Orderic and English

1. Introduction

Narrating Henry I's attempts to recapture Robert of Bellême in 1102 in Book XI of his *Historia*, Orderic describes the surrender of Bridgnorth and Henry's subsequent journey north-west with his 60,000 troops to Shrewsbury via the road across Wenlock Edge, widening the cutting as they went.[1] This cutting was a bare ten miles south-east of Orderic's birthplace in Atcham, and it is therefore no surprise that he is well informed about the troops' movements. It is also no surprise either that Orderic knew the English name of this pass - '*Huvel hegen*' - glossing this as '"malum callem" vel "vicum"' (translated by Chibnall as '"evil path" or "road"'). Orderic's inclusion of the English road name raises questions not about only how much knowledge of English he retained in later life, but his reasons for including this detail in an account of a conflict over English territory between two primarily French-speaking adversaries written for a Francophone monastic audience.

Chibnall reconstructs the road name given by Orderic as Middle English *uvel hege*, 'evil hedge or undergrowth', but given that Orderic describes it as 'a deep cutting … overshadowed on both sides by a thick wood', it would be preferable to connect the second element with *ege*, 'ridge'.[2] There is, moreover, reason to believe that *hegen* should be construed as a plural, so that the road name should in fact be 'evil edges'.[3] Orderic's translation of this name is thus doubly wrong: first in that renders *hege* with *callis* or *vicus*, both of which essentially mean 'road', thus missing the topographical significance of the name; second, in that he translates as singular a noun that is plural, implying a somewhat shaky recollection of his childhood language. But, as his very inclusion of this phrase suggests, English and getting English right seems to have remained important to Orderic. This is apparent from his hypercorrection here. Francophones like Orderic would have been unused to pronouncing [h] at the beginning of words; consequently, if they tried to speak English, they would have struggled to pronounce words beginning with [h].[4] Consequently, Francophones may have written <h> where they would not have pronounced it: this is the most economical explanation for the

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[1] *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis* ed. Marjorie Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1969-1980) [hereafter OV], 6:28-31. The following other abbreviations are used in this article:

AND: William Rothwell, Louise Stone and T. B. W. Reid (eds), *Anglo-Norman Dictionary* (pubd online 2007), <http://www.anglo-norman.net/gate/>, accessed 19 December 2014.

CDEPN: V. E. Watts, *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Cambridge, 2004).

DOE: Angus F. Cameron, Ashley Crandell Amos and Antonette diPaolo Healey (eds), *Dictionary of Old English: A to G online* (pubd online 2007), <http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/dict/index.html>, accessed 19 December 2014.

MED: Hans Kurath, Sherman M. Kuhn and Robert E. Lewis (eds), *Middle English Dictionary* (pubd online 2001) <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/>, accessed 19 December 2014.

[2] OV 6: 29n4. For *ege* in the sense 'crest (of a hill), ridge', see MED **egge** (n. (2)), 3(c), and compare DOE **ecg** 3.

[3] As it stands, the concord of 'huvel hegen' cannot be reconciled with Old English norms. The lack of inflection on 'huvel' suggests the road name should be understood as grammatically nominative. Since *ecg* is a light *jō*-stem, we would expect **yfelu ecg*, with *–u* rather than *–ø* on the adjective and *–ø* rather than <-en> on the noun. In transitional English, <-en> is more likely to be a reflex of historical <-V(n)> (i. e. any bare vowel or any vowel followed by <n>) than *–ø*. For this reason, Orderic's <-en> is more likely to reflect the plural **yfele ecga*, probably via analogy with the *an*-declension and in any case better suits the topography.

[4] Word-initial [h] had been lost in Late Latin, creating considerable difficulties for speakers of Late Latin when writing the language. The sound was used in Old French only in a handful of words borrowed from Germanic. See further M. K. Pope, *From Latin to Modern French* (Manchester, 1934), §28.

inorganic \<h> at the beginning of both 'huvel' and 'hegen' in Orderic's text.[5] Orderic's determination to get the English right here, even at a cost of getting it wrong, thus provides evidence for the importance he attached to the English he retained in the mid 1130s, some forty years after he had left England.[6]

This paper offers the first account of the knowledge of a vernacular language of Orderic or any of the major Latin historians of the long twelfth century. Historians have long been interested in how Orderic's biography – his birth in the 'remote parts of Mercia' as the offspring of a putatively mixed marriage between an immigrant from central France and an English woman, his entry into Saint-Évroul as a ten-year old oblate only to find the other monks spoke a language he did not know, and, with a developing reputation as a historian, his sojourn in Crowland to write the history of the abbey – shaped his writing of history.[7] Key to this biography is that he grew up speaking English, but wrote a Latin history in a Francophone monastery. Ascertaining how much of his childhood English he retained in his later years is thus a necessary first step in assessing his use of English in the *Historia*, and may also help decide whether it is likely he used vernacular sources for some of his English material. Furthermore, since Anglo-Saxon England was the one territory in early medieval Europe where there has been a possibility of instrumentalising the vernacular to mobilise national unity, establishing Orderic's knowledge of English may ultimately enable us to better understand Orderic's attitude to England, Englishness and the Anglo-Saxon state.[8] Given this, it is disappointing how little evidence the *Historia* of English seems to contain: one sentence in English, and that quoted at secondhand;[9] the English terms for 'carrucate' and 'feast';[10] and Latin etymologies of seven English

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[5] If my interpretation of *hegen* as a plural is correct, then this would constitute a third instance of hypercorrection, whereby Orderic tried to counter the tendency towards denasalisation in transitional English by mistakenly restoring \<-n> where it was not required.

[6] For 1135x1137 as the date of Book XI, see OV 1:47.

[7] Thus Amanda Jane Hingst draws several connections between Orderic's English upbringing and his historical writing in her recent *The Written Word: Past and Place in the Work of Orderic Vitalis* (Notre Dame, 2009). See especially pp. xiii, 50, 65. For Chibnall, Orderic's early years in England meant 'he could not fail to know at first hand the grievances of the English' (OV 1:79), while his oblation at Saint-Évroul 'undoubtedly enabled [him] to become one of the greatest of Norman historians' (OV 1:5). For Leah Shopkow (*History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington D. C., 1997), p. 100), Orderic writes as 'an Englishman defending his people' against the 'negative insinuations' of William of Jumièges and William of Poitiers. For Jean Blacker (*The Faces of Time: The Portrayal of the Past in Old French and Latin Historical Narrative of the Anglo-Norman Regnum* (Austin, 1994), p. 15), the fact that Orderic 'always thought of himself as an Englishman in exile' meant 'he approached his task' of writing a history for the Normans 'with a touch of irony'. See also the comments of Robert M. Stein, *Reality Fictions: Romance, History and Governmental Authority, 1025-1180* (Notre Dame, 2006), pp. 97-100.

[8] For Anglo-Saxon England as the exception to the rule that in the early Middle Ages 'language simply did not appear among the various strategies used for the mobilization of unity', see Patrick J. Geary, *Language and Power in the Early Middle Ages*, The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures (Waltham, Mass., 2013), p. 73.

[9] 'That wat min lauert Godel mihtin that ic sege soth' (OV 3:350). This is included in a *miraculum* of St Æthelthryth which Warin des Essarts, later abbot of Saint-Évroul, wrote up for Hervey, bishop of Ely, in epistolary form, and which Orderic quotes in its entirety in Book VI. A narrative of the same events is included in the *Liber Eliensis* (ed. E. O. Blake, Camden Society, 3rd ser. 92 (London, 1962), 266-9). For discussion, see most recently Helmut Gneuss, 'More Old English From Manuscripts', *Intertexts: studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture presented to Paul E. Szarmach* ed. Virginia Blanton & Helen Scheck (Tempe, 2008), pp. 411-421 at pp. 413-5.

[10] 'Conuiuiis prouincialium quæ uulgo firmam appellant' ('the feasts of the country people which are colloquially known as "feorms"', OV 2:230); 'carrucatas quas Anglice hidas uocant' ('the ploughlands which in English are called hides', OV 4:172) . The reference to *feorms* is very possibly taken from the lost conclusion of the *Gesta Guillelmi* of William of Poitiers (see Chibnall, OV 2: xviii for Orderic's use of this source).

Mark Faulkner, 'Orderic and English', in *Orderic Vitalis: Life, Works and Interpretations* ed. Rozier et al. (Boydell, 2016).
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names.[11] Fortunately, the text is stuffed full of English place and personal names, and these provide valuable if difficult evidence for Orderic's knowledge of English.

2. Names as Evidence

Using name forms as linguistic evidence is far from new. For example, Alistair Campbell's *Old English Grammar* accepts 'the names contained in the early manuscripts of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* […]' as, alongside manuscript texts and inscriptions, 'a further source for Northumbrian'.[12] However, as Campbell and subsequent scholars have acknowledged, names are a vexed source of linguistic evidence.[13] One problem is what exactly they offer evidence of. Though it is cognate with the noun *cniht*, 'boy', the Old English name **Cniht** is not itself a lexical word.[14] There are sound changes that affect only names.[15] This means that evidence from names is not necessarily applicable to the language more broadly.[16] Another problem is that not all name data is equally helpful. The spelling of particularly common names (e. g. **Alfred**) was liable to fossilize into a standard form that ceased to replicate sound changes affecting the lexical words.[17] Thus the first element of King Alfred's name is spelled *Ælfred* in the Parker Chronicle, retaining the Mercian spelling *Ælf-* in preference to the **Ielf-* that we might predict were it a lexical word.[18]

Despite these difficulties, used with care, names can offer valuable linguistic evidence. One large project that makes exclusive use of onomastic material is Gillis Kristensson's *Survey of Middle*

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[11] Place-Names: 'Crulandia enim crudam id est cenosam terram significat' ('Crowland means rough or boggy land', OV 2:339), a hybrid French-English etymology (cp. AND **cru**, 3 ('(of earth) untilled, uncultivated'), and cf. the etymology given by *CDEPN* < **crūw* + **land**, 'the land in a bend'); 'Torneia quippe spinarum insula nuncupatur Anglice' ('Thorney is the English name for "island of thorns"', OV 6:151).
Tribe Names: 'North enim anglice aquilo, man uero dicitur homo. Normannus igitur aquilionalis homo interpretatur' ('in the English language "aquilo" means "north" and "homo", "man"; Norman therefore means "man of the North"', OV 5:24).
Personal Names: 'Guthlacus, id est belli munus' ('Guthlac, meaning "Gift of War"', OV 2:324), following Felix's *vita* (ed. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge, 1956), p. 79).
Bynames: 'Edmundi Irneside id est Ferrei Lateris' ('Edmund called Ironside', OV 2:180); 'Edricus quoque […] cognomento Streonæ id est siluaticus' ('Edric known as the wild', OV 2:194); 'Edrici … cogomento Streonæ id est adquisitoris' ('Edric called Streona, or "the rapacious"', OV 2:194). All three explanations may ultimately be indebted to William of Poitiers.
In addition to these, note also 'Hugoni Dirganæ id est grosso'('Hugh "Digri", that is "the stout"', OV 5:224), where the etymon is Old Norse *dyggr*.
[12] A. Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959), §7.
[13] See, most recently, Carole Hough, 'Evidence from Sources Prior to 1500', *The Oxford Handbook of the History of English* ed. Terttu Nevalainen and Elizabeth Closs Traugott (Oxford, 2012), pp. 37-49, esp. §4 ('Names').
[14] On the linguistic status of names, see Fran Colman, *The Grammar of Names in Anglo-Saxon England: The Linguistics and Culture of the Old English Onomasticon* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 21-95.
[15] One example is the development of *Æthel-* to *Ægel-* in the tenth and eleventh centuries, discussed by Fran Colman, 'The Name Element *Æðel-* and Related Problems', *Notes and Queries* n. s. 28 (1981), 295-301.
[16] Thus Cecily Clark ('Towards a Reassessment of "Anglo-Norman Influence on Place-Names"', in *Language Contact in the British Isles: Procedings of the Eighth International Symposium on Language Contact in Europe, Douglas, Isle of Mann, 1988* ed. P. Sture Ureland and George Broderick (Tübingen, 1991), pp. 275-95, reprinted in *Words, Names and History: Selected Writings of Cecily Clark* ed. Peter Jackson (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 144-167, esp. pp. 150-2) talks of 'onomastic sound change' and Carole Hough ('The Role of Onomastics in Historical Linguistics', *The Journal of Scottish Names Studies* 3 (2009), 29-46, esp. 33-4) notes that onomastic isoglosses can differ from lexical isoglosses.
[17] For fossilisation, see especially Fran Colman, *Money Talks: Reconstructing Old English* (Berlin, 1992), p. 15.
[18] Example from Colman, *Grammar of Names in Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 23. For the putative development to **Ielf-* (via breaking and i-umlaut) see Richard M. Hogg, *A Grammar of Old English*, Vol. 1, *Phonology* (Oxford, 1992), §5.74n3.

English Dialects 1290-1350, completed in 2001.[19] Kristensson's delineation of dialect boundaries is based on evidence from the Lay Subsidy Rolls. Though written in Latin, these Rolls contain numerous place- and personal-names, given in – Kristensson argues – what is likely to be a faithful transcription of the preliminary local return, and therefore ultimately a faithful reflection of local pronunciation.[20] While Kristensson's work has been somewhat overshadowed by the contemporary *Linguistic Atlas of Late Middle English*, and doubts must remain over whether the place and personal names in the Rolls do invariably represent local pronunciations, reviewers have generally received it and its methodology favourably.[21]

The methodology of this essay differs from this and other studies that use names as a source of linguistic evidence in several ways. One of the major questions about the *Survey* has been 'how much the names that Kristensson used for his data might have been altered for the copyists and perhaps not representative of local forms'.[22] Since we have access to Orderic's autograph text of the majority of his *Historia*, we do not have to fret about whether later scribes are likely to have altered his spelling. Instead, we are confronted with a different but related problem, for while we can be confident that the informants behind the Lay Subsidy Rolls were people from the relevant localities, we do not always know who Orderic's informants were, and some of his informants were texts which (as will emerge below) used a variety of different orthographical systems. However, with care, it is possible to make sense of the surface variety of forms Orderic uses.

3. Methodology

This assessment of Orderic's knowledge of English is primarily based upon all the English place and personal names found in Books III-VI, IX-XIII, that is, all those parts of the *Historia* to survive in autograph that are printed in full by Chibnall. This data was collected by reading through Chibnall's text and in total consists of 167 place names, collectively occuring over 400 times, and 121 personal names, collectively found over 300 times. In establishing Orderic's usage, I have relied more heavily on place names than personal names: this is because place names, by virtue of their greater variety, are less liable to fossilisation than personal names. Personal names are nonetheless used to confirm or query patterns detected in the place name evidence.

Two further considerations inform my handling of this evidence. First, in order to control for the possibility that a particular place-name form may not represent Orderic's idiolectal usage but show a fossilised spelling, I have compared his spellings of place-names with the autograph forms of two near-contemporary historians: Eadmer of Canterbury (c. 1060 – in or after 1126) and William of Malmesbury (c. 1090 – in or after 1142).[23] A second factor that needs to be controlled for is the

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[19] Gillis Kristensson, *A Survey of Middle English Dialects 1290-1350*, 4 vols. in 5 (Lund, 1967-2001).

[20] For Kristensson's methodology, see particularly his 'Another Approach to Middle English Dialectology', *English Studies* 46 (1965), 138-56, along with the 'General Remarks' that open *A Survey of Middle English Dialects 1290-1350: The West Midland Counties* (Lund, 1987), pp. ix-xiii.

[21] Richard Dance ('[Review of] Gillis Kristensson, *A Survey of Middle English Dialects 1290-1350: The Southern Counties*, Part I, *Vowels (Except Diphthongs)* (Lund, 2001)', *Notes and Queries* n. s. 49 (2002), 398-9 at p. 398) observes the volume 'follows the same tried and tested format as its predecessors').

[22] Keith Williamson, 'Middle English: Dialects', *English Historical Linguistics: an international handbook* ed. Alexander Bergs and Laurel J. Brinton, I (Berlin, 2012), pp. 480-505 at p. 482.

[23] For Eadmer, I have collected relevant forms from the indexes of *Eadmeri Historia novorum in Anglia* ed. M. Rule, Rolls Series 81 (London, 1884) [hereafter *HN*], and to ensure full coverage of this text, *Eadmer's History of Recent Events in England: Historia Novorum in Anglia* trans. Geoffrey Bosanquet (London, 1964); *The Life of St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, by Eadmer* ed. R. W. Southern (Oxford, 1962) [hereafter *VA*]; *Vita Sancti Wilfridi Auctore Edmero: the Life of Saint Wilfred by Edmer* ed. Bernard J. Muir & Andrew J. Turner

possibility that Orderic took the spelling of a particular place name from a written source, and that its orthography in the *Historia* is that of the source not Orderic. For example, as I show below (§4.1.1), Orderic generally writes the reflex of Old English /y(:)/ as <u>, but his transcription of William the Conqueror's pancarta for Saint-Évroul includes three <e> spellings. To control for this possibility, I have relied on Chibnall's account of Orderic's sources, as presented in the introductions to the relevant volumes of her edition and aggregated in the introductory volume which completed the edition.[24]

Finally, a brief account of how historical linguists interpret spellings is in order. Spellings ultimately represent spoken linguistic forms, but there is seldom a simple relationship between orthographical representation and the phonology of the underlying language. No one writes as he speaks. To interpret spellings we therefore need to bring a range of evidence to bear, including an awareness of the different orthographical systems available (here principally Latin, 'Standard' Old English, and French, in so far as this had a stable orthography in the second half of the eleventh century) and knowledge of the phonology of both Old English, and West Midlands Middle English.[25] While we can never be entirely sure what a given spelling might represent, it is possible to know within certain bounds, and thereby to extrapolate from Orderic's use of place- and personal-names some sense of how he spoke, and to identify aspects of his mapping of sounds to graphs (in other words, of his spelling system) that are idiosyncratic for the first half of the twelfth century.

4. Results

In this section, I demonstrate that Orderic retained a Shropshire pronunciation of English late into his life, but that his proficiency in English diminished as he grew older. I argue that he was not taught to read or write English before he departed for Normandy. Using the English language was probably not a part of his self-identity as *Angligena*.

4.1 Orderic as a Speaker of Shropshire English

There is good evidence that Orderic retained a South-West Midlands pronunciation of English, consistent with his early upbringing in Shropshire, throughout his life. This is suggested by three particular features of his orthography: his preference for representing the reflex of OE /y(:)/ as <u>, the presence of forms that seem to show second fronting, and the occurrence of several forms with <o> for OE [ã].

(Exeter, 1998) [hereafter *VW*]; and *Eadmer of Canterbury: Lives and Miracles of Saints Oda, Dunstan, and Oswald* ed. Andrew J. Turner and Bernard J. Muir (Oxford, 2006) [hereafter *SL*]. All three of these texts are based upon Eadmer's autograph manuscript, MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 371 (described in R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 367-74). For William, I have used his *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum: The History of the English Bishops* ed. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2007), an edition based on his autograph, MS Oxford, Magdalen College, lat. 172.

[24] OV ed. Chibnall 1:48-77; 2: xvi-xxix; 3: xv-xxviii; 4: xix-xxv; 5: xiii-xix; 6: xvii-xxi.

[25] For an excellent introductory example of phonological reconstruction, see Roger Lass, 'Phonology and Morphology', in *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, volume 2, *1066-1476* ed. Norman Blake (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 23-155 at pp. 27-30. For 'Standard' Old English, see §4.2 below. For Shropshire Middle English, the most important evidence is 'AB', the language of the Katherine Group and *Ancrene Wisse*, on which see most recently Richard Dance, 'The AB Language: the Recluse, the Gossip and the Language Historian', *A Companion to Ancrene Wisse* ed. Yoko Wada (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 57-82. The most thorough grammar of AB remains *Þe Liflade ant te Passium of Seinte Iuliene* ed. S. R. T. O. D'Ardenne, EETS o. s. 248 (London, 1961 for 1960), 177-250.

4.1.1 <u> for OE /y(:)/

The reflex of Old English /y(:)/ has usually been taken as one of the most dialectally diagnostic features of Middle English texts, with /e/ found in Kent, Sussex, Surrey and the South-East Midlands, especially Essex and Suffolk, /i/ in the North East Midlands and the North, and /y/ (spelled <u>) in the West Midlands, Gloucestershire, Devon, Wiltshire and Hampshire.[26] Orderic has both <u>, <e> and <i> for historic /y(:)/, with <u> in:

> Bridgenorth, Shrops (< OE **brcyg** [later + ME **north**], 'bridge'): Brugiam [5:224; 6:24]; Brugiæ [6:28]
> Brinsop, H&W (< *Brynes* + **hop**, 'Bryni's enclosed valley'): Bruneshopa [3:248]
> Cambridge(shire), Cambs (< *Granta* + **brycg**, 'bridge over the Granta'): Grontebrugæ [2:218]; Grantesbrugescira [3:140]; Grantesbrugæscira [3:234 (x2)]
> Eynesbury, Cambs: Enolfesburiæ (< *Eanwulfes* (reanalysed as CG *Einulfes*) + **byrig**, 'Eanwulf's fortified place'): Enolfesburiæ [2:342]
> Malmesbury, Wilts (< *Maildub* + **byrig**, 'Maildub's fortified place'): Malmesburiensi [5:298]
> Tewkesbury, Glos (< **Teodeces* + **byrig**, 'Teodec's fortified place'): Teochesburiæ [3:228]
> Tonbridge, Kent (< **tun** + **brycg**, 'bridge by the town'): Tonnebrugiam [5:208]
> Tutbury, Staffs (< *Tuttan / Stutes* + **byrig**, 'Tutta's / Stut's fortified place'): Stotesburia [6:518]; Stutesburiæ [2:264]
> Shrewsbury, Shrops (< ***scrobbes** + **byrig**, 'the fortified place of the scrubland'): Scrobesburiæ [2:224, 5:222; 6:520]; Scrobesburiam [2:228; 6:24; 6:28; 6:552]; Scrobesburiensis [2:286; 6:318]

But <e> in:

> Brickhill, Bucks (< PrW ***brig** + OE **hyll**, 'hill called Brick'): Brichella [3:238]
> Burghill, H&W (< OE **burh** + OE **hyll**, 'fort hill'): Burchella [3:248]
> East Shilton, Leics (< OE **scylf** + **tun**, 'shelf settlement'): Sceltonæ [3:234]

And <i> in:

> Bristol, Avon (< **brycg** + **stow**, 'assembly place by the bridge'): Bristou [6:518]

The spelling <u> thus predominates, and, on closer inspection, the minority <e> and <i> forms can be dismissed: *Bristou* appears to be a fossilised spelling (cp. WM, *GP*, §154); *Brichella* and *Sceltonæ* occur only in Orderic's transcription of William the Conqueror's pancarta for Saint-Évroul; and *Burchella* is found in Orderic's summary of a grant of Bernard, son of Geoffrey of Neufmarché to the canons of Auffay.

Orderic's use of <u> in these contexts is idiosyncratic: William of Malmesbury almost always has <-berie> for place names in –**byrig**; Eadmer's two relevant forms, 'Westberi' and 'Westberiam' [SL 244, 248], both for Westbury-on-Trym (Glocs), likewise have <e>.[27] Additional forms support the

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[26] Richard Jordan, *Handbook of Middle English Grammar: Phonology* trans. Eugene E. Crook, Janua Linguarum Series Practica 218 (The Hauge, 1974), §§39-42. Kristensson (*A Survey of Middle English Dialects 1290-1350: The West Midland Counties* (Lund, 1987), Maps 8, 9) confirms that Shropshire was consistent /y(:)/ country and in AB, the reflex of OE /y(:)/ is likewise regularly /y/, spelled <u> (D'Ardenne, *Seinte Iuliene*, p. 193).

[27] *Ambresberiae, Ambresberiense* [*GP* 87.1] for Amesbury, Wilts (< *Ambres* + **byrig**, 'Ambre's fortified place'); 'Meldunense, quod corruptior aetas Malmesberiam nuncupat' [*GP* 197.2] for Malmesbury, Wilts (< *Maildub* + **byrig**, 'Maildub's fortified place'; cf. *Maldelmesburuh* [252.3] where William is copying S796); *Ramesberia(m)* [*GP* 14.1, 75.1, 80.4, 83.6] for Ramsbury, Wilts (< *hræfnes* + **byrig**, 'raven's fort'); *Scrobbesberia* etc [*GP* 144.1, 171.1] for Shrewsbury, Salop (< ***scrobbes** + **byrig**, 'the fortified place of the scrubland'); *Theokesburia* etc [*GP* 157] for Tewkesbury, Gloucs (< **Teodeces* + **byrig**, 'Teodec's fortified place'); and *Westberiam* [*GP* 150.ß3] for Westbury-on-Trym, Gloucs (< **west** + **byrig**, 'west fortified place'). For Eadmer's use of the same spelling for the last, see *SL* 244, 248.

conclusion that both usually spelled the reflex of OE /y(:)/ as <e>.[28] Orderic's use of <u> in these words cannot therefore be dismissed as a conventionalised Latinisation of historic English /y(:)/. Nor can Orderic's spellings derive from passively reporting the spellings of local documents, since he has <u> for places in /e(:)/ territory, for example Tonbridge in Kent. This suggests that Orderic pronounced these placenames with /u(:)/, as we might predict from what we know of the Shropshire dialect of Middle English. This conclusion is corroborated by his spelling of OE *yfel* as 'huvel' when he gives the name of the road across Wenlock Edge in Book XI. The most economical explanation is therefore that Orderic writes <u> in these words because he retained the accent he grew up speaking in Shropshire late into his adult life. This suggestion is corroborated by two further features of his spelling.

4.1.2 Second Fronting

As a result of the sound change known as Second Fronting, pre-Conquest Mercian texts, particularly the Vespasian Psalter gloss, have <e> where other dialects have <æ>, thus *deg*, 'day', rather than *dæg*.[29] The 'AB' texts from around 1200 have <e> in similar contexts, though in Kristensson's material from a hundred or so years later, spellings in <a> predominate.[30]

While Orderic usually has <a> in relevant contexts, it is striking that he has <e> in a number of place names where it is otherwise rare.[31] Thus he spells the opening syllable of Glastonbury (<**Glæstinga** + **byrig**, 'the fortified place of the Glæstingas') once as *Glast-* [2:242] but four times as *Glest-* [2:242, 2:270 (twice), 2:344]. William of Malmesbury and Eadmer almost invariably have *Glast-*.[32] Orderic moreover has *Dorseta* [2:228] for Dorset (< *Dorn* + **sæte**, 'the Dorn people') and *Summerseta* [2:228] for Somerset (< *Sumortun* + **sæte**, 'the people dependent on Somerton') in a passage describing the rebellions of 1069.[33] While these forms are all found in Book IV, and may therefore come from William of Poitiers, three of them occur after Orderic by his own declaration had ceased to use the *Gesta Guillelmi*. These forms therefore suggest Orderic grew up speaking a dialect that had

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[28] William of Malmesbury has *Wellis* etc [*GP* 75.1, 90.1, 130.1] for Wells, Somer (< **wyllum**, '(at) the springs'); and *Warewelle*, *Warewellense* [*GP* 78.7, 87.1] for Wherwell, Hants (< **hwer** + **wyllum**, 'cauldron streams'). Eadmer has *Petteham* [*HN* p. 75] for Petham, Kent (< **pytt** + **hamm**, 'pit valley').

[29] Hogg, *Old English Grammar*, §§5.87-5.92. The phonemic interpretation of the <e>-spelling is controversial.

[30] D'Ardenne, *Seinte Iuliene*, p. 181; Kristensson, *The West Midland Counties*, pp. 30-42. See also Jordan, *Handbook*, §32.

[31] Thus Orderic has <a> in the following placenames: *Habundoniam* [5:298] and *Abundoniam* [2:242] for Abingdon (< *Æbban* + **dun**, 'Æbba's hill'; cp. William of Malmesbury's *Ab(b)endonia* [*GP* 75.37, 86.6, 88.1] and Eadmer's *Abendonia* [*HN* p. 293; *SL* p. 192]); *Badense* [5:204] and *Bada* [6:16] for Bath (< OE **bæth**, '(hot) bath'; cp. Eadmer's *Bathoniensem* [*SL* p. 84]); *Traditon* [3:162] for Drayton, Shrops (< **dræg** + **tun**, 'place where loads have to be dragged'), summarising a bequest to Saint-Évroul; *Clenefeld* [3:236] for Glenfield, Leics (< **OE clæne + feld**, 'clear open ground'), quoting the Conqueror's pancarta; *Hastingas* [2:168, 2:170, 2:221] for Hastings (< *Hæsta* + **ingas**, 'people called after Hæsta'; cp. William of Malmesbury's *Hastingensis* [*GP* 23.5] and Eadmer's *Hastinges* [*HN*, p. 47]); *Estaford-* [2:228; 2:237; 2:324 (twice)], *Staphord-* [3:140] for Stafford, Staffs (< **stæth** + **ford**, 'the landing-place ford'; cp. William of Malmesbury's *Statfordensi* [*GP* 172.1]); *Guaris* [3:234; 3:236] for Ware, Herts (< **wæras**, 'the wiers'), both times in William I's pancarta; and *Guareuico* [5:18] and *Guareuichæ-* [3:234] for Warwick, Warks (< **wæring** + **wic**, 'the dwellings by the wick'; cp. William of Malmesbury's *Warwicensem* [*GP*, 153.1]). He also has *that* (OE *þæt*) twice in the English sentence he quotes at secondhand in Book VI [3:350].

[32] William of Malmesbury (all *GP*): *Glastonia* [91.1], *Glastoniam* [83.4], *Glastoniae* [19.6, 83.5], *Glastoniense* [209.2], *Glastoniensi* [75.35], *Glastoniensem* [90.6], *Glastoniensibus* [228.1], but also *Glestonia* [91.1]; Eadmer (all *SL*): *Glastoniensis* [p. 20], *Glastoniae* [p. 50], *Glastoniam* [pp. 66, 80]. Unfortunately the Somerset volume of the English Place Name Society remains unpublished, and the majority of the forms cited in *CDEPN* come from late medieval copies of Anglo-Saxon charters.

[33] William of Malmesbury, by contrast, predominantly has *–a-*: *Dorsatensem* [*GP* 79.1, 217.2], *Dorsatensi* [*GP* 84.1, 217.6], and *Dorsatensis* [*GP* 14.1, 80.3], but *Dorseta* [*GP* 95.5].

undergone second fronting, and retained some pronunciations involving second fronting later in his life. This conclusion might be corroborated by his reference to his baptism at *Etingesham* (Atcham, Shrops), though the first element of this placename is sufficiently uncertain for this to be only very slight supporting evidence.[34]

4.1.3 <o> for OE [ã]

Before a nasal, Old English texts represent the low back vowel [a] as either <o> or <a>, with <o> generally characteristic of Anglian texts, and <a> of non-Anglian texts, including those written in 'Standard' Old English.[35] In Middle English, only West Midland texts preserve <o>, probably representing [ɔ].[36] There is some very slender evidence that Orderic grew up with [ɔ] here and retained it. While he has <a> in most relevant place-name elements, for instance –**hamm**, **hramsa-**, -**land**, and **langa-** and **sand-**,[37] when naming the River Granta and the Cambridge, the fenland city which takes its name from the river, Orderic twice writes *Gronta(-)* for OE *Grante(-)*.[38] His reference to the River Granta in Book IV as the *Gronta* [2:326] may perhaps owe its spelling to the manuscript of Felix's Life of Guthlac that he was abridging at this point, but his inclusion of *Grontebrugæ* among the three castles William the Conqueror constructed in late 1068 [2:218] does not seem to derive from a surviving source, and, even if does derive from a text no longer extant (like the lost conclusion to William of Poitiers' *Gesta Guillelmi*), that text is very unlikely to have had an <o> spelling.[39] Given that many of Orderic's <a> forms occur in place-names with fossilised Latin spellings (e. g. Crowland, Ramsey), or where he was following a documentary source (e. g. Church Langton), this solitary <o> form might, in conjunction with the much stronger evidence that he had a West Midlands

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[34] *CDEPN*, p. 25-6, offers three suggestions: (1) *Ætti*; (2) *Eata*; (3) **ætting* or **etting,* 'eating or grazing place'. A first element beginning *æ-* best explains Orderic's variation between *Etingesham* [3:6] and *Attingesham*.

[35] Hogg, *Grammar of OE*, §§5.3-5.6.

[36] Jordan, *Handbook of ME Grammar*, §30.

[37] **-hamm**: *Buchingeham* [2:264], *Buccingeham-* [3:238], *Buc(c)ingehamensis* [5:214], *Bucchingeham* [6:36] for Buckingham, Bucks (< *Bucc* + **ingas** + **hamm**, 'river bend land of the Buccingas'); *Suthhamtonæ pagum* [5:285] for Hampshire (< **sūth** + **hamm** + **tūn**, 'southern Hampton (= estate in a river bend)'; cp. William of Malmesbury's *Amptunensem* [*GP* 79.1]); *Northamtoniæ* [2:262, 2:312], *Northamtoniensis* [2:344], *Northamtonæ-* [3:238] for Northampton, Northants (< **north** + **hamm** + **tūn**, 'northern Hampton (= estate in a river bend)'). I have excluded *Etingesham* [3:6], *Attingesham* [6:552] for Atcham, Shrops from consideration since *CDEPN* does not commit on whether the second element is **hamm** or **hām**.
hramsa-: *Ramesiæ* [2:242], *Ramesiensi* [3:350] for Ramsey, Cambs (< **hramsa** + **ēg**, 'wild garlic island', cp. WM consistently *Ram-* [*GP* 74.2, 180.1, 181.1 etc]).
-land: *Bocalanda* [6:16] for Buckland, Oxon (< **bōc** + **land**, 'estate granted by royal charter'); *Croland-* [2:230, 2:336] or *Cruland-* [2:322 (twice), 2:324, 2:326, 2:338] for Crowland, Lincs (< **crūw** + **land**, 'the land in the bend'; cp. WM consistently *Croland* [*GP*, 180.1, 182.1, 182.4]).
langa-: *Langhetonæ* [3:234] for Church Langton, Leics (< **langa** + **tūn**, 'the long village'), where Orderic is quoting the Conqueror's pancarta for Saint-Évroul.
sand-: *Sanguicum* [2:226] for Sandwich, Kent (< **sand** + **wīc**, 'trading place on/at the sand'; cp. William of Malmesbury's *Sandwic* [*GP*, 100.18] and Eadmer's *Sandicum* [*VW*, 29]).
Note that, for the purposes of this discussion, it does not matter whether so-called 'Homorganic Cluster Lengthening' (Hogg, *Grammar of OE*, §§5.202-4) had occurred in the elements -**land**, **langa-**, and **sand-**, since the output in the West Midlands would have been [ɔ:], spelled <o>.

[38] Cf. also *Grantesbrugescira* [3:140] and *Grantesbrugæscira* [3:234 (twice)], though all three occur where Orderic is following Saint-Évroul charters.

[39] Among the many forms cited for Cambridgeshire, Cambridge and the River Granta by P. H. Reaney, *The Place Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely*, English Place Name Society 19 (Cambridge, 1943), pp. 1, 6, 36-7, only those from Felix and Orderic have <o>.

pronunciation for the reflex of Old English [y(:)], suggest he also retained West Midlands [ɔ], albeit barely.[40]

4.2. Was Orderic taught to read and write English?

Describing his upbringing in Book V of the *Historia*, Orderic tells us that he was sent, aged five 'to learn his letters' (*literis erudiendus*) with Siward, a priest at the church of St Peter in Shrewsbury.[41] He studied with Siward for five years, mastering the 'first rudiments' (*prima rudimenta*) of learning, which, according to Book XIII, encompassed the alphabet, psalms, hymns and other necessary knowledge (*necessariis instructionibus*).[42] Orderic does not give any further details about what he learned with Siward, but it has been suggested that eleventh-century students would have learned the alphabet, before beginning to pronounce texts out loud – initially the Lord's Prayer and then the Psalms – and only then moving on to Latin grammar.[43]

Research on present-day languages suggests that learning to read (that is, to produce a word aloud on the basis of seeing it in writing) also develops the skills required to spell. However, 'more information is needed to produce a correct spelling than a correct reading'.[44] Even if Orderic did not learn to write in England – and palaeographers remain divided on the issue – it is therefore likely that he did at least begin to learn to spell in Latin.[45] My interest in this section is in whether Orderic also learned to spell English with Siward. On the basis of manuscript alphabets that include the insular letter forms wynn, eth, thorn and aesc after the Latin characters, Nicholas Orme has suggested that pupils generally learnt to pronounce English texts as well as Latin in Anglo-Saxon schools.[46] Yet Orderic never uses wynn, eth or thorn in the *Historia*, and little significance can be attached to his use of <æ> since this remained a legitimate, if minority, graph in Latin.[47] Indeed, it is the conclusion of this section that it is likely Orderic encountered very little written English during his early education in Shrewsbury in the early 1080s.

The principal system for writing the vernacular in the eleventh century was 'Standard' Old English, developed in the 970s as part of the Benedictine Reform and written, with more or less consistency, until the first or second decade of the twelfth century.[48] This variety was still being written in

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[40] Orderic's spelling shows no sign of two other twelfth-century South-West Midland features, the raising of /a:/ to /o:/ (Jordan, *Handbook of ME Grammar*, §44) and the voicing of initial fricatives (*ibid*, §159).

[41] OV 3:6-8. *Siward* is of course Old English Sigeweard.

[42] OV 6:552-3.

[43] Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Schools: From Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven, 2006), pp. 40-6.

[44] See especially Linnea C. Ehri, 'Learning to Read and Learning to Spell are One and the Same, Almost', *Learning to Spell: Research, Theory, and Practice Across Languages* ed. Charles A. Perfetti, Laurence Rieben and Michael Fayol (Mahwah, 1997), pp. 237-69 at p. 247.

[45] See especially Léopold Delisle, 'Notes sur les manuscrits autographes d'Orderic Vital', *Matériaux pour l'édition de Guillaume de Jumièges* ed. J. Lair (Paris, 1910), pp. 7-27, and the paper by Jenny Weston in this volume. I am grateful to her for discussing Orderic's script with me.

[46] Orme, *Medieval Schools*, p. 40.

[47] For Orderic's occasional use of <ð> in his reworking of Wulfstan Cantor's *Life of St Æthelwold*, see OV 1:202 (and note also Chibnall's comment (OV 1:5n1) that this character 'slipped naturally from his pen in copying English manuscripts').

[48] Key here are Helmut Gneuss, 'The Origin of Standard Old English and Æthelwold's School at Winchester', *Anglo-Saxon England* 1 (1972), 63-83 [reprinted with important addenda as the first article in his *Language and History in Early England* (Aldershot, 1996)]; Mechthild Gretsch, 'Winchester Vocabulary and Standard Old English: the use of the vernacular in late Anglo-Saxon England', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 83 (2001), 41-87; and eadem, 'In Search of Standard Old English', in *Bookmarks from the Past: studies in early English language and literature in honour of Helmut Gneuss* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 2003), pp. 33-67.

Worcester during the episcopacy of St Wulfstan (1062-1095).[49] While it is conceivable that Orderic learned to read and write English using an entirely different set of conventions, as noted above, no vernacular texts or manuscripts written in Shropshire survive from which these conventions could be known, and the moneyers' names on coins produced by the Shrewsbury mint during the reign of Edward the Confessor do not in any case suggest a radical departure from the established norms for writing the vernacular.[50] This section therefore focuses on assessing whether Orderic had learned 'Standard' Old English spelling. To eliminate the possibility that he hit upon 'Standard' spellings by chance (on the basis of invention or analogy from Latin or French orthographies), it examines two phonetic environments where the 'Standard' spelling had become artificial due to sound change, so that any ongoing use of these spellings would be explicable only through early training in the 'Standard'.

4.2.1 <VfV> for [VvV]

By the time of the earliest Old English texts, Old English /f/ had voiced between voiced segments, hence Present Day English pairs like *wolf ~ wolves*.[51] In 'Standard' Old English, however, this sound was always represented <f>, thus Old English *wulf ~ wulfas*. Instead of 'Standard' <f> in these contexts, Orderic varies between <f>, <u> and <ph>. Thus, with <u>:[52]

> Byfield, Northants (< **bī** + **feld**, '[the settlement] beside the open land'): Biuella [3:238]

and with <ph> or <f>:

> Graffham, W. Sussex (< **grāf** + **hām**, 'the grove homestead'): Grafan [3:140]; Graphan [3:334]
> Stafford(shire), Staffs (< **stæth** + **ford**, 'the landing-place ford'): Estafort [2:228, 2:237]; Staphordscira [3:140]; Estafordæscira [3:234 (twice)].

In each of these cases, however, Orderic was likely following the spelling of his sources: the Conqueror's pancarta for Saint-Évroul (*Biuella*, *Graphan*, *Estafordæscira*), Roger of Montgomery's charter for the same monastery from the mid 1080s (*Grafan*, *Staphordscira*), and the lost conclusion to William of Poitiers (*Estafort*, twice). A particularly neat illustration of Orderic's indebtedness to William of Poitiers is his spelling *Peneusellum* [2:168, 2:170, 2:196] for Pevensey, East Sussex. The first element here can be established, on the basis of spellings in other texts, as the genitive singular of the OE personal name **Pefen*: Orderic's form, lifted from William of Poitiers, must therefore show the double confusion of <n> and <u> in bookhand (i. e. *Peneus-* for **Peuens-*).[53] Strikingly, when Orderic refers again to Pevensey in Book X when narrating the rebellion against William Rufus in 1089, an account reliant 'in the main on oral sources', he again writes *Peneusellum* [5:208].[54] This illustrates very forcibly how ready Orderic was to be guided by his sources as regards English spelling, suggesting he did not himself have strong convictions about how it should be spelled.

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[49] See, for example, the comments of J. C. Pope, *Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection*, EETS o. s. 259 (London, 1967), 77 concerning the language of MSS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 121 + Hatton 113, 114, a homiliary produced at Worcester in the third quarter of the eleventh century.

[50] A range of these spellings are handily collected by Colman, *Money Talks*, pp. 313-6.

[51] Hogg, *Grammar of OE*, §§7.54-8.

[52] Also perhaps relevant is *Noueslai* [3:236] for Noseley, Leics (< *Nōthewulfes* + **lēah**, 'Nothwulf's wood or clearing').

[53] See especially OV 2:170 < *GGWP* ii. 38.

[54] On the sources of Book X, see OV 5: xii.

4.2.2 \<hC-\> for [C-]

'Standard' Old English included a number of word-initial \<hC-\> clusters: \<hn-\> (e. g. *hnacod*, 'naked'), \<hl-\> (e. g. *hlūd*, 'loud'), \<hr-\> (e. g. *hræfn*, 'raven') and \<hw-\> (e. g. *hwæt*, 'lo!'). With the partial exception of words which historically had \<hw-\>, these initial \<hC-\> clusters disappeared in early Middle English, suggesting that whatever sound the \<h-\> represented, it was lost within a century or two of the Conquest.[55] While what this \<h-\> indicated remains controversial, it has recently been persuasively argued that 'it was lost in late Old English and survived in eleventh century writings largely because of the spread of a standard form of the vernacular in eleventh-century England'.[56]

Orderic eschews \<hC-\> clusters in all relevant placenames. His relevant forms are:

> Ramsey, Cambs (\< **hramsa** + **ēg**, 'wild garlic island'): Ramesiæ [2:242]; Ramesiensi [3:350]
> Repton, Derbs (\< *Hrypa* + **dūn**, 'Hill of the people called *Hrype*'): Ripadum [2:324]

While these h-less forms may well be fossilised Latinisations since identical spellings are found in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta pontificum*, the conclusion that Orderic did not know the 'Standard' \<hC-\> spellings is supported by relevant personal names:

> Hlothere, king of Kent (d. 685): Lotheris [2:264]; Lothere [6:320].
> Hwætred, subject of miracle by St Guthlac: Wehtredus [2:330][57]

Orderic's references to Hlothere come in a rhetorical passage on Odo of Bayeux's control of Kent in Book IV and a lament for the accession of a canon rather than a monk, William of Corbeil, to the archbishopric of Canterbury in Book XII. Whether or not Orderic used a written source for the information about early Kentish history given in these passages, he evidently did not see fit to write these names with initial \<h-\>.

In neither of the consonant segments discussed in §4.2.1 and §4.2.2 does Orderic consistently use the 'Standard' Old English spelling. Though he does have two \<-f-\> spellings, these seem likely to derive from his practice of imitating the spelling of his sources. Since we do not have complete access to Orderic's sources, it is difficult to state definitively that a particular form is Orderic's own spelling, but Orderic's heavy use of \<u\> for the reflex of Old English /y(:)/ (§4.1.1), contrasted with his non-use of \<-f-\> or \<hC-\>, strongly suggests he did not have firm ideas about how English should be written beyond that it should reflect his pronunciation. This suggests that he was not taught to read and write English by Siward, corroborating Chibnall's suggestion that Latin was Orderic's 'first written language'.[58] This is not, however, to say that Orderic was entirely unfamiliar with written

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[55] Hogg, *Grammar of OE*, §7.48.

[56] Donald Scragg, 'Sin and Laughter in Late Anglo-Saxon England: the Case of Old English *(H)leahtor*', *Saints and Scholars: New Perspectives on Anglo-Saxon Literature and Culture in Honour of Hugh Magennis* ed. Stuart McWilliams (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 213-23 at p. 213. Hogg ('Phonology and Morphology', in *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, vol. 1, *The Beginnings to 1066* ed. Richard M. Hogg (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 67-167 at p. 94) suggests interpreting these clusters as [xl, xn, xr, xw], while Campbell (*OE Grammar*, §61) statess that \<h-\> 'is used as a diacritic to indicate a voiceless consonant in *hl*, *hr*, *hn*, *hw*'. The best account remains Karl Luick, *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache* (reprinted Oxford, 1964), §704.

[57] Compare Felix's Life of St Guthlac ed. Colgrave, p. 127 (where the name is printed as *Hwætred*).

[58] Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, p. 11.

English. For example, his apparent use of <-en> as a plural inflection in *hegen* seems to indicate his awareness that orthographic <-n> could correspond to what was for him phonetically zero.[59]

4.3 The Attrition of Orderic's English

Language attrition is the process by which a speaker's competence in a particular variety declines over time.[60] The prototypical attriter is someone who grew up speaking one language, then moved to second country where a different language or languages was used. That person may lack the opportunity to use his or her original language, leading to a decline in his or her fluency in speaking it. Research on attrition has therefore very often focused on European migrants, for example Germans, to the United States, but by virtue of his move from England to France, Orderic also fits this prototypical mould well.

Work on attrition has established that a speaker's knowledge of vocabulary is the most liable linguistic feature to attrite, but that attrition can also affect his or her knowledge of phonology, morphology and syntax. Assessing whether Orderic's knowledge of English attrited is challenging. For one thing, most studies of attrition have worked with live subjects, whose linguistic knowledge can be experimentally tested. However, there have been several papers which have used written texts, specifically collections of letters sent home by particular migrants, to trace the attrition of lexis, morphology and syntax over time.[61] Unfortunately, the nature of the evidence for Orderic's English – principally place and personal names – makes it impossible to assess anything except phonology, for which written texts, by their very nature, offer only indirect evidence. A second challenge is that we have no evidence for how much English Orderic knew when he left England, a baseline against which we can measure his subsequent knowledge. One recent study has found that migrants who left their home country before the age of twelve (as Orderic did) can suffer rapid or even total attrition of their first language.[62] Moreover, studies have suggested that, regardless of age at migration, attrition is rapid for the first ten or fifteen years, and then slows considerably.[63] Since the earliest evidence we have for Orderic's English is Book III, begun according to Chibnall in 1114, twenty years after Orderic arrived in Normandy, it is not clear whether we could expect to see any significant decline in his English through the *Historia*. Despite these problems, I argue that it is possible to observe the attrition of Orderic's knowledge of at least one English phone in the text.

4.3.1 Despirantisation

One phonological feature that distinguishes Old English from Latin and Old French is the frequency with which it used the voiced and unvoiced dental fricatives, [θ~ð]. Except in a few Greek loanwords, Latin did not have any dental fricatives, and while early Old French did develop dental fricatives intervocalically and finally, these were lost in the course of the twelfth century.[64] There is, moreover,

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[59] For example, King Eadred's appearance as *Ædredus* in Orderic's history of monasticism in Book IV [2:242], if not copied verbatim from his 'notes taken from earlier annals', may indicate his familiarity with the orthographical interchange of <æ> and <ea> in late Old English.

[60] For a recent introduction, see Monika S. Schmid, *Language Attrition*, Key Topics in Sociolinguistics (Cambridge, 2011).

[61] Koen Jaespart & Sjaak Kroon, 'From the Typewriter of A. L.: a Case Study in Language Loss', *Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages* ed. Willem Fase, Koen Jaspaert and Sjaak Kroon (Amsterdam, 1992), pp. 137-47; Matthias Hutz, 'Is There a Natural Process of Decay? A Longitudinal Study of Language Attrition', *First Language Attrition: interdisciplinary perspectives on methodological issues* ed. Monika S. Schmid et al. (Amsterdam, 2004), pp. 189-206.

[62] Emanuel Bylund Spångberg, 'Maturational Constraints and First Language Attrition', *Language Learning* 59 (2009), 687-715.

[63] e. g. Hutz, 'Is There a Natural Process of Decay?', p. 203.

[64] Pope, *From Latin to Modern French*, §§333, 335, 346.

some evidence that as early as the second half of the tenth century French speakers struggled to pronounce these sounds in other languages.[65]

In English texts, these sounds were represented by the insular characters <ð> and <þ>. While some Latin texts did use these characters, the majority represent these sounds with the digraph <th> or <d> (rarely also <t>). While <th> unquestionably denotes a fricative, <d> is ambiguous. In early manuscripts, for example the eighth-century Leningrad Bede and ninth-century Durham *Liber vitae*, it is clear that it represents [θ~ð].[66] Yet this spelling is also found in early Middle English manuscripts, and there arguably sometimes is the product of two genuine sound changes, dubbed by Lass and Laing 'Later Dental Hardening' and 'Theta Hardening'.[67] It is thus difficult to be sure whether Orderic's <d> spellings represent [d] or [θ~ð]. Orderic, however, has far more <d> and <t> spellings than either Eadmer or William of Malmesbury:

Table 1: Tokens with <d, t> for historic [θ~ð] in placenames

	Total	With <d, t>	Ratio with <d, t>
Orderic	37	25	0.68
William of Malmesbury	32	13	0.41
Eadmer	17	7	0.41

This disparity could of course simply reflect differing orthographical convention, but because it is clear that because <th> was part of Orderic's active repertoire and he therefore had the option of writing it where he retained a fricative pronunciation, it can tentatively be suggested that Orderic's heavier use of <d> at least in part reflects his pronunciation of this segment as a stop rather than a fricative.[68] With the possible phonetic significance of Orderic's <d> spellings established, we can look at Orderic's representation of historic [θ~ð] as evidence for phonological attrition, whereby the absence of dental fricatives in spoken French and their extreme scarcity in Latin led the dental stops and dental fricatives to converge in Orderic's phonological system, such that he did not distinguish them in pronunciation or in writing.[69]

My corpus of place- and personal-names from the autograph books of Orderic's *Historia* includes 108 instances of historic [θ~ð].[70] Dividing these usages by book, there seems a general decline in the frequency of <th> spellings in the later books, completed last:

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[65] Thus Abbo of Fleury comments in his *Quaestiones grammaticales* (ed. A. Gurreau-Jalabert (Paris, 1982), §28) that 'you English can distinguish aspirations well, who for θ frequently write and pronounce þ' (*sed aspirationes bene uos, Angli, peruidere potestis qui pro θ frequentius þ scribitis et effertis*). For discussion, see Roger Wright, *Late Latin and Early Romance in Spain and Carolingian France* (Liverpool, 1982), p. 138.

[66] Hogg, *Grammar of OE*, §2.59 and n.1.

[67] Roger Lass and Margaret Laing, 'Databases, Dictionaries and Dialectology: dental instability in early Middle English: a case study', in *Studies in English and European Historical Dialectology* ed. Marina Dossena and Roger Lass (Frankfurt-am-Main, 2009), pp. 91-131.

[68] We know this because Orderic uses <th> in passages where he seems not to have had a written source, e. g. in his reference to the construction of the New Forest around *Suthamtonæ pagum*, 'the shire around Southampton, Hampshire' [5:285].

[69] For phonological convergence as a result of attrition, see Schmid, *Language Attrition*, pp. 52-3. One might compare certain varieties of Hiberno-English, where the dental fricatives have fortified to stops: see Raymond Hickey, *Irish English: History and Present Day Forms* (Cambridge, 2007), 318-9.

[70] Notice that I have not attempted to subdivide this data by phonetic environment (e. g. intervocalic vs word-initial). This is because there are not enough data points for such a fine-grained analysis.

Table 2: Spelling of [θ~ð], by book

Book	<th>	not <th>	Total	% <th>	% not <th>
3	4	9	13	31%	69%
4	13	33	46	28%	72%
5	1	3	4	25%	75%
6	3	19	22	14%	86%
9	0	1	1	0%	100%
10	2	3	5	40%	60%
11	1	8	9	11%	89%
12	1	5	6	17%	83%
13	1	1	2	50%	50%
Total	26	82	108	24%	76%

However, the paucity of the data in certain books (e. g. IX, XIII) considerably obscures this pattern. Grouping the books by when they were written (before 1130 in the case of Books III-V; after 1130 in the case of Books IX-XIII) yields clearer results:

Table 3: Spelling of [θ~ð], grouped by date of writing

Books	<th>	not <th>	Total	% <th>	% not <th>
3-5	18	45	63	29%	71%
6, 9-13	8	37	45	18%	82%

There is therefore some tentative evidence that Orderic's ability to recall which words in English were pronounced with a dental fricative declined when he was in his late fifties and sixties. The data is not robust enough to suggest this with any great confidence ($\chi^2 = 1.673$, p=0.2), but given the small sample size, the generally limited effect on phonology previous studies of attrition have found, and the possibility that Orderic's knowledge of English had already attrited significantly by the time he began writing the *Historia*, I suggest that it should be taken seriously. Other occasional forms, e. g. *Esledas* for Leeds in Kent in Book XIII, also suggest that interaction with French speakers influenced Orderic's pronunciation of English.[71]

4.4. Orderic's Spelling and his Identity

Spelling is a social practice, in which spellers can convey different social meanings by chosing from among the range of spellings available to them for a particular word or sound.[72] One example of this is the graffito <OKUPACÍON> (i. e. *ocupacíon*, 'occupation'), transcribed by Sebba from a wall in Ripoll, Catalonia.[73] In Spanish, the phoneme /k/ is usually represented by <c>, occasionally <qu>, but as <k> in loanwords only. The scarcity of <k> has made it iconic in Spanish, 'the favourite letter of

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[71] OV 6:520. CDEPN suggests three possible etymologies: (1) OE **hleda, hlyda**, 'a seat, shelf'; (2) OE **hild**, 'a door, a gate, an opening'; (3) the stream name, **Hlyde*, 'the loud one'. Of these (1) or (3) seems preferable, since they are compatible Orderic's *Ludas* (which would then show OE /y(:)/ > /u(:)/, established above as Orderic's pronunciation). None of these however explain the on-glide which the spelling here strongly suggests (see Pope, *From Latin to Modern French*, §§361, 603). Earlier in the work, Orderic has relevant forms both with and without spellings indicative of an on-glide (e. g. *Estentona* for Stainton, Lincs (< **steinn** + **tun**, 'stone village, farm') and *Stotonæ* for Stougton, Leics (< **stoc** + **tun**, 'outlying farm with enclosure')), but the occurrence of a spelling of this sort in a book for which Orderic's sources were largely oral is suggestive.

[72] For a general introduction to spelling as a social practice, see Mark Sebba, *Spelling and Society* (Cambridge, 2007).

[73] Sebba, *Spelling and Society*, pp. 3-4, 48-50.

okupas, ['occupations'], war resisters, *bakaleros* [adherents of a type of techno music, also associated (in stereotype at least) with recreational drugs], *ákratas* ['anarchists', university students and high school teenagers who are anti-establishment'] and gay movements'.[74]

The majority of work on spelling as a social practice has however focussed on modern, standard languages, most of which permit some limited variation (e. g. *–ise* vs *–ize* in Standard English).[75] Without such variation, there would be no scope for choice, and thereby no scope for conveying social meaning through choice. But it has also been argued that there is no scope for such expression in unstandardised languages, since the pool of variants from which to choose is potentially infinite. Yet twelfth-century English spelling, though it permitted a diversity of practices, was not lawless.[76] It is the purpose of this section to explore what Orderic's spelling of place- and personal-names can tell us about his sense of identity.

Attempting to make this connection is however very delicate. In the most straightforward of the two segments analysed below, Orderic's 'choice' (if choice it was, given the growing picture of his general deference to the orthographic forms of his exemplars) was between an English representation, on the one hand, and a French or Franco-Latin representation on the other; for example, between <sc> and <s> to represent [ʃ]. However, even in this case, Orderic's choice might have been restricted by a limited awareness of the conventions of 'Standard' Old English (§4.2 above) and, if was chosing between this and a French or Franco-Latin orthography, his choice may not have been driven by purely orthographical considerations. Phonological considerations may also have been a factor, since [ʃ] was not present in the phonemic inventory of twelfth-century French, and his time in Normandy might have caused Orderic to pronounce this sound as [s]. Despite these difficulties, it is argued below that Orderic's handling of place- and personal-names suggests he felt no connection between English spelling, and more broadly, the English language, and his self-identity as *Angligena*.

4.4.1 [ʃ]

In 'Standard' Old English, the unvoiced post-alveolar fricative /ʃ/ was spelled <sc>. The sound [ʃ] did not develop in French until the thirteenth century, and it is not uncommon to find the sound represented by <s> in post-Conquest Latin records dealing with English place- and personal-names.[77] Orderic's text shows variation in the spelling of this sound. Thus he has non-'Standard' <s> in:

> Butler's Marston, Warks (< **mersc** + **tun**, 'marsh settlement'): Merestonam [3:234]; Mersitonæ [3:236]
> Marston, Staffs (< **mersc** + **tun**, 'marsh settlement'): Mersitonam [3:140]; Mersitonæ [3:234]
> Marston St Lawrence, Northants (< **mersc** + **tun**, 'marsh settlement'): Merestona [3:238]
> Oxhill, Warks (< *Ohta* + **scylf**, 'Ohta's shelf'): Ostesiluæ [3:236]
> Shingay, Cambs (< *Scene* + **inga** + **eg**, 'the low lying land of the people of Scene'):[78] Senegai [3:234]
> Shenley, Bucks (< **sciene** + **leah**, 'bright clearing'): Sanleia [3:238]

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[74] A. Castilla, 'La Letra "malkerida": 'Okupas", "Bakaleros", "Vallekanos" y "Ábraktas" Revindican la "k"', *El País*, 16 February 1997, translated Sebba, *Spelling and Society,* pp. 3-4.

[75] Though some of Cecily Clark's work on twelfth-century spelling could definitely be framed in these terms: see particularly her 'L'Angleterre Anglo-Normande et des Ambivalences Socio-Culturelles: un Coup D'Oeil de Philologue', *Les Mutations Socio-Culturelles au Tournant des XIᵉ-XIIᵉ Siècles: Actes du Colloque International du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique – Études Anselmiennes (IVᵉ Session)* ed. Raymonde Foreville (Paris, 1984), pp. 99-110.

[76] A point most forcefully apparent from the work of Roger Lass and Meg Laing, who show how even superficially prodigal orthographies are rule bound. See especially their 'Shape-Shifting, Sound-Change and the Genesis of Prodigal Writing Systems', *English Language and Linguistics* 13 (2009), 1-31.

[77] Pope, *From Latin to Modern French*, §194.

[78] Not in CDEPN; etymology from Reaney, *Place Names of Cambridgeshire*, p. 65.

but 'Standard' <sc> consistently in shire names like *Northamtonæscira* [3:238], as well as in the following place names:

> East Shilton, Leics (< **scylf** + **tun**, 'shelf-settlement'): Sceltonæ [3:234]
> Shrewsbury, Shrops (< ***scrobbes** + **byrig**, 'the fortified place of the scrubland'): Scrobesburiæ [5:222; 6:520], Scrobesburiæ [2:224]; Scrobesburiensis [2:286; 6:318]; Scrobesburiam [6:24; 6:28]; Scrobesburiam [6:552; 2:228].
> Shropshire: Scrobesburiæ [6:144]; Scrobesburiensem [2:210]; Scrobesburiæ [3:148]

Unfortunately, the vast majority of these place- and county-names, whether spelled <sc> or <s>, occur only in the section of Book VI where Orderic is making heavy use of Saint-Évroul documents. The only forms that might indicate what his active usage are thus those for Shrewsbury and the shires, both of which had more or less fossilised Latin spellings in the twelfth century.[79] But while Orderic's active usage must remain questionable, it is clear he did could passively produce both native <sc> and non-native <s>. That he did not programatically insist on <sc> suggests spelling English names with English orthography was not a priority for him.

4.4.2 [w]

Orderic's spelling for [w] varies between <gu> and <u, uu, w>. The latter is a distinctively Franco-Latin form, not found in the work of Eadmer or William of Malmesbury.[80] Orderic very rarely uses the spelling <gu> medially, hence Æthelwulf is *Adeluulfi* [2:340].[81] In initial position, however, there is considerable variation, thus in section of Book V devoted to the history of Crowland, Waltheof is indifferently *Walleuus* [e. g. 2:314] and *Gualleuus* [e. g. 2:320]. Across the *Historia*, <gu-> is Orderic's most frequent spelling, but he uses <u-, uu-, w-> in a greater range of words:

Table 4: A Type-Token Analysis of Orderic's Spelling for [w-]

	Types	Tokens
<gu->	0.380	0.639
<u-, uu-, w->	0.620	0.361

This distribution seems to suggest that <u-, uu-, w-> was Orderic's instinctive orthography, but that he used <gu-> in a small range of names that he had seen written in that way, in continental historical texts like William of Poitiers. This conclusion is corroborated by Orderic describing having seen a copy of Sigebert of Gembloux's chronicle at *Wigornæ* and not *Guigornæ* in an autobiographical passage for which he can hardly have had a textual source [2:188].

The distribution of Orderic's variety of spellings for [w] suggests that he did not regard English orthography as an inherent part of English names. Thus he is quite happy to follow William of Poitiers in giving Eadric the Wild's byname as *Guilda* [2:228]. Preserving English spelling conventions and avoiding orthographies characteristic of Franco-Latin was not important to Orderic, and thus not likely to have been part of his sense of identity as an *Angligena*. This challenges recent

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[79] *Scrobbesberia* [*GP* 144.1]; and *Scrobbesberiam*, *Scrobbesburiense* [*GP* 171.1]. More generally, see the forms listed by Margaret Gelling, *The Place-Names of Shropshire* Part I *The Major Names of Shropshire*, English Place Name Society 62-3 (Nottingham, 1990), pp. 267-71.

[80] For the phonological developments implied by <gu>, see Pope, *From Latin to Modern French*, §636.

[81] The exceptions are the spellings like *Northguici* [2:226] beside *Nortwicensis* [2:310] for Norwich (< **north** + **wīc**, 'the north hamlet') and *Sanguicum* [2:226]for Sandwich, Kent (< **sand** + **wīc**, 'trading place on or at the sand').

Mark Faulkner, 'Orderic and English', in *Orderic Vitalis: Life, Works and Interpretations* ed. Rozier et al. (Boydell, 2016).
Preprint
work that has asserted a connection between language choice and identity in twelfth-century England.[82]

5. Conclusion

As a named author with a known biography and educational history, Orderic provides singularly valuable evidence for the English language and its cultural status in the immediate post-Conquest period. Linguistically, Orderic wrote his *Historia* during the transition from Old to Middle English, described in one recent history of the language as 'the most dramatic change in the English language', which saw (among other changes) the loss or at least dramatic reduction of grammatical categories like gender and case, diminishing flexibility in word order, and the collapse of the highly focussed conventions of 'Standard' Old English.[83] He grew up moreover in Shropshire, a county for which almost the only pre-Conquest linguistic evidence comes from moneyers' names on coins, yet which a hundred years later produced , in 'AB', one of the most important literary varieties of early Middle English.

While no one could pretend that it is simple to extract meaningful data about English from place- and personal-names in a Latin history written by an author who had left England aged twelve and whose history was in part based on written sources, a better understanding of the linguistic history of the twelfth century requires the use of as wide a range of evidence as possible.[84] Historical linguistic analyses of the transition to Middle English have typically based their findings on a small number of long texts. Thus, the Helsinki Corpus includes no English text whatsoever composed in the second quarter of the twelfth century, when Orderic completed his *Historia*; and there is only one text from this period in the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English: the first continuation of the Peterborough Chronicle, which was maintained in the years between 1122 and 1131.[85] A more nuanced grasp of this linguistic history will also contribute to the recent reappraisal of the literary history of this pivotal period.[86]

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[82] Elaine Treharne, *Living Through Conquest: The Politics of Early English, 1020-1220* (Oxford, 2012), passim (and for some comments on the arguments advanced there, my review in *Review of English Studies* 65 (2014), 922-3). For earlier work that questions the connection between language and identity, see, for example, Tim William Machan, *English in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2003), p. 71; Hugh M. Thomas, *The English and the Normans: Ethnic Hostility, Assimilation and Identity 1066-c.1220* (Oxford, 2003), esp. pp. 377-90; and Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200* (Cambridge, 2007), esp. pp. 1-19.

[83] The quotation is from Elly van Gelderen, *A History of the English Language* (Amsterdam, 2006), p. 91.

[84] For further discussion of this point, and an illustration of how one neglected type of evidence (readers' annotations) can contribute to revising these histories, see Mark Faulkner, 'Archaism, Belatedness and Modernisation: 'Old' English in the Twelfth Century', *Review of English Studies* 63 (2012), 179-203.

[85] For Helsinki, see Merja Kytö, *Manual to the Diachronic Part of the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*, 3rd ed. (Helsinki, 1996) [available from http://clu.uni.no/icame/manuals/HC/INDEX.HTM]; for PPCME and its sister YPCOE, see Ann Taylor, 'The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose', *Creating and Digitising Language Corpora*, vol. 2, *Diachronic Databases* ed. Joan C. Beal, Karen P. Corrigan and Hermann L. Moisl (Basingstoke, 2007), 196-227. I am currently working on a paper about the representativeness of these corpora and the reliability of the abstractions they facilitate.

[86] For the resurgence of interest in twelfth-century literary history, see Faulkner, 'Rewriting English Literary History'. More recent work includes A. N. Doane & William P. Stoneman, *Purloined Letters: The Twelfth-Century Reception of the Anglo-Saxon Illustrated Hexateuch (British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv)* (Tempe, 2011); Sara Harris, 'Twelfth-Century Perceptions of the History of Britain's Vernacular Languages', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2013, esp. ch. 2; Bruce O'Brien, *Reversing Babel: Translation among the English during an Age of Conquests, c. 800 to c. 1200* (Newark, 2011); Stephen Pelle, 'Source Studies in the Lambeth Homilies', *JEGP* 113 (2014), 34-72, plus other papers by the same author;

The findings of this paper contribute to this reappraisal in several ways. First, by establishing that one can discern in idiosyncratic aspects of the orthography of native place- and personal-names in a Latin history (e. g. <-buri> for *–bury*) some features of the author of that history's local dialect, it demonstrates the feasibility of using onomastic evidence to flesh out the evidentiary base of existing studies. Second, in showing that Orderic did not learn to read or write English with Siward when he was taught Latin, it provides invaluable indirect evidence for late-eleventh-century educational practices, in particular by showing that instruction in 'Standard' Old English does not seem to have been available with a secular priest in Shropshire at a time when it apparently still was in major Benedictine houses. Finally, in its suggestion that Orderic did not use English to reinforce his self-identity as *Angligena*, it challenges Treharne's recent attempt to explain twelfth-century vernacular writing through reference to English resistence to Norman oppression.

I want to end where I began, however, with Orderic's inclusion of the name of the road between Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury in his account of Henry I's conflict with Robert of Bellême. Orderic's transcription of the road name as *huvel hegen* and his translation of it as *malum callem uel vicum* expose his attrited knowledge of English orthography, morphology and semantics. He includes the original English despite the probability that his Norman audience would have had no understanding of vernacular name, and despite, as I have argued, the English language not playing any significant place in his identity as *Angligena*. Why include it then? To answer that we might turn to the track 'USA' from I-Wolf and Burdy's 2004 album *Meet the Babylonians*, in which the rapper RQM, whose parents, when he was seven, 'snatched [his] ass up' from Poland and took him to New York, confides half-way through that he's 'never, ever rhymed in Polish before' but switches into that language anyway.[87] To highlight in English a shift into Polish on a French-language track about an English-speaking country on a multilingual album released on an Austrian record label can only be understood as an assertion of the irrelevance of linguistic difference in the globalised world. Orderic's inclusion of the road-name might similarly be understood as an assertion of the irrelevance of linguistic difference, but of the irrelevance of linguistic difference in a pan-European Norman imperium under a Christian God who understood, and oversaw the creation of, all languages.

Elaine, *Living Through Conquest*; and George Younge, 'The *Canterbury Anthology*: An Old English Manuscript and its Anglo-Norman Context', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2012.
[87] 2Sheep4Coke, 'RQM: An Emcee without Border', *Jeckyll et Hyde*, 27 May 2010 < http://jekyllethyde.fr/2010/05/rqm-english-interview/>, accessed 19 December 2014.