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On Middle English *she*, *sho*: A refurbished narrative¹

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In memoriam Derek Britton

We offer a radical reinterpretation of the first step in the development of OE [h] in *hēo* towards PDE [ʃ] in *she*. This solves outstanding difficulties in accounting for the vocalism in ME [je:], precursor of PDE [ji:]. The background is the etymology of *she* created for the Corpus of Narrative Etymologies, and its accompanying Corpus of Changes. The database for CoNE is The Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English, with 36 different spellings for *she* across 71 texts. First, we present the OE etymology of *she*, tracking the changes that gave rise to all the attested OE variants. Second, using Britton's (1991) paper as a starting point, we give a new explanation for initial [hj], allowing a straightforward account for all three attested ME vocalisms: [e:], [o:] and [ø:]. Third, we unpack the changes underlying the complex of variants attested in LAEME.

Keywords: Old and Middle English, *she*, pronoun, CoNE, LAEME

1. Introduction

There has been up to now no 'canonical' or accepted solution to the origin of the English nominative singular third person feminine pronoun *she*. The controversy has focused on (a) the initial [ʃ] of Middle English (ME) *she*, *sho* and (b) the difficulties of the [e:] vocalism (the source of PDE [i:]),

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which does not arise naturally from any of the solutions proposed. We will return to these in Sections 4 and 5, and offer a radical reinterpretation of the first step in the development towards [ʃ], which also solves the difficulties of the vocalism.

The interest of this pronoun, however, begins in pre-Old English times and is inextricably bound up with the history of the accusative, which by North West Germanic (NWGmc) had merged with the nominative by loss of weak final nasal (see Section 3.3.1). Consider the overlapping inventories of subsequently developed variant forms for the Old English (OE) nominative and accusative (Campbell 1959: §704; *OED3* hoo, pron. and n. – note that *OED* cites even more forms that are either ‘rare’ or late):

Nominative: *hēo, hī, hīa, hīæ, hīe, hīo, hīu*

Accusative: *hēa, hēo, hī, hīa, hīæ, hīe, hīo, hȳ*

The handbook paradigms, which are biased towards West Saxon (WS), have *hēo* as NOM and *hīe, hī* as ACC. This makes sense as a general rule because for NOM, *hēo* is found in all dialects of OE, while for ACC, *hīe* is only absent from Northumbrian (Nth) and *hī* is found in both early WS (EWS) and late WS (LWS). In NOM/ACC crossovers, shown above in bold, it is only in Mercian (Merc) where *hīo, hēo* (Ru¹) and *hīe* (VP) appear in both functions.

According to Campbell (1959: §703), and cf. Hogg & Fulk (2011: §5.17 and n. 2) the dialectal distribution is:

Nominative

hēo is found in all dialects of OE. *hīo, hīa* and *hī* are mainly Kentish (Kt), though there are seven tokens of *hīo* and three tokens of *hīa* in Nth (Li) beside 11 tokens of *hīu*,² which is also found elsewhere in Anglian (Angl). *hīæ* (rare) and *hīe* are Merc only (VP).

Accusative (not attested in Kt)

hīe, hī are found in both EWS and LWS. *hīe* is also Merc. *hȳ* is LWS only. *hīo* and *hēo* are mostly confined to Merc (Ru¹), though *hīo* is found in the EWS Martyrology fragment. *hīæ* is Angl (Ru¹ and Ru²). *hīa* forms are Nth as is rare *hēa* (Li only).

Differences between nominative and accusative are: NOM sg *hīu* (Angl only) is not recorded as ACC sg; ACC sg *hēa* (Nth (Li) only) and *hȳ* (LWS

² Thanks to Julia Cuesta for supplying forms and numbers of attestations in the Lindisfarne Gospel gloss.

only) are not recorded as NOM sg. All other forms can represent both cases. This overlap has led in some accounts of the origin of ME *she* to the suggestion of *hīe* as a possible etymon (but see Section 3.4). The source of this large number of forms can be clarified by the OE etymologies of the NOM and ACC as sets, both with the same (merged) ProE origin. See Section 3.1.

2. A Corpus of Narrative Etymologies (CoNE)

Standard lexicographical practice is to present the ‘etymology of’ an item as a set of cognates, often with some historical commentary, as in the form-histories in *OED3*, or scattered comments throughout the cognate set. While CoNE reconstructions are of course based in large part on cognate materials, we do not present the cognate sets. Rather we take them as background (what philosophers of science call ‘context of justification’), invisible in the actual etymologies, which are change-by-change narratives of the emergence of the targeted forms. Cognate material may be referred to in the commentaries.

2.1. Data set

The purpose of CoNE is to derive the forms attested in the corpus of early Middle English texts collected for a Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English 1150–1325 (LAEME). The scribal languages of the texts in the LAEME corpus of tagged texts (CTT) are the product, at least in part, of developments from OE. The first part of a CoNE etymology therefore accounts for each of the attested shapes of an item in OE – the ‘Old English Etymology’. The second part takes all the OE forms that could plausibly serve as inputs to the forms attested in the LAEME CTT and accounts for their transformation(s) – the ‘Middle English Etymology – Base Phonology’. Thereafter, the ‘Middle English Etymology – Morphology’ section assigns each form in LAEME CTT to its relevant lexico-grammatical tag(s) accounting for the shape of any inflection morphology. This article is concerned mainly with phonology and takes account of LAEME tags only insofar as they label subject (OE nominative) or direct object (normally OE accusative) functions in the relevant forms.³

³ The LAEME tags for feminine personal pronoun in subject and direct object functions are \$/PI3NF and \$/PI3OdF respectively. The tags are built up incrementally: \$ indicates the

3. The Old English Etymologies

The input to an OE etymology in CoNE is usually the reconstructed etymon during the time of the original West Germanic (WGmc) settlement of England, i.e. Ingvaeonic (Ing). In the cases discussed here, however, the histories require us to go much further back, even to Proto-Germanic (PGmc). Each CoNE etymology tells the story of how the input form changed (often taking divers paths) to give the various forms found in OE.

As Wright & Wright (1925: §458) remark, ‘The most difficult chapter in works on comparative grammar is the one dealing with the pronouns’ (under which both personal and demonstrative, i.e. determiners are included). They continue: ‘It is impossible to state with any degree of certainty how many pronouns the parent Indg. [Indo-germanic] language had and what forms they had assumed at the time it became differentiated into the various branches’. We find this as much of a problem as the Wrights and others have. Our reconstructions are our ‘best guesses’, arrived at after sorting through largely unargued claims in the handbooks and invoking the least ad-hockery. (CoNE, Grammel-only items, /P13~she and /P13~hie, Old English Etymology)

3.1. Old English narrative etymologies of NOM and ACC singular third-person feminine pronoun

General shape:

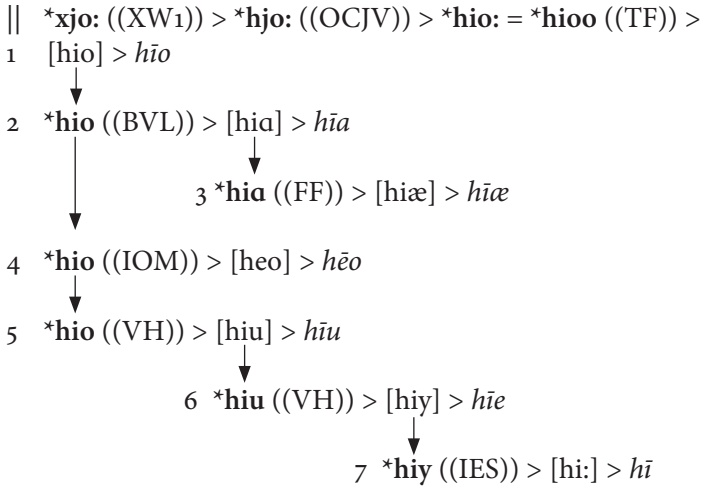
||*reconstructed input form ((change)) > *resulting reconstructed form > [phonetic substance underlying OE citation form] > *OE citation form*

The ((change)) and *resulting reconstructed form stages may be (multiply) repeated. The change in double parentheses is always an initialism.⁴

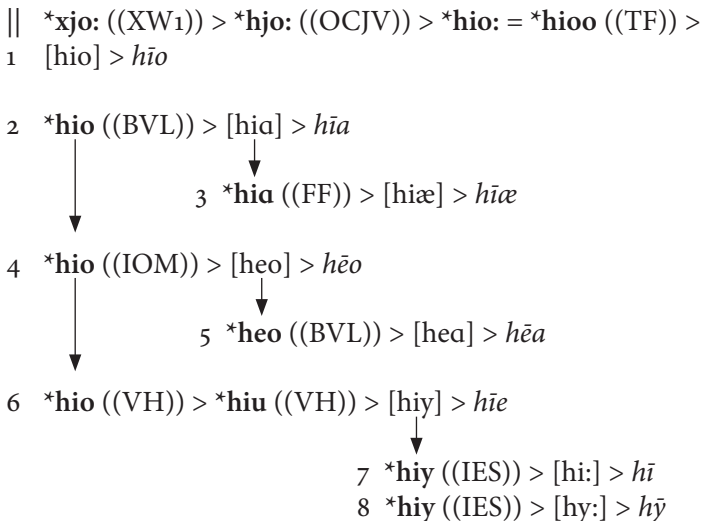
start of the tag; immediately following / indicates that these pronominal tags lack a lexical element (lexel), since the grammatical element (grammel) provides sufficient information to identify them; P = personal pronoun; 1 = singular; 3 = third person; N = nominative; Od = object, direct; F = feminine.

⁴ Initialisms are spelt out (and the changes explained) in Section 3.2. In CoNE the initialisms are linked to their interpretations in the Corpus of Changes (CC), which forms part of CoNE. For the most part these are extended versions of the commentaries we give in this article.

