heued, heud or
hefd and hed(e; also giues, gifs, gis.

### The Sonorants

7.30. The bilabial nasal sonorant /m/ is written m and oc-
curs initially, medially and finally. In all positions it is derived
(a) from OE /m/, medially and finally also from OE /mm/.

| (a) | Initial | 183   | man     | 'man'    | (OE mann)    |
|-----|---------|-------|---------|----------|--------------|
|     | Medial  | 3653  | comen   | 'come'   | (OE cumen)   |
|     |         | 11208 | wemming | 'defect' | (OE wemming) |
|     | Final   | 193   | lam     | 'loam'   | (OE lām)     |
|     |         | 1786  | ram     | 'ram'    | (OE ramm)    |

It is also derived (b) in all positions from ON /m/.

| (b) | Initial | 1204 | meke | 'meek' | (OIc mjūkr) |
|-----|---------|------|------|--------|-------------|
|     | Medial  | 350  | samen | 'together' | (OIc saman) |
|     | Final   | 1731 | þam  | 'them' | (OIc þeim) |

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /m/.

| (c) | Initial | 484  | merci | 'mercy' | (OF merci) |
|-----|---------|------|-------|---------|------------|
|     | Medial  | 7500 | homage | 'homage' | (OF homage) |
|     | Final   | 728  | blam  | 'blame' | (OF blame) |

7.31. The dental nasal sonorant /n/ is written n and occurs initially, medially and finally. In all positions it is derived (a) from OE /n/, initially also from OE /hn/, medially and finally also from OE /nn/.

| (a) | Initial | 390  | night  | 'night' | (OE niht) |
|-----|---------|------|--------|---------|-----------|
|     |         | 8986 | nesse  | 'weak'  | (OE hnesc) |
|     | Medial  | 420  | mani   | 'many'  | (OE manig) |
|     |         | 9202 | wonnen | 'won'   | (OE wunnen) |
|     | Final   | 4724 | ken    | 'keen'  | (OE cēn) |
|     |         | 641  | wan    | 'plenty' | (OE wann) |

It is also derived (b) in all positions from ON /n/, medially and finally also from ON /nn/.

| (b) | Initial | 22883 | nait    | 'use'  | (OIc neyti) |
|-----|---------|-------|---------|--------|-------------|
|     | Medial  | 18261 | tinning | 'loss' | (OIc tȳning) |
|     |         | 563   | minning | 'mind' | (OIc minning) |
|     | Final   | 7506  | lan     | 'loan' | (OIc lān) |
|     |         | 3556  | ran     | 'ran'  | (OIc rann) |

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /n/, medially and finally from OF /ñ/.

| (c) | Initial | 241 | nacion | 'nation' | (OF nacion) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Medial | 9540 | manere | 'manner' | (OF maniere) |
| | | 24773 | senurre | 'dominion' | (OF seigneurie) |
| | Final | 741 | gin | 'contrivance' | (OF engin) |
| | | 13420 | sign | 'sign' | (OF signe) |

7.32. The sonorant /l/ is written l and occurs initially, medially and finally. In all positions it is derived (a) from OE /l/, initially also from OE /hl/, medially and finally from OE /ll/.

| (a) | Initial | 9871 | lese | 'lose' | (OE lēosan) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 106 | lauerd | 'lord' | (OE hlāford) |
| | Medial | 211 | hali | 'holy' | (OE hālig) |
| | | 392 | duelland | 'remaining' | (OE dwelland) |
| | Final | 119 | sal | 'shall' | (OE sceal) |
| | | 121 | al | 'all' | (OAng all) |

It is also derived (b) in all positions from ON /l/; initially from ON /hl/; medially and finally from ON /ll/.

| (b) | Initial | 1774 | lau | 'low' | (OIc lāgr) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 5324 | lite | 'delay' | (< OIc hlīta) |
| | Medial | 7648 | felau | 'fellow' | (OIc fēlagi) |
| | | 11536 | calling | 'visit' | (< OIc kalla) |
| | Final | 105 | til | 'to' | (OIc til) |
| | | 46 | ill | 'ill' | (OIc illr) |

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /l/

| (c) | Initial | 4319 | langur | 'langor' | (OF langueur) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Medial | 2381 | felun | 'felon' | (OF felon) |
| | Final | 2217 | fole | 'foolish' | (OF fol) |

7.33. The sonorant /r/ is written r and occurs initially, medially and finally. It is derived in all positions (a) from OE /r/, initially from OE /hr/, medially and finally from OE /rr/

| (a) | Initial | 1767 | ris | 'rise' | (OE rīsan) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1282 | reu | 'rue' | (OE hrēowan) |
| | Medial | 214 | dreri | 'dreary' | (OE drēorig) |
| | | 8779 | merring | 'trouble' | (OE merring) |
| | Final | 156 | bare | 'carried' | (OE bæ r) |
| | | 1034 | fer | 'distant' | (OE feorr) |

It is also derived (b) initially and finally[67] from ON /r/, initially also from ON /hr/.

| (b) | Initial | 9 | rike | 'rich' | (OIc rīkr) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 11948 | ros | 'boast' | (OIc hrōs) |
| | Final | 925 | sere | 'several' | (OIc sēr) |

It is also derived (c) in all positions from OF /r/.

| (c) | Initial | 219 | resun | 'reason' | (OF raison) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Medial | 4137 | baret | 'strife' | (OF barat) |
| | Final | 5075 | chere | 'countenance' | (OF cher) |

7.34. The sonorant /w/ is written w and u and occasionally uu. It occurs in all positions.[68] In all positions it is derived (a) from OE /w/; medially and finally also from OE /g/ following a back vowel.

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[67]The Vesp. MS evidently has no word with medial /r/ which can be connected with an ON etymon.

[68]Strictly speaking, medial and final occurrences can also be considered in connection with diphthongs.

| (a) | Initial | 836  | wa      | 'woe'     | (OE wā)                   |
|     | Medial  | 385  | grouand | 'growing' | (OE grōwende)             |
|     |         | 5687 | drauand | 'drawing' | (OE dragende)             |
|     | Final   | 9932 | snau    | 'snow'    | (OE snāw)                 |
|     |         | 2932 | dau     | 'day'     | (OE dag- in obl. cases)   |

It is also derived (b) initially from ON /w/; finally from ON /g/ following a back vowel.

| (b) | Initial | 3505 | waith | 'game' | (ON *waiþ-) |
|     | Final   | 1636 | au    | 'awe'  | (OIc agi)   |

It is also derived (c) initially from OF /w/.

| (c) | Initial | 5209 | ward | 'guard' | (OnF ward) |

7.35. The sonorant /y/ is written y and ȝ. It occurs in all positions. Initially it is derived from OE /j/, medially and finally from OE /j/ following a front vowel.

|  | Initial | 188  | yeir    | 'year'    | (OE gēar)    |
|  | Medial  | 5623 | plaiand | 'playing' | (OE plegende)|
|  | Final   | 510  | dai     | 'day'     | (OE dæg)     |

It is also derived initially from ON /j/.

|  | Initial | 7101 | yate | 'assent' | (OIc jāta) |

7.36. OF /ñ/ has coalesced with OE /n/ in Vesp. although reflexes of it quite regularly have a traditional gn spelling. Among the words in which it appears are coroigne 'carcass' 22906, cheigne 'chain' 22054, groigned 'muttered' 13590, baraigne 'barren' 16655, meigne 'company' 3208, also regn 'reign' and signe 'sign' which appear rather often. Coalescence with OE /n/ is indicated by such spellings as meyne 'company' 1916, meine 11597, and senurre 'dominion' 24773.

<u>7.37</u>. Vesp. /n/ has an allophone [ŋ] before velar consonants /g/ and /k/ for which a traditional <u>ng</u>, <u>nc</u>, <u>nck</u> or <u>nk</u> spelling is employed. Confusion of <u>thing</u> and <u>think</u> is always graphic; <u>na-thinc</u> 'nothing' 12245 is influenced by <u>me-thinc</u> two verses earlier. <u>Thing</u> for <u>think</u> 9842, 21630, 24276 is also an oversight. Both <u>g</u> and <u>k</u> are used in <u>for-thingk</u> 25996, which rimes with <u>sink</u>. <u>Alking</u> <u>thing</u> for <u>alkin</u> <u>thing</u> 9379, 9383 is not an unexpected anticipatory spelling. <u>Lenth</u> 'length' 1642, 2130, 5027, 5805 and also <u>strenth</u> 5806 represent an assimilation of /n/ to /th/. In these words [n] occurs[89] although the scribe also occasionally writes <u>length</u> 8244 and <u>strencth</u> 7208.

<u>7.38</u>. The Vesp. MS maintains an extremely regular alternation: /a/ ∼ /an/, /nă/ ∼ /nān/, /mī/ ∼ /mīn/, /þī/ ∼ /þīn/ before consonants and vowels, respectively.[70] A rare exception is <u>na vtetrage</u> 'no outrage' 975. These have been preserved into MnE. Since the vowel-final allomorph is regular before consonants, a remodelling of the words <u>nangat</u> and <u>nankin</u> has taken place in Vesp. where <u>nagat</u> and <u>nakin</u> are rather common. Ekwall explains this as loss of /n/ before a velar stop.[71] It is more simply explained as morpheme alternation.

<u>7.39</u>. Loss of /l/ following a back vowel and preceding a velar stop is clearly shown in Vesp.[72] Loss before velar stops is largely obscured by traditional spelling, but certain deviations may be observed:

[89]Jordan, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., pp. 173-4.

[70]Arend, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., pp. 222-5.

[71]Ekwall, "Loss of a Nasal before Labial Consonants," <u>Studies in English Philology</u>, pp. 21-7.

[72]A number of OF borrowings reflect a vocalization of OF /l/: <u>auter</u> 'altar' 1936, 2388, 2442, 2485; <u>maugre</u> 'despite' 4305, 6424; <u>faut</u> 'fault' 5385; <u>sauter</u> 'psalter' 7969. These took place not in English, but in French. Pope, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 154.

820  For-þi yett wald he wit him tak

This has been interpreted as 'take'[73] but the context fails to support it.

13115  And he to tak with þaim began 'And he to talk with them began'
       And bad þaim als to hald þam still

Morris restored <u>l</u> here, but the parallel MSS suggest that <u>tak</u> was the form in the <u>Cursor</u> original.  The following are also of interest:

11247  Wit þis talkyng þat i yow sai

18700  Herd þis talkin o iesu muth

The meaning here is that of <u>taken</u> 'token'.  The scribe may have been misled by the context to read the word as <u>talk</u>(ing) and accordingly he used the familiar spelling.  This occurs also in:

27844  Alkin talking wrangwisly

The context has to do with covetousness and theft, and the meaning 'taking' is unmistakably indicated.  There is loss of /l/ also in <u>walk</u>:

11422  þai went and tua yeir war wakand

Kaluza has glossed this correctly, following the parallel MSS.  The sense of 'waking' would be preposterous here.  The same loss occurs in <u>folk</u>:

4646  Til al mi fok it sal auail

12054  O þis fcle foke for þi dedes

12838  And said þat al þaa fok moght here

A variant spelling <u>agat</u> for the adverb <u>algat</u> 'by all means' is given in Vesp., 4091.  This may be a scribal error, but is more probably another

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[73]Strandberg, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 67; Hupe, <u>cp</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 219*.

instance of loss of /l/. There is no indication that this loss also affected words like ilk, quilk, silk or milk. A preterit welk, occurring eight times in Vesp. may have preserved /l/ in walk to some extent.

7.40. The spellings qu and w in words like quat 'what' and qui 'why' side by side with wat and wi are generally interchangeable in Vesp., indicating that an older [xw] in Vesp. is [hw] or [w].[74] It is true that reflexes of OE cw and OF qu [kw] are regularly written qu; quak 'quake' (OE cwacian) 3566, 5196, 22539; questiun 'question' 22891 (OF question). There are occasional puns:

18043  þe quilk al ded him quick i yald

This may, however, be a kind of spelling pun, for the opposite also occurs:

778  He wat wel wat tim or tide     G:  He wat wele þat quat . .

Or sometimes qu and w spellings turn up in phrases:

157  How he was born and quen and ware

There is even a reverse spelling:

28686  To fall in syn hu gret foly
       Hu quat it es þar-in to ly

Hu quat makes no sense. This should have been hu wath 'how dangerous.' There seems to be little doubt that the original regularly had qu. The dialect of the Vesp. scribe has [w] and he employs a w spelling as it is convenient. In the above example, he evidently read wat for wath from an earlier transcription and in order to resolve an ambiguity he put down quat, falling into a worse error than the first.

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[74]Wright, op. cit., p. 130; Cf. also "Qu" in NED.

7.41. The spellings <u>w</u> and <u>v</u> are often interchangeable also. Sometimes <u>v</u> appears in place of <u>w</u>: <u>his viue</u> 'wife' 1192; <u>wath vas</u> 'danger was' 1846; <u>he vent</u> 'he went' 12510. And on the other hand: <u>wessel</u> 'vessel' 1662; mans <u>woice</u> 'voice' 11420; <u>wirginite</u> 'virginity' 24681. Both occur in one verse:

24907 Do <u>wou</u> elsis and hald þi <u>vou</u>    'Make a vow Elsey, and hold thy vow'

In Vesp. both <u>w</u> and <u>v</u> are employed as spellings for [ɥ]; consequently the confusion is to be considered graphic, not phonemic.

# SUMMARY

This description of the phonology of the Vesp. MS of <u>Cursor Mundi</u> has been made in accordance with modern synchronic methods and thus it constitutes a re-examination of many of the conclusions presented in the handbooks of Luick, Jordan, Wright, Brunner and others. Substantial agreement is reached with the writers of the handbooks on many particulars and it may be regarded as significant that earlier findings can be corroborated by newer methods.

A number of conclusions established by this study are to be noted:

1) Two dialects must be distinguished, the first that of a lost original manuscript which was written in Southern Scotland <u>ca</u>. 1300, and the second that of the manuscript actually under examination which was written in Northern England, possibly Durham, <u>ca</u>. 1400.

2) It has been shown that OE /$\bar{æ}^2$/ > Vesp. /$\bar{ę}$/ before voiced dentals, that OE /i, u/ were lengthened in open syllables to Vesp. /$\bar{ę}$, $\bar{ǫ}$/ respectively, and that before the clusters /ld, nd, st/ it was possible to have a long mid or low vowel. Since these features are distributed over limited geographical areas, two possibilities present themselves: first, on the assumption that the provenance of Vesp. is reasonably well known, to make a comparison with other MSS of the Northern area and to fix the extent of various dialect areas; second, where the provenance of other MSS is well known, to establish more accurately that of Vesp.

3) It has been possible to determine more precisely the time of the Great Vowel Shift in the Northern dialect on the basis of a substantial body of evidence. It has also been shown that the shift appears to have started before dental consonants.

4) The development of the unstressed vowel is not fully understood, especially in the Northern area. This study has clarified certain features, among them the complete loss of an earlier unstressed vowel in word-final position, quite probably medially in compounds, and also in unstressed endings of words, particularly -<u>ed</u> and -<u>es</u>. It has been shown that final -<u>i</u> and -<u>u</u> in unstressed syllables are phonemicized as /y/ and /w/ respectively before the initial vowel of a following word.

5) This study has established a positive identification of an early instance of phonemic voicing of the interdental fricative, both medially and initially in frequently unstressed words. As a result it is possible to date more accurately the first appearance of this development in the Northern dialect.

6) It is evident from the examination of a single extensive literary work that the concept of a "pure dialect" serves merely as a working hypothesis. While the dialect of the Vesp. MS does not make extended or numerous departures from the ordinarily accepted "Northern" features, nevertheless there are variant forms as the result of diachronic or areal mixture. The fact that these are regarded as impurities does not bespeak a defect in the dialect or in the manuscript, but points to a deficiency in our knowledge.

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