3.1.1. *Nominative singular (adapted from CoNE, Grammel-only items, /P13~she, Old English Etymology)*



3.1.2. *Accusative singular (adapted from CoNE, Grammel-only items, /P13~hie, Old English Etymology).*



Differences between 3.1.1 nominative and 3.1.2 accusative are:

Fork 5 NOM sg *hīu* (Angl only) is not recorded as ACC sg;

Fork 5 ACC sg *hēa* (Nth (Li) only) is not recorded as NOM sg;

Fork 8 ACC sg *hȳ* (LWS only) is not recorded as NOM sg.

3.2. The changes

3.2.1. ((XW1)) *x-Weakening 1*

***xjo:** > ***hjo:**. ***x** > [h] morpheme initially and between voiced segments if the first is a vowel. Thus OE *holt* COPSE < ***xolt-a**, *sēon* SEE < ***sehan** < ***sexan**. See Hogg (1992: §7.45).

3.2.2. ((OCJV)) *Onset Cluster j-Vocalisation*

***hjo:** > ***hio:**. In Ing or PrOE, in onsets of the shape *Cj-, the approximant vocalizes to *i.

3.2.3. ((TF)) *Triphthong Filter*

***hio:** = ***hioo** > [hio]. We assume a filter that prevents one mora of what would otherwise be an overlong trimoric nucleus from surfacing. In PrOE this disallows the phonotactically illegal trimoric nuclei that would otherwise appear in OE from Breaking ((BRK)) or Palatal Diphthongisation ((PD)) of long vowels – or in this case ((OCJV)). The filter is actually a constraint, rather than strictly a change, and it acts as a result of and simultaneously with ((OCJV)), so that ***hjo:** > [hio] directly. We have put in the non-surfacing ***hio:** = ***hioo** stage to show how the filter operates (see further fn. 7). This filter is important in the later discussion of the ME forms.

3.2.4. ((BVL)) *Back Vowel Lowering*

***hio** > [hia]. From PrOE into OE, under low stress, all or part of the sequence ***u** > ***o** > ***a** may occur. This change also accounts for the variation between *-ast* and *-ost* in superlatives and *-ade* and *-ode* in the weak class 2 past tense.

3.2.5. ((FF)) *First Fronting*

***hia** > [hiæ]. In PrOE ***a** > [æ] except before nasals. This change has complications in ways not relevant to this article; for full details see CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((FF)).

3.2.6. ((IOM)) *io-Merger*

***hio** > [heo]. OE *īo/io* and *ēo/eo* fell together. In WS and Angl (mainly Merc) the merger was in [eo]/[ěo]. In EWS there is considerable intertextual variation in spellings, with merger in *ēo/eo* increasing, and becoming virtually complete in LWS. In Kt the merger was first in [io]/[īo]. Later in Kt *io* and *īo* underwent separate mergers via ((VH)) (see Section 3.2.7).

3.2.7. ((VH)) *Vowel Harmony*

***hio** > [hiu] > [hiy]. Vowel harmony is any assimilation between vowels where the influence goes from left to right. ((VH)) can occur within the nucleus, as in the diphthongal changes here of [hio] to [hiu], where height is the assimilating feature and thence [hiu] > [hiy] in which backness is the assimilating feature.

3.2.8. ((IES)) *ie-Split*

***hiy** > [hi:] or [hy:]. In OE, *īe/ie* > *ī/i* or *ȳ/y*. This change is said in the handbooks to be restricted to WS territory, however defined, and to be primarily a feature of EWS. We follow Colman (1985) (and cf. Lass 1994: §3.8.2) in taking the EWS ‘ie’ spelling to represent [iy] or [īy]; for discussion and references see also Hogg (1992: §236) and Section 3.3.1. The spelling and what it represents vanish through merger with already existing categories, *ȳ/y* the commonest result, *ī/i* more usual before palatals. However, *ie* spellings, and presumably therefore [iy] diphthongs, do occur in other dialects: [iy] is required in these etymologies (Fork 7) to account for Kt fem sg NOM *hī* spellings.

3.3. Commentary

Our monosyllabic input form *xjō: for both NOM and ACC is problematic: it is taken as parallel to the nominative singular feminine demonstrative *sjō: (Prokosch 1939: §94; Krahe 1965: §35). We select it on the grounds of ‘majority rule’ in the handbooks, and because there is a plausible route from it to the attested OE forms.⁵

3.3.1. *Excursus on hīe*

We assume that all our attested OE outputs for both NOM and ACC feminine pronouns are monosyllabic, whether continuing diphthongs or the outcome of monophthongisation processes. Indeed, it is generally accepted that this is the case in all but one of the outputs. But there is some disagreement in the handbooks about *hīe*. For instance, Hogg & Fulk (2011: §5.17 (3)) assert that “perhaps in EWS . . . and certainly in Angl” the *-ie* represents a disyllabic sequence. As indicated above in Section 3.2.8, we do not agree with Hogg & Fulk’s claim. They adduce a metrical argument (*ibid.* note 3), although they admit that there is no metrical evidence from the attested pronouns themselves to substantiate this. Instead, *hīe* is assumed to be “parallel to the present subjunctive *sīe(n)*” MAY BE (which *is* frequently disyllabic in verse) because they are “etymologically parallel”. It seems likely that the final *-e* in *sīe* was still perceived as a separate syllable because it was seen as a continuingly functional singular subjunctive marker. It seems to us unlikely, however, that by OE times, the final *-e* in *hīe* should be seen as a separate syllable in one case only of a pronominal paradigm (and one form only of other possible forms for that case). We believe it is more likely that all the OE outputs for the pronoun were monosyllabic in OE. See further, CoNE, Grammel-only items, /P13~she.

⁵ In CoNE we offer two possible OE etymologies for each of these items. The difference is in input forms and early stages of the etymology; in each case they merge in Proto-OE (PrOE). One input form is monosyllabic, the other disyllabic. Both inputs are problematic, but we prefer the monosyllabic solution. For more extensive discussion, see CoNE, Grammel-only items, /P13~she and /P13~hie, Old English Etymology. The monosyllabic input is identical for both nominative and accusative. Where the two OE etymologies somewhat differ is in the developmental Forks that account for the various OE citation forms (see Section 1) for each grammatical function.

3.4. The OE spellings and their subsequent development

Whether the forms are used in nominative or accusative contexts in OE texts, the variation between them seems to be largely regional. Most of the OE variants die out during the period between OE and ME. Written English in the transitional period is mostly confined to copies of earlier works in OE. By the time ME proper begins to emerge, and to survive in the written record in the mid to late twelfth century, the new 'she' type for the subject pronoun already begins to be found. For the object pronoun the levelling of the 'her/hir' type from the OE DAT/GEN variants is also already the majority for direct object function. For the FEM SG personal pronoun used as direct object (\$/P13OdF), LAEME CTT has 60 tokens of the 'heo/hi(e)' type across only 7 texts. If one includes *hi(e)* spellings for IT (\$/P13OdI) showing survival of feminine grammatical gender in inanimates, the total rises to 77 tokens across 14 texts. Only 2 texts (with 3 tokens between them) have 'heo/hie' exclusively in direct object function for HER. The other 5 texts show 'her/hir' types beside 'heo/hie' types. Against this are 494 tokens of the 'her/hir' type for HER found across 51 texts. Or, if one includes 'her/hir' type spellings for IT showing the survival of grammatical gender, the total rises to 590 across 58 texts. The development of the 'her/hir' type is treated separately in CoNE under the etymology of \$/P13~her and plays no part in this article.

The early ME object forms in 'hi(e)' types do not continue into later ME and even in LAEME show no further phonological development. Those non-'her/hir' object forms that match subject forms in shape, *heo* and *ha*, may be derived in the same way as the subject forms. The implication of all this is that in spite of the multiple variants in OE and NOM/ACC overlap among those variants, we can derive almost all the 3SG FEM subject pronoun variants found in LAEME CTT, including all the 'she' types, from OE *hēo*. Only Kt *hīo* is additionally required to explain a few SE 'i' variants in ME; our account of *she* does not invoke *hīe* at all. From Section 4 onwards we therefore deal only with the continuing history of 3SG FEM subject pronoun and will say no more about object forms and functions.

4. The SHE problem

‘What is the OE etymon for *she*?’ is a controversial issue that has generated extensive debate for well over a century. There are two main camps: (a) those who derive it directly from the nominative personal feminine pronoun *hēo*, *hīo*; (b) those who derive it from the nominative feminine singular of the demonstrative, *sēo*, *sīo*.

The two main difficulties in accounting for *she*:

- (a) getting an initial palatalised coronal [ʃ] from either [h] or [s] and including in the narrative an initial dorsal [ç], which ME spellings such as *ǰho*, *g(h)e*, *ʒe* suggest formed an intermediate stage;
- (b) getting from a mid diphthong [eo] to a long monophthong – [e:] or [o:] – both variants required by the ME spellings. [e:] is also required for PDE *she* [ʃi:] and [o:] by some dialectal variants in PDE, e.g. *shoo* [ʃu:].

4.1. Britton’s 1991 account

The exemplary account by our late and beloved colleague, Derek Britton (1991), summarises and discusses all the main arguments, and comes down firmly and very convincingly in the *hēo*, *hīo* camp. The present article is in grateful celebration of Britton’s and (in a spirit which he would have applauded) it seeks to build on it, solving some of its difficulties.⁶

Our ME etymology accepts Britton’s account in principle but is based on a different model: (i) we provide a different account of the structure of the diphthongs in *hēo*, *hīo* and a radically new interpretation of the initial stages of the history; (ii) we fill in (by means of four CoNE-specific sound changes) some of the phonological gaps that Britton’s account fails to bridge; (iii) we have different explanations for some particular early ME spellings, based on interpretations of individual scribal systems in LAEME CTT. (CoNE, Grammel-only items, /P13~she, Middle English Etymology – Introductory Notes.)

⁶ We take Britton’s article as the starting point for our argument. See his article for a summary of previous work with detailed references. A more recent article (Juengling, 2001) returns to the *sēo*, *sīo* camp, deriving ME *sho* from *sēo*, and ME *she* from ACC *sīe*. This account, like Britton’s, provides a summary of earlier arguments (repeating much of Britton’s and expanding some of it). It relies on ‘stress shift’ (similar to Britton’s ‘resyllabification’: see Sections 4.1.2 and 4.2.2). It discounts derivation from *hēo* on the grounds that other OE *hēo*-words did not also develop initial [ʃ], an objection that ignores Britton’s evidence and the fact that changes need neither complete nor spread across the lexicon.

4.1.1. *The structure of the OE input diphthongs*

Britton's account has the OE 'long' diphthongs as trimoric – [he:o], [hi:o]. Our framework (cf. Sections 3.1 and 3.2.3.) has a filter specifically designed to rule out such structures. We claim therefore that these diphthongs were not trimoric but bimoric, that is, in this case [heo], [hio].⁷

4.1.2. *'Resyllabification'*

Britton assumes that trimoric: [he:o], [hi:o] were subject to 'resyllabification' to [hjo:] and thence [ço:]. However, he does not explain how the [o] element of the diphthong lengthens rather than remaining short. This is a difficulty whether [o] is part of an originally bimoric or trimoric sequence.

4.1.3. *Development from [ço:] to [ʃo:]*

Having detailed all the plausible sources for [ʃ], Britton demonstrates that it is derivable by native phonological processes also observable in other WGmc languages. He deals thoroughly with the proposal of a Scandinavian (West Norse) origin, that is, 'the Shetland theory', and shows that it is unlikely that *she* is anything other than a native development (1991: 12–16).

⁷ Nonspecialist readers may be confused by our treatment of the OE digraphs. We assume that those conventionally marked in the handbooks with a macron and said to represent 'long' diphthongs, e.g. *ēo*, in fact represent bimoric nuclei, as opposed to the unmarked ones like *eo* which are monomoric. That is, the macron does not represent an extra increment of length or weight; it indicates that these digraphs are reflexes of Germanic diphthongs, assumed to be bimoric, or of various diphthongisations of long vowels. In phonetic representations, on the other hand, the 'long' diphthongs are written simply as bimoric, with no diacritic, and the 'short' ones (which have the weight of short vowels, i.e. two qualities associated with one timing slot) are written with a breve. Hence our writing long/short pairs as e.g. as orthographic *ēo/eo* and phonetic [eo]/[ěo]. Let [] represent a mora. A long vowel then would be e.g. [e][e], a short vowel [e]. Similarly a 'long' diphthong would be [e][o], and a short diphthong [eo]. This interpretation is supported by the fact that the 'long' diphthongs pattern with the long vowels, and the 'short' diphthongs with the short (e.g. a long diphthong alone makes a heavy syllable, whereas a short diphthong, like a short vowel, requires two following consonants). This phonological model, with the short diphthongs consisting of two 'half-morae', was first proposed in Lass (1983: 172–177, 1984: 253–257); it was adopted in Hogg (1992: §2.29). The use of the breve to mark shortness in phonetic/phonological representations first appears in Hogg (loc. cit.). It was more fully explicated and developed in Lass (1994: §3.6), and is used in CoNE. This conceptual framework was not available to earlier scholars like Campbell (1959), who do not appear to be concerned with the phonetic properties of the diphthongs with respect to weight; at present Hogg (1992) is probably the standard handbook, and we use the Lass–Hogg model here. The long–short diphthong contrast occurs in a number of Germanic languages, e.g. Scots and Icelandic.

4.1.4. *Development of [j̄e:]*

At this stage of his argument, Britton admits to facing serious problems in how to account for the vocalism, and is forced to resort to a sequence of unsupported hypotheses. In the first stage of his reconstruction (1991: 6–7), he posits a separately derived ‘stressed’ [he:] beside ‘unstressed’ [hjo:]. He gives no argumentation to support the existence of these two prosodic types. The supposed ‘stressed’ form would have been produced unproblematically from *hēo* by the usual monophthongisation of OE *ēo* to *ē*. Later (1991: 19), he suggests that the [e:] in [çe:] came from this [he:] variant. In other words, there was a blend of two forms: unstressed [ço:] (< earlier [hjo:]) and stressed [he:] (< earlier [he:o]).

4.2. An altered model and narrative

We accept Britton’s *hēo*-based account in principle, but present important differences and offer solutions that simplify the narrative and solve otherwise continuing difficulties:

- (a) our framework has the ‘long’ diphthongs not trimoric but bimoric (see Section 3.1);
- (b) we give a totally different origin for the initial cluster [hj], extrinsic to the nuclear (root) vowel;
- (c) we give a more finely detailed phonetic narrative;
- (d) we do not see stress as playing any part in the history;
- (e) following from our new interpretation of [hj] in (b), above, we have a different explanation of the vocalism in the forms [çe:] and [j̄e:], the latter the direct precursor of standard PDE [j̄i:] and related forms.

4.2.1. *Structure of the OE input diphthongs*

Our model has the ‘long’ diphthongs bimoric via ((TF)), which is specifically designed to rule out trimoric sequences: that is the OE input was [heo], [hio] *not* [he:o] [hi:o] (see fn. 7). It is only fair to note that the bimoric interpretation of the so-called long diphthongs did not become prominent until a year after Britton’s article appeared.⁸

⁸ For a later study that also has the relevant long diphthongs as trimoric sequences, see Krygier (1998).

4.2.2. 'Resyllabification' and differential stress

This notion does not explain why [o:] (< [he:o]) became long. Nor can it account for the vocalism in [çe:]/[fe:], nor that in [çø:], which is the presumed realisation of ME forms like *ʒ(h)eo*. To explain [çe:]/[fe:] and possible [çø:], Britton (1991: 6–7) is forced to invoke different degrees of stress and 'generalisation' (i.e. analogical extension). We think there is no acceptable argument (empirical or theoretical), for associating the two vocalisms [e:] and [o:] with particular differing degrees of stress.

4.2.3. *Yod Epenthesis*

We resolve all the above difficulties by introducing a different change, Yod Epenthesis ((YE)) – that is, insertion of a palatal approximant before the nuclear vowel. Here we cite a parallel case where 'resyllabification' or 'the formation of rising diphthongs' have been invoked in the past. This is in the well-known development of certain OE *eo-* words into ME *ye-/yo-* words. The two best known examples are *yede/yode* (< OE *ēode*) WENT and of course *you(r)/yow(r)* etc. (< OE *ēow(er)*) YOU(R) (see further Section 5.3.5). However, OE evidence suggests that in these cases the change is not an intrinsic development of the nucleus but rather an extrinsic development of the word onset.

4.2.4. *Evidence for ((YE)) in OE*

There is evidence in OE from sporadic initial *g-* spellings in words with historical initial *ea-*, *eo-* (long or short) that the palatal approximant yod could be inserted word-initially without affecting the following diphthong. See DOE s.v. *eallunga*, *eallinga* ALTOGETHER: *geallunga*; s.v. *ēare*, *ēar* EAR: *gearan*, *gearum*; s.v. *eorþe* EARTH: *georþan*, *georðe*, *georþa*; s.v. *ēowan*, *ēowian*, *ȳwan* DISPLAY: *geowde* (C12), *geawian* (C12), *geowige*; s.v. *ēower* YOUR: *geowre*, *geowrum*; (cf. s.v. *gē* YOU acc *ieow*, gen *geower*) and s.v. *gān* GO, *ēode* (pret.ind. 1st/3rd sg.): *geode*; (pret.ind. 2nd sg.): *geodest*; (pret.ind. 3rd pl.): *geode*, *geoden* (C12), *geodon* (C12) *gyodan*.⁹

⁹ The full list of headwords in DOE that have attestations labelled "with intial g" is: *ēacnian*; *ēacnung*; *ēadig*; *ealdor-dōmlic*; *ealgian*; *eallunga*, *eallinga*; *ēar1*; *eardian*; *ge.eardod*; *eardung*; *eardung-stōw*; *ēare*, *ēar*; *earfoþ*, *earfoþe*, *earfoþu*; *earfoþe*, *earfeþe*; *earfoþlice*; *earn*; *ge.earnian*; *ge.earnung*; *ēaster-sunnanæfen*; *eornostlice*; *eorþe*; *eorþ.gemet*; *ēowan*, *ēowian*,

Such forms, followed by continuing digraph spellings, strongly suggest that ((YE)) occurred (or at least could occur) before the monophthongisation of the Old English diphthongs and independent of the nuclear vowel. There is nothing odd about a change restricted to these environments in Old English; all changes have to begin somewhere. There is nothing strange either about a segment appearing *ex nihilo*; after all, epenthesis is nothing more than the presence of something where there used to be nothing.

4.2.5. ((YE)) post Old English

Sporadic ((YE)) continues after the monophthongisation of the OE diphthongs, and later spreads to words without historical initial diphthongs:¹⁰

(a) For early ME, see: (i) LAEME CTT especially the items \$e:ode/vpt (reflexes of OE *ēode* WENT), and those for object and genitive forms of YOU(R) (i.e. \$/P22<pr, \$/P22G, \$/P22Od, \$/P22Oi – large numbers of reflexes implying initial [j]); (ii) CoNE, the etymologies of \$/P22~inc, \$/P22~incer (reflexes of OE dual forms, viz *ȝinc*, *ȝing*, *ȝung*, *ȝinker*, *gunker*, *ȝunker*), \$a:/av (*ȝo* as a reflex of OE *ā* EVER) and \$earl/n (*ȝierl* as a reflex of OE *eorl* EARL). Cf. LAEME, Maps, no. 16256301 WENT: ‘yed(-), ‘yod(-)’, ‘yeod-’ and ‘yiod-’ types, all forms implying initial yod, e.g. *gedē*, *iæde*, *yod*, *ȝeode*. It is clear from the surviving dual forms and from *ȝo* < *ā* EVER that already in early ME ((YE)) can be seen in contexts other than historical *ea-*, *eo-* words.

(b) For late ME, see: eLALME, Item 282 WENT and Dot Map, WENT: ‘ye(o)de’ and ‘y(i)ode’ types, all forms implying initial jod, e.g. *yede*, *yhode*, *ȝeode*; and Item List, Item 387 (collected for the southern part of the survey only) and Dot Map, Jod insertion, as in ‘yerth’, EARTH etc. The LALME forms include e.g. *ȝend(e)* for END, *yet-*, *ȝet-* in EAT(EN), *yeftsones* EFTSOONS, *yorsse* HOURS, *ȝeuyn* EVEN(ING). The spread from historical *ea-*, *eo-* words continues.

(c) For Older Scots, insertion of initial [j] (or ‘preiotation’ as Aitken (2002: 132) calls it) also occurs in words with short vowels, where a stress or syllabicity shift explanation is impossible. Aitken points to ‘pre-iotated’

ȝwan; ēower; gān, ge.gān. The last two listed are the headwords for the *geod-* examples from OE *ēode*.

¹⁰ For similar observations on ‘glide’ epenthesis in initial position in C12–C15, within the framework of an articulated theory of phonological ‘strength’, see Jones (1989: 178–182, esp. Table 3.3.4 and the discussion following). This is a teleological account, which ours is not. Jones does not relate this epenthesis to the history of *she*.

forms of EARTH, EARL, ELD, OVEN, HERB, ADAM. He also mentions *y*-forms in words with historical long vowels or diphthongs such as ALE, APE, HIGH (he cites *hyech*), HAME (i.e. southern HOME), HALE. Aitken primarily cites lexemes rather than word forms. Citations gleaned from LAOS (largely restricted to legal documents and only up to 1500) include: *zerd(e) zeyrde* EARTH; *y(h)ed, yheide, ze(i)d(e), zhed, zid, zyhd* (< OE *ēode* WENT).

(d) For rural English speakers born in the late nineteenth century there is evidence in the SED materials. For the North, see Orton and Halliday (1962) s.v. hoof, III.4.10 and s.v. oak and acorn IV.10. 2 and 3. There are many other examples, but typical are [hjʊf], [jʊf] in Cumberland [jə:fs] in Durham for HOOF. For the South, see Orton & Wakelin (1968) s.v. ears VI.4.1 and hear VI.4.2. [jəː] is typical for both EAR and HEAR in Somerset, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and Hampshire.

(e) In standard PDE, the commonest non-initial yod insertion is after [h] (as in PDE *huge, human, hue, humour*), but it occurs frequently (except in East Anglia) after labials and before the GOOSE vowel (as in PDE *dew, few, music, mutant, punitive, putrid*; and see Wells 1982: 181).

4.2.6. ((YE)) after [h]?

The evidence is sporadic and scattered, but it is clear from the Older Scots and PDE examples above that it could and did occur in those varieties. There are some indications that it might have happened in OE itself. There are no attested examples of OE forms in **hg-*, but this is no surprise, as it seems likely that such spellings would be graphotactically prohibited. But ‘i’ may also be used in OE for word onset [j], as is witnessed by such forms as *ieo* FORMERLY, *ieorne* EAGERLY, *ieogoðe* YOUTH. A search of the DOE Web Corpus reveals the following forms: *hiea* (1× for sg fem ACC pron translating Latin *eam*), *hieo* (6× in 5 different texts for fem NOM sg and NOM pl pron), *hieom* (2× for dat pl pron) and *hieora* (7× for gen pl pron). In OE, VVV spellings are uncanonical, so *hVVV* would be distinctly odd. It seems reasonable that *hieo(-)* should be read as [hjeo] in these cases. It may also be of interest that such forms are apparently confined to the personal pronoun system in OE.¹¹

¹¹ Of further interest is the presence in Ælfric (Book of Kings) of 12 citations of the personal name *Hieu* HUGH. All this OE evidence (albeit sporadic) gives support to the existence of [hj]. As Donka Minkova (pers comm) remarks: “It really re-dates the emergence of /hj/ in English and fits in with the richer phonotactics of /h/ word-initially in OE: add (marginal) /hj/ to /hw, hr, hl, hn/.”

Is there also evidence of ((YE)) after [h] in ME? A very fruitful source is the Kentish of Dan Michel in the *Ayenbite of Inwit* (ayenbitet.tag): e.g. *hyere* HEAR; *hierþ*, *hyerþ* HEARS; *hyerd* HEARD; *hier*, *hyer(e)* HERE; *hyealde*, *hyalde* HOLD. These spellings are part of an extensive range, not confined to words with initial vowel or *h-*, known commonly as Kentish Diphthongisation: e.g. *dyere* DEAR; *yede* (< OE *ēode*) WENT; *yeren*, *yearen* EARS; *lyesynges*, *lyeasynge* LIES. These spellings taken as a set suggest simple insertion of yod (as in the later Older Scots and PDE examples) rather than a complex development of historic diphthongs or the formation of new rising ones.¹²

4.3. New proposal for *she*

We propose that OE [heo] > [hjeo] via ((YE)). eo-Monophthongisation/Merger ((EOM)) follows. That is: OE [eo] monophthongises and merges with pre-existing [e:] or [o:], perhaps via intermediate [ø:]. The nuclear vowel remains long.

Therefore the word onset and the nuclear vowel in *she* have separate histories. This explanation solves the problem of all the vocalisms suggested by the ME spellings ([e:], [o:] or [ø:]), without recourse to any arbitrariness involving either stress or analogy. It also allows us to make sense of anomalies in parallel ME data that Britton cites but has difficulty accounting for. Thus sporadic ((YE)) and subsequent Fusional Assimilation ((FA)) see below in Section 5.1.3) can account for *zare* and *zor* THEIR (Britton 1991: 40 n. 15) more simply than ‘resyllabification’ does; but ((YE)) equally has no difficulty with forms that “are usually not readily or uniquely explicable as the result of resyllabification” (1991: 41 n. 18), including ME *ze*, *ghe* for HE and *zam* for THEM.¹³

It is clear from Britton’s account that all the phenomena listed above *can* be explained in different, more or less complex and unrelated ways. But adoption of the idea of ((YE)) solves them all in a simpler more unified manner. Intriguingly, the form *hye* for SHE occurs once in LAEME CTT, in

¹² For a useful summary of the literature on the Kentish forms, invoking ‘syllabicity shifting’ but also linking the Kentish phenomena with later ‘glide epentheses’ of [j] and [w] see Jones (1989: 68–73).

¹³ Given the possibility of initial [h] deletion, ME forms in *z-* could possibly imply [j] rather than [ç] < [hj]. The possibility of this outcome in individual cases must be seriously considered given the parallel modern examples cited in Section 4.2.5 (d). Britton seems not to espouse this view (1991: 5, n. 5 and references). Whatever the case, if there were such ME realisations, they could have played no further part in the development to [ʃ].

the Kentish Sermons (laud471kst.tag) via Kentish ‘Diphthongisation’. Since we think ((KD)) is merely a local, florid manifestation of ((YE)) (or its back vowel equivalent ((WE)) (w-Epenthesis)) *hye* could be a straightforward rendition of the (temporary but necessary) [hje:] stage. This text also has the forms *yare* EAR, *ialde* OLD. (See further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((YE)), ((WE)) and ((KD))).

5. Middle English developments

Given the arguments in Sections 4.2.1–4.2.6, our account of the central narrative is:

- ***heo** ((YE)) > ***hjeo** ((EOM)) >
 1 ***hjo**: ((FA)) > [ço:] ((PF)) > [fo:]
 2 ***hje**: ((FA)) > [çe:] ((PF)) > [fe:]

5.1. The changes

5.1.1. ((YE)) *Yod Epenthesis*

***heo** > ***hjeo**. A yod is a palatal approximant with greater but non-fricative stricture than a nonsyllabic [i] (see Trask 1996: s.v. approximant for this definition; cf. also the usage – as a different category from nonsyllabic vowel – in Hogg 1992). Such a segment, which is functionally consonantal, is inserted word-initially or at the right edge of a consonantal word-onset (i.e. just before the following vowel); so it may occur in both vowel-initial and consonant-initial words. ((YE)) therefore occurs only in the onset, which is what we meant above (Section 4.3) by saying that the stories of the word onset and nuclear vowel in *she* have separate histories. The output of ((YE)) is minimally a CV structure (as in *yede* [je:de] CVV-, [hjo:] CCVV).

We have mentioned the sporadic evidence for this change in Old English as well as in both early and late Middle English. In Old English it appears to be restricted to insertion of initial *g-* before historically initial *ea-* and *eo-* diphthongs (long or short) or of *-i-* between initial *h-* and such diphthongs. This context seems to be strongly preferred in the Middle English examples also, and so-called Kentish ‘Diphthongisation’ provides very numerous local examples (cf. Section 4.2.6 and see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((KD))).

5.1.2. ((EOM)) *eo-Monophthongisation/Merger*

***hjeo** > ***hjo:** or ***hje:** OE *eo/ēo* ([ěo]/[eo]) monophthongise, leading to merger with pre-existing short and long vowels: so for the long ones, our concern here, to [e:] or [o:] (possibly in some cases via intermediate [ø:]). (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((EOM))).

((YE)) and ((EOM)) often co-occur because the same word may contain suitable environments for both:

For instance, [jeo-] from the operation of ((YE)) in the reflexes of *ēode* becomes *yode* or *yede* via ((EOM)) (with long monophthongs from the original diphthongal nucleus). On the other hand, the existence of *choose* and *cheese* forms (i.e. the two vocalisms [e:] and [o:]) can be accounted for by ((EOM)) alone, with no need to invoke 'stress shift'. Indeed stress shift in a diphthong makes no sense, in spite of its common appearance in the handbooks. Only a diphthong as a whole, like any vowel, can be stressed or unstressed: a mora is either syllabic or nonsyllabic. But our point stands even if the term used is 'syllabicity shift' or 'resyllabification' because this change [((YE))] can also occur (albeit later) in contexts where there is no diphthongal nucleus following. (CoNE s.v. The CC and ((YE)), para 3.)

5.1.3. ((FA)) *Fusional Assimilation*

***hjo:** > [ço:] and ***hje:** > [çe:]. [h] and [j] mutually assimilate giving a palatal fricative, [ç]. The [j] takes on the voicelessness and fricativity of the [h], and the [h] takes on the palatality of the [j], yielding a single segment. This results in forms spelled with initial *ȝ(h)-*, *g(h)-* and *ȝ-*. ((FA)) occurs as a synchronic process in many varieties of PDE and Scots, giving initial [ç] in *hue*, *huge*, *hew*, *human*, etc. (cf. Britton 1991: 25–26). (See further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((FA))).

5.1.4. ((PF)) *Palatal Fronting*

[ço:] > [fo:] and [çe:] > [fe:]. This is a common change of tongue shape and point of articulation. It also occurs in a number of German dialects as well as in ME (cf Britton (1991: 12) resulting in loss of the palatal fricative and merger in [f]: in e.g. Alsatian, Darmstadt Hessian and Rhenish Franconian (Keller 1961). In English, apart from *she*, ((PF)) seems to be restricted to

shoops ROSE HIPS (< OE *hēope*) and to the place names, *Shap, Shaps* and *Shipton* (Britton 1991: 13–15 and n. 23). In Scots, Britton (1991: 20–28) cites [ʃ] forms in the personal name *Hugh(ie)* and in *hook*, and *huge*. He points out (1991: 30–35) that the limited nature of this change is partly due to the paucity of contexts for it in English/Scots. (See further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((PF))).

5.2. The early Middle English spelling variants for *she*

Including variants that retain OE initial *h-*, there are 36 different forms for *SHE* recorded in LAEME CTT. Those with OE initial *h-* (or showing loss of [h]) are:

a, ha, he, heo, hi, hie, hio, ho, hoe, hoo, hue, hy, hye

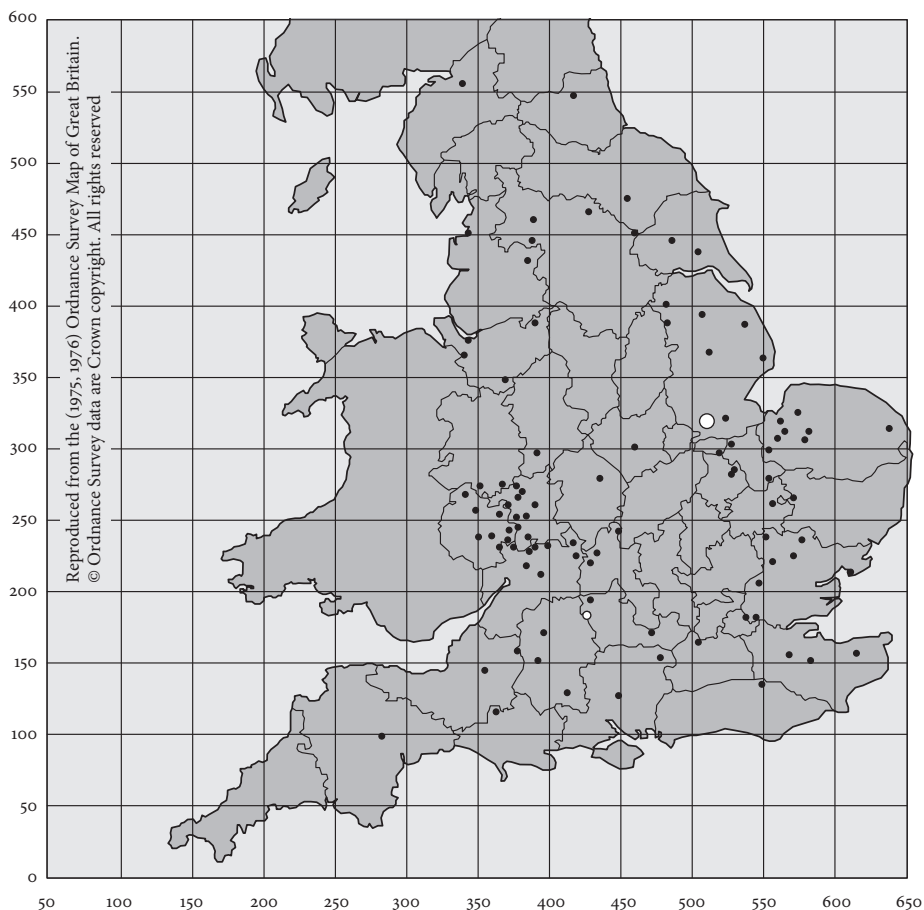
We have already mentioned Kentish *hye* (Section 4.3). For detailed discussion of all the continuing *h-* types, see Appendix 1. Variants in LAEME CTT implying ME development to initial [ç] or [ʃ] (with or without further changes) are:

*che, ge, ge, Gge, ghe, scae, **scha**, sche, scho, sco, se, sge, she, sho, yo, ŷho, ŷhö, ŷie, **pie**, **poe**, ʒe, ʒeo, ʒo.*

The narrative in Section 5.1 accounts for the common variants that are specific to ME: [ʃo:], [ʃe:], and the intermediate, much less common, [ço:], [çe:]. Each of our four exclusively ME types is represented by multiple orthographic variants. Their spellings may often be accounted for by ‘purely orthographic’ changes (i.e. without phonetic implication), which are also an important feature of CoNE’s CC. Below we give a summary account of these four outcomes. The forms *scha*, *yo*, *pie* and *poe*, indicated in the list above in bold, are discussed in detail in Appendix 2. The form *scae* will be the subject of Section 6.

5.3. Main types exclusive to ME

All these types develop from OE *hēo* via ((YE)), ((EOM)), ((FA)) with or without ((PF)), as described in Section 5.1.

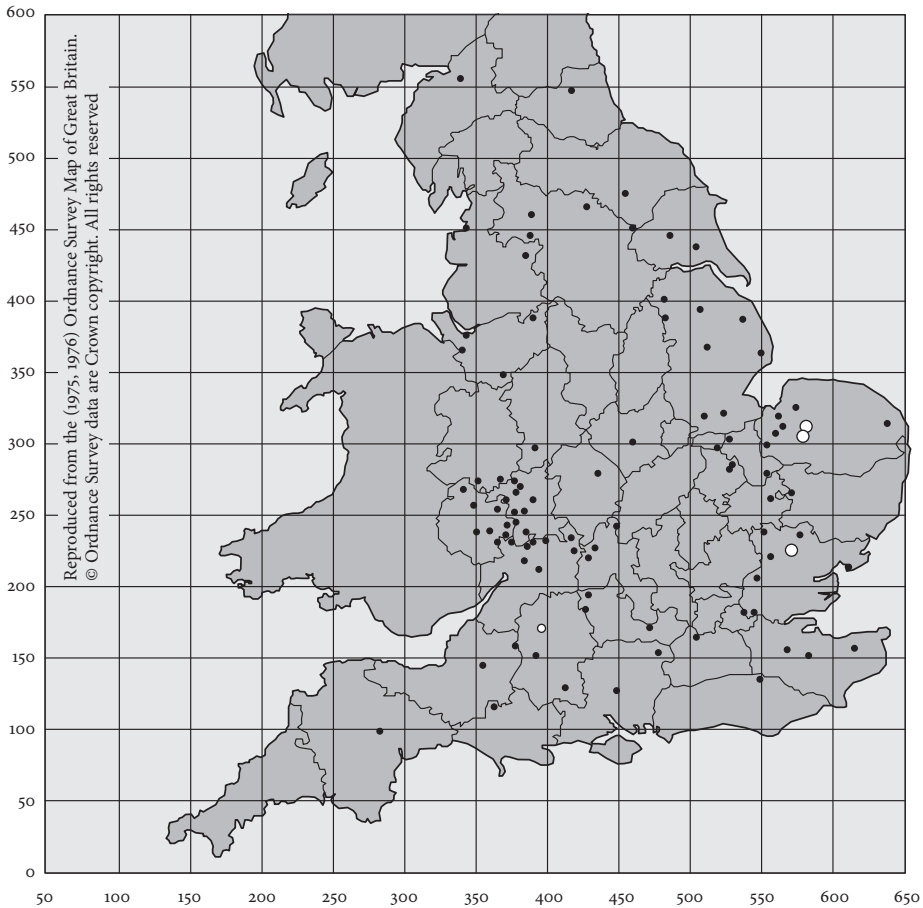


Map 1. SHE: spellings with initial ȝ , ȝ- and final simple $-o$, e.g. ȝho , ȝo

5.3.1. [$\text{ç}o:$] type

The [$\text{ç}o:$] type is represented in LAEME CTT by only two texts widely separated geographically:¹⁴ ȝho in *ormt.tag* (S Lincs) (19 tokens, one with three acute accents on the ‘ o ’) and a single example of ȝo (beside very numerous *heo* and occasional *he*) in *corp145selt.tag* (Berks). Orm’s language is located contiguous to the distribution of the [$\text{ʃ}o:$] type (see Section 5.3.3) and provides an excellent illustration of the intermediate stage of develop-

¹⁴ See Map 1: LAEME, Maps, no. 00062533 SHE: spellings with initial ȝ , ȝ- and final simple $-o$, e.g. ȝho , ȝo . In Maps 1–6, white dots indicate presence of the feature indicated by the title. The three different sizes of dot show relative frequency of occurrence. Black dots indicate the position of texts that do not show the title feature.



Map 2. SHE: spellings with initial *g, ġ, ȝ-* and final simple *-e*, e.g. *ghe, ȝe*

ment before [ʃo:]. Orm was working in the late twelfth century (Parkes 1983: 120–125) so *ġho* illustrates also an earlier stage of linguistic development. The single example in *corp145selt.tag* might seem anomalous, especially as the text is late in the early ME period (C14a1),¹⁵ but there are [ç:] types not far distant (see Section 5.3.2)¹⁶ and the later ME picture, which

¹⁵ Our abbreviated datings follow the conventions in LAEME and CoNE, viz: C = century, a = first half, (a1 = first quarter, a2 = second quarter) b = second half (b1 = third quarter, b2 = last quarter).

¹⁶ See Map 2: LAEME, Maps, no. 00062530 SHE: spellings with initial *g-, ȝ-, ġ-* and final simple *-e*, e.g. *ghe, ȝe* and cf. no. 00062520 SHE: spellings with initial *g-, ȝ-, ġ-* implying [ç], e.g. *ge, ȝeo, ġho*.

has a much denser coverage of surviving texts, also shows such forms into C14 and C15, with a distribution linking our two witnesses.¹⁷

Initial insular ‘g’ may be explained by Orthographic Remapping of ‘g’ (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((ORG))). This change explains how the three OE functions of ‘g’ (i.e. [g], [j] and [ɣ]) were redistributed between the new Caroline ‘g’¹⁸ and the old insular ‘g’ (‘ǧ’), which later was to become yogh (‘ȝ’). Initial ‘ȝ’ may be further explained therefore by Orthographic Remapping of ‘ȝ’ (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((OR3))). In some scribal systems in LAEME, this still developing *figura* also took on some of the functions of OE ‘h’, viz non-initial [ç, x]. In the unique case of SHE, its presence in initial position is one indicator that the change from *hj to [ç] did in fact happen. In Orm’s very idiosyncratic (and mostly extremely regular) system, ‘ǧ’ by itself can only stand for [j]. Orm uses an added ‘h’ as a diacritic for fricativeness (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((HDF))). When he wishes to indicate historical [ɣ] he places the diacritic ‘h’ as a small superscript above the ‘ǧ’. Uniquely in his system, the word *ǧho* SHE always has a full-sized ‘h’ beside the ‘ǧ’. This unique rendition by a careful systematist suggests that the sound was different from that realised by ‘ǧ’ plus superscript ‘h’, and adds reinforcement to the proposal of an otherwise almost unique initial [ç] for this pronoun at this stage in its history.¹⁹

5.3.2. [çe:] type

The [çe:] type is slightly more common than the [ço:] type and is represented in LAEME CTT by *ge*, *ge*, *Gge*, *ghe*, *ȝe*, *ȝie* and probably also *ȝeo*. This type is for the most part confined in LAEME CTT to texts in the (S)E Midlands.²⁰ Only one SW Midland text, *layamonBOt.tag* (NWWilts, C13b1) has this type, though its apparent absence elsewhere in the region may be a function of time, since it is an area where *h*-spellings predominate in early ME and continue well into late ME. Its rarity outside the (S)E

¹⁷ See eLALME, Dot Maps, Item 4, SHE: spellings with initial ȝ(h)-; cf also Dot Maps SHE: ȝ(h)eo; SHE: ȝ(h)e; SHE: ȝ(h)o.

¹⁸ For the Emergence of Caroline ‘g’, see CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((EOCG)).

¹⁹ For a detailed version of this argument including first notice of Orm’s differentiation between superscript and non-superscript ‘h’ see Britton (1991: n. 5). See also Laing (2008: 8–10).

²⁰ See Map 2: LAEME, Maps, no. 00062530 SHE: spellings with initial *g*-, *ȝ*-, *ȝ*- and final simple *-e*.

Midlands may also, however, be related to patchy survival of texts in the early period; eLALME shows considerable minority presence of *ʒ*-forms in the SW Midlands from C14 and C15.²¹

The *ʒe* spellings may be explained by ((OR₃)) and are confined to layamonBOt.tag (10 tokens) and a single token in adde6at.tag (N Essex, C13b2). In LAEME CTT, *ʒeo* is unique to layamonBOt.tag and is the majority form (51 tokens).²² This text uses *eo* and *e* spellings for historical [e(:)] as well as for reflexes of OE *ēo* and *eo*. It also occasionally uses *eo* rather than *o* spellings for historical [o(:)]. This usage indicates merger of OE *ēo/eo* and *ē/e* in [e(:)] or (less commonly) [o(:)]. Thus the change, eo-Monophthongisation/Merger (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((EOM))) allows *eo* to be used beside *e* or *o* for historical [e(:)] or [o(:)] via Litteral Substitution (see CoNE s.v. Special Codes and then ([LS])). It seems likely therefore that both *ʒeo* and *ʒe* in this text represent [çe:], though it remains possible that *ʒeo* stands for [ço:]. Given the greater numbers of *eo* spellings, it may be that they also function indexically for feminine gender. The initial 'ʒ' in *ʒe*, *ʒeo* for SHE makes these forms quite distinct from forms of the masculine subject pronoun HE. But, in spite of the effects of ((EOM)) and the possibility of ([LS]), for HE there are only 3 tokens of *heo* in this text, beside nearly 400 tokens of *he*. The combination of different initial consonant and different vowel spelling (and possibly different vocalism) for each pronoun provides maximal contrast. It is of interest to note that in late ME *ʒ(h)eo* forms are confined to the South-West and SW Midlands, including Wilts. The *ʒ(h)o* forms have a smaller contiguous configuration at the east edge of the *ʒ(h)eo* area in Wilts, Gloucs and S Worcs. There are no surviving late ME *ʒ(h)o* forms in the East Midlands. It is possible that indexical feminine *-(e)o* in such forms had become a regional feature by late ME. See eLALME, Dot Maps, Item 4, SHE: *ʒ(h)eo* and SHE: *ʒ(h)o*.

In OE times, Caroline 'g' was confined to the writing of Latin, insular 'g' ('ǧ') being used in Anglo-Saxon scripts. After the Conquest, Caroline 'g' began to be adopted also for the writing of English, and it was the availability of this extra *figura* that made it possible for the remapping of sounds to symbols indicated in Section 5.3.1. During the ME period a consensus gradually emerged, that Caroline 'g' was used for [g] and [dʒ], with 'ʒ' (the development from 'ǧ') used for [j], [ʎ] and sometimes [ç, x]. This con-

²¹ See eLALME, Dot Maps, Item 4, SHE: *ʒ(h)e*.

²² See LAEME, Maps, no. 00062529 SHE: *ʒeo*.

sensus, however, occurred only gradually. Some early ME scribes adopted Caroline ‘g’ and simply transferred to it all the uses of ‘ȝ’ and the developing ‘ȝ’, including [ç]. One such was the scribe of *genexodt.tag* (W Norfolk, C14a1). The single occurrences of *ge* and *Gge* belong to this scribe’s output, the latter showing dittography, presumably an error arising from the fact that the first ‘g’ is capitalised at the beginning of the verse line. This scribe’s majority form for SHE is, however, *ghe* (56 tokens) showing ((HDF)) as well as ((EOCG)) and ((ORG)). He also has a few spellings indicating the [ʃe:] type for which see Section 5.3.4.

The form *ge* is the creation of the scribe of *bestiaryt.tag* (W Norfolk, C13b2). Like the writer of *genexodt.tag*, this scribe adopts Caroline ‘g’ instead of ‘ȝ’ or its later development ‘ȝ’. But unlike the scribe of *genexodt.tag* he does some further remapping of sound to symbol by modifying the shape of his Caroline ‘g’ to create two variants. Both have a single lobe and a leftward turning descender or tail. When the *littera* is used for [g] or (rare) [ǧ], the scribe gives it the usual offstroke or hook from the top of the lobe, whether in final position or linked to a following *littera*. When, however, the *littera* stands for [j], [ç, x] or [ɣ], it lacks the final hook. These functions are those that other scribes might employ ‘ȝ’ to express. The first to notice this hookless ‘g’ were Gumbert and Vermeer (1971) and they refer to it as ‘an unusual yogh’; but its shape is nothing like yogh, being identical to this scribe’s normal ‘g’ but simply lacking the hook. Its use is therefore separately recorded in both LAEME and CoNE.

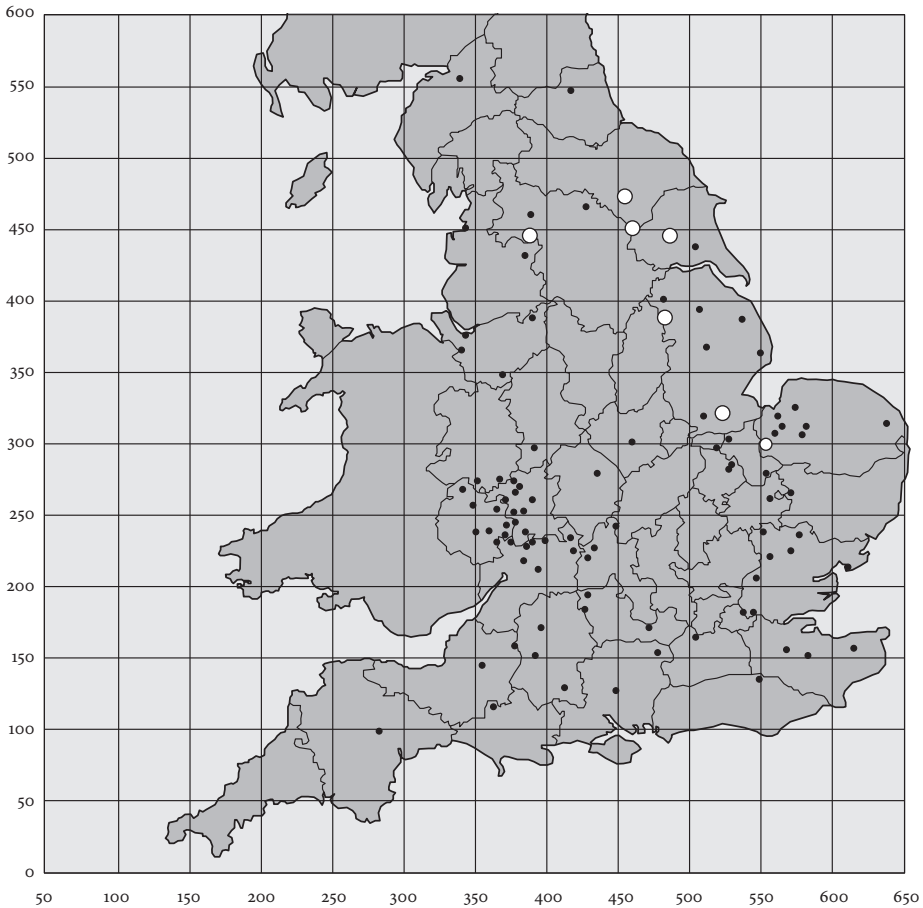
ȝie occurs once in *vvbt.tag* (SE Essex, C13a1)²³ beside usual *hie* (28 tokens and *he* once). In this text OE [eo] has monophthogised to [e:] via ((EOM)) resulting in usual [he:] for SHE, realised once as *he*. But this scribe very frequently employs ‘i’ before ‘e’ as a height diacritic to differentiate [e:] from [ɛ:], hence *hie* and the single occurrence of *ȝie* (with the earlier changes described in Section 5.1). This diacritic usage is most commonly found in the SE Midlands (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((IAHD))).

5.3.3. [ʃo:] type

The [ʃo:] type is represented in LAEME CTT by seven texts all localised in the North or NE Midlands.²⁴ Because very few northern or northerly texts survive from before 1300, the representation and geographical configuration

²³ See LAEME, Maps, no. 00062527 SHE: *ȝie* and *ȝie*.

²⁴ See Map 3: LAEME, Maps, no. 00062521 SHE: ‘sho’ type, incl *sco*.



Map 3. SHE: 'sho' type, incl *sco*

of the [fo:] type is therefore provided by texts that are late in the early ME period. They are: *cotvespcmat.tag* (West Riding of Yorks, C14, *sco* 25×, *scho* 9×); *dulwicht.tag* (S Lincs, c.1300, *sco* 10×, *scho* 9× beside *scha* 1×²⁵); *edincmat.tag* (East Riding of Yorks, C14a, *sco* 20×, *scho* 2×); *edincmbt.tag* (North Riding of Yorks, C14a, *scho* 95×, *sco* 4×, *sho* 1×); *edincmct.tag* (City of York, C14a, *sco* 44×); *havelokt.tag* (W Norfolk, C14a1, *sho* 21×, *scho* 1× beside *she* 46×, *sche* 1×,²⁶ *he* 1×²⁷) and *merton248t.tag* (NW Lincs, C14a2, *sho* 7×).

²⁵ See further under Appendix 2 no. 1.

²⁶ See further under Section 5.3.4.

²⁷ See further under Appendix 1 no. 2.

The *sco* spelling retains the OE representation of [ʃ], albeit in a new ME context. The other representations of the initial consonant are therefore the result of another orthographic remapping, that of OE palatal *sc*. The remapping consists of the use of ‘h’ as a fricative marker, probably modelled on the parallel adoption of *ch* for [tʃ] following OF orthographic practice. The result in ME is most commonly *sch* or *sh*, as in the SHE examples above (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((ORPSC))).

5.3.4. [ʃe:] type

In early ME, the [ʃe:] type seems to be less common than the [ʃo:] type and is confined to a smaller area in the NE Midlands, contiguous to, and at the south end of, the [ʃo:] area.²⁸ It is represented in LAEME CTT by *che*, *sche*, *se*, *she* and probably *sge* (see below). For *scæ*, which also belongs to this set, see below under Section 6.

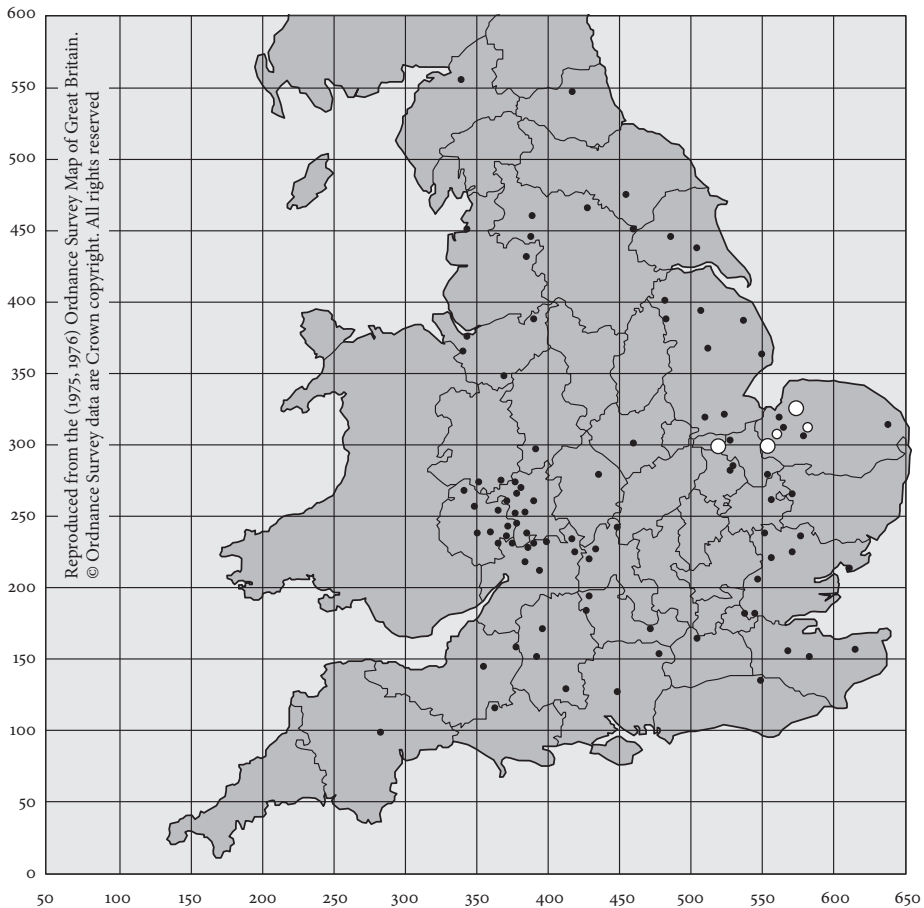
The texts showing the [ʃe:] type are: *buryFft.tag* (W Norfolk, C13b2, *sche* 1×); *genexodt.tag* (W Norfolk, C14a1, *sge* 2×, *che* 1×, *sche* 1×, *she* 1×, beside spellings of the [çe:] type for which see Section 5.3.2); *havelokt.tag* (W Norfolk, C14a1, *she* 46×, *sche* 1× beside *sho* 21×, *scho* 1× and *he* 1×) and *trinleoDt.tag* (W Norfolk, C13b1, *sche* 7×, *se* 1×).

As with *scho* and *sho* in Section 5.3.3, *sche* and *she* spellings may be accounted for via ((ORPSC)). In Norfolk especially, single ‘s’ is also found in early ME as one of the possible realisations of [ʃ]. In *bestiaryt.tag* and *genexodt.tag*, almost all the reflexes of OE *sc* are spelled *s* with only occasional *s(c)h*. It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that for SHE neither of these texts has any examples of the form *se*. Its presence in neighbouring *trinleoDt.tag*, however, is no surprise since this text shows a wide range of spellings for historical [ʃ], whether initial, medial or final: *ch*, *s*, *sc*, *sch* and *ss* (the last in medial position only).

The other two spellings represented above, *che* and *sge*, are both from *genexodt.tag*. The single occurrence of *che* would seem to be either an error for *sche*, or a unique example in this text of palatal hardening of [ʃ] to [tʃ] (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((PH))). There are no other examples of palatal hardening in this text, but there is evidence in later ME of *che* spellings for SHE in Norfolk,²⁹ so this could be an early manifestation of a real sound change.

²⁸ See Map 4: LAEME, Maps, no. 00062522 SHE: ‘she’ type, incl rare *scæ*, *se* and *sge*.

²⁹ See eLALME, Dot Maps, Item 4, SHE: spellings with initial *ch*.



Map 4. SHE: 'she' type, incl rare *scaē*, *se* and *sge*

The two examples of *sge* in *genexodt.tag* are oddities. The majority of forms for SHE in this text imply [çe:] (see Section 5.3.2), with both *ghe*, and *ge* spellings. But two tokens, *sche* and *she*, clearly imply [ʃe:]. The form *sge* we take to be a portmanteau form for [ʃe:], with 's' indicating sibilance and 'g' indicating palatality. There are no other occurrences of *sg-* in this text.

5.3.5. Time and space: the distribution of [fo:] and [ʃe:] types in ME

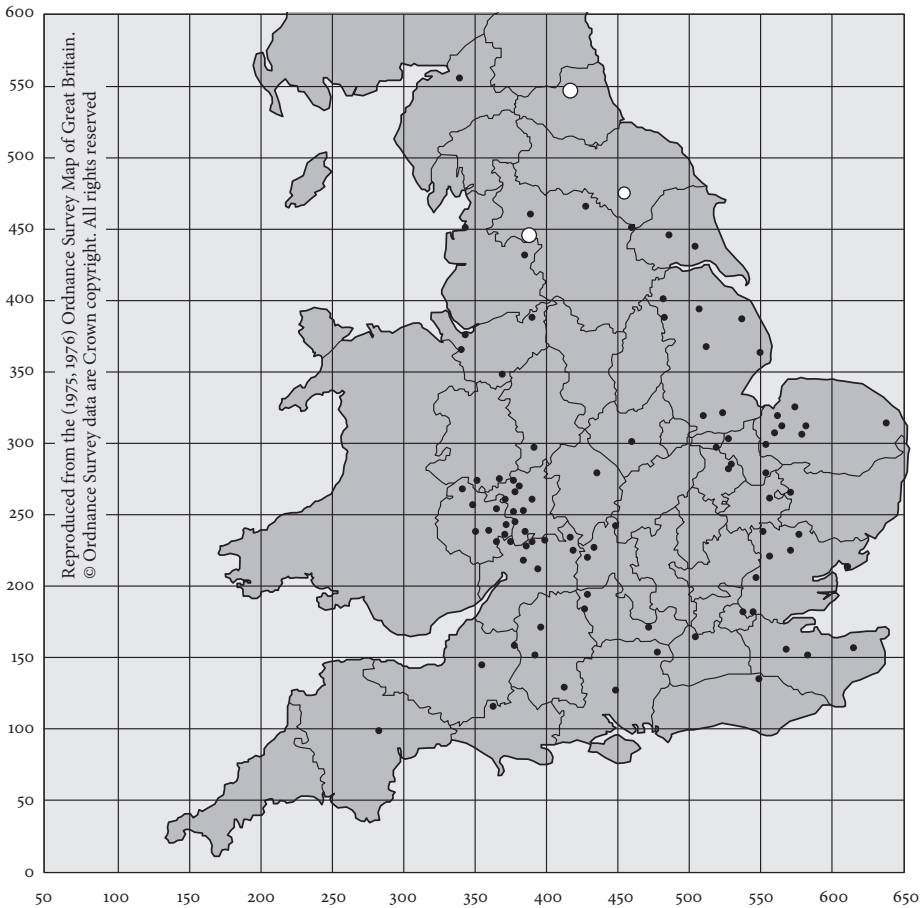
As we indicated in Section 4.2.3, the development of OE *ēode* WENT in late Old English and in Middle English provides a very useful parallel to the

development of ME [ʃo:] and [ʃe:]. Reflexes of *ēode* are well attested up to the end of the Middle English period. Old English *geo-* spellings subsequently give rise to forms showing the effects of ((EOM)) whether to initial [jo:] or [je:] or intermediate [jø:]. In mid C11 we already find *gode* (implying post ((EOM)) [jo:d]-) in the gloss to the Benedictine Rule in British Library, Cotton Tiberius A.iii. By early C12 we find the following spellings in the Peterborough Chronicle: First Continuation *iedon*, *geden* (both 3pl) and by mid C12 in the Second Continuation (petchront.tag), *gæde* and *iæde* (3sg) and *ieden* (3pl), all implying post ((EOM)) [je:d]-.³⁰

The distribution of [ʃo:] for *shē* in the North and NE Midlands is perhaps surprising, because the result of ((EOM)) in these areas would normally be [e:] rather than [o:], which was normally mainly confined to the South West and (S)W Midlands. But the combined occurrence of ((YE)) and ((EOM)) seems to have led to differing outcomes with a near complementary distribution to the expected regional pattern. The early ME reflexes of OE *ēode* went (also with ((YE)) and ((EOM))) show a similar distribution to those of *sho*, *she*, the *yode* type being found in the North and the *yede* type elsewhere as well as showing some spread to the North. The reflexes of second-person plural object and genitive pronouns *you* and *your* (< OE *ēow* and *ēower*) have the added complication of influence of the following [w], but again *you(-)*, *yow(-)*, *zou(-)* and *zow(-)* types predominate everywhere except the South East where *geu(-)* and *gew(-)* types may be found.³¹

³⁰ *petchront.t.tag* also has the very first attestation (ca 1155) of a spelling for *shē* implying [ʃe:], for which see further Section 6.

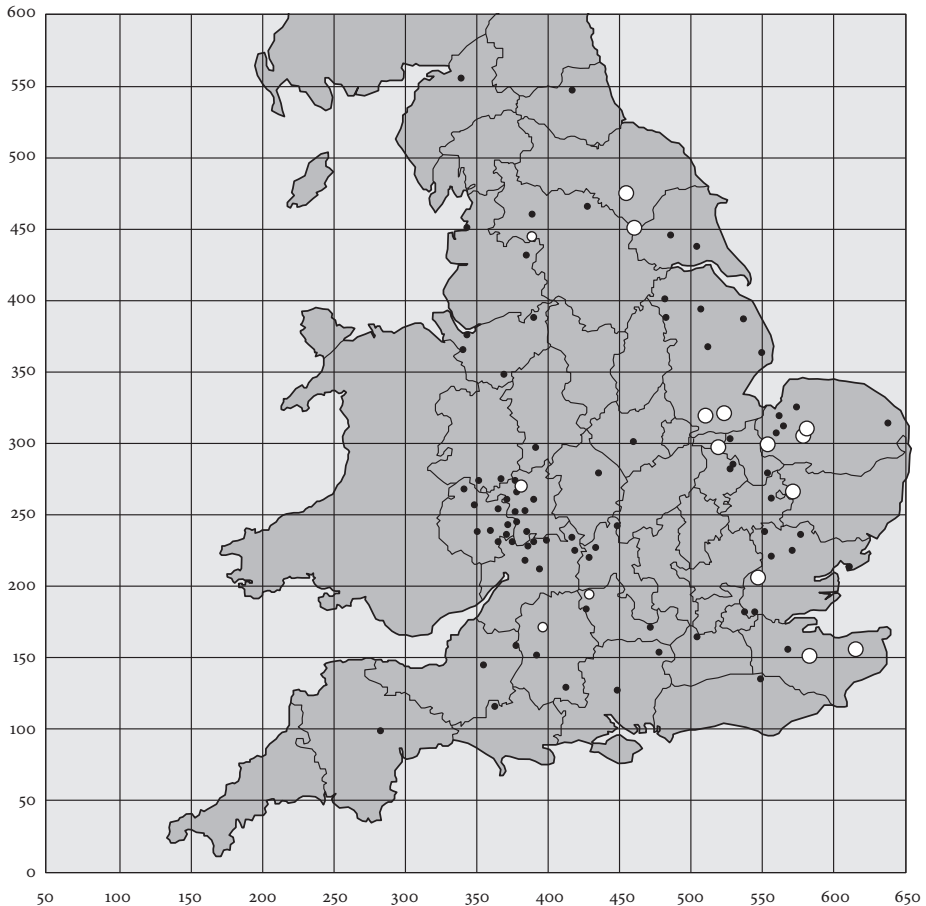
³¹ For evidence from the LAEME CTT, see item \$e:ode/vpt where the following yod-ful spellings are recorded: 1SG: *yede*, *yod*, *zeode*; 3SG: *gede*, *gide*, *giede*, *gæde*, *iæde*, *yed*, *yede*, *yod*, *yode*, *zede*, *ziede*, *zied*, *zede*, *zeide*, *zeode*, *zet*, *zode*; PL: *geden*, *giede*, *giode*, *ieden*, *yed*, *yede*, *yeden*, *yod*, *yode*, *geden*, *zeden*, *zeode*, *zeodem*, *zoden*, *zode*. For distributions see Maps 5 and 6: LAEME, Maps, no 16256303 WENT: 'yod(e)' type, all spellings with simple medial -o- incl *ʒ-* variants and no 16256302 WENT: 'yed(e)' type, all spellings with medial -e-, -ie- and -æ-, incl *ʒ-*, *ʒ-*, *g-* and *i-* variants. For evidence from LALME see eLALME, Itemlist, Item 282 and Dot Map WENT: 'yo(o)de' type (excl 'yiodē'), incl *yh/ʒ(h)-* variants and Dot Map WENT: 'ye(e)de' type, all forms with simple medial -e(e)-, incl *yh/ʒ(h)-* variants. For *you*(R), see LAEME, Maps, no. 00143212 *YOU* all object types: 'yew' type (*geu*, *gew*, *gep* and *geu*) and 00143301 *YOUR*: *geuer(e)*, *gewer(e)*, *geure* (data from one text only). Such spellings are very rare and sporadic in late ME. Compare also Maps 3 and 4 with eLALME, Dot Map *shē*: 'sho' type, incl *sco* and *s(s)o*; and Dot Map *shē*: 'she' type, incl *sce* and *se*.



Map 5. WENT: 'yod' type (excl. 'yiod-'), all spellings with simple medial -o- incl 3- variants

6. *scæ*

The earliest recorded example of the [ʃ] type for *shE* is that found in the Final Continuation of the Peterborough Chronicle, written ca 1155 (petchront. tag). In the annals for 1140–1153, which deal with the complex power struggle between King Stephen and Empress Matilda, the feminine personal subject pronoun occurs six times, always as *scæ*. Continuation of the OE spelling *sc-* for historical [ʃ] (i.e. all reflexes of WGmc *sk) is exceptionless in this text language. So *sc-* in *scæ* can be safely taken to represent this new [ʃ] from



Map 6. WENT: 'yed(e)' type, all spellings with medial *-e-*, *-ie-* and *-æ-*, incl *ȝ-*, *ȝ-*, and *i-* variants

((PF)) of earlier [ç]. The aesc spelling for [e:] might seem problematic. But Peterborough early ME may be taken to represent a descendant of Angl in which Anglian \bar{a}^1 Raising had taken place; i.e. [æ:] arising from the fronting of WGmc * \bar{a} : > [e:]. Moreover, in late OE and very early ME, in all dialects except Kt, Long ae-Raising occurred; i.e. [æ:] from whatever source³² raised to [ɛ:] (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((AAEIR)) and ((LAER))).

³² That is, \bar{a}^1 , from the fronting of WGmc [* \bar{a} :] (WS only); \bar{a}^2 , which is the reflex of the i-umlaut of PrOE * \bar{a} : < Gmc * $\bar{a}i$ (WS and Angl); and [æ:] resulting from the monophthongisation of $\bar{e}a$ [æa] (WS and Angl).

These changes allow ‘æ’ to become a floating *littera*, employable for a number of functions. In petchrontag *æ* alternates with *e* for reflexes of OE *æ*, *e*, *ea* and *eo* whether long or short (either stressed or unstressed). For [e:] specifically, note the forms *cæse* CHEESE (< OE (Angl) *cēse*) and *dær* DEER, ANIMAL (< OE *dēor*) showing ((EOM)). Of particular interest also are the forms *gæde*, *iæde* WENT (< OE *ēode*) (beside plural *ieden*), which show ((YE)) parallel to that proposed for [ʃe:] < [çe:] < [hje:], but in a vowel-initial *ēo* word where there was no ‘h’ to trigger ((FA)).

7. Conclusions

(a) For the history of *she*, we posit an approximant epenthesis of a type already found in OE, spreading to further items in ME, and occurring in all periods of Scots as well as PDE. This turns the word-onset into a consonant cluster with its own history, independent of that of the nuclear vowel (though it seems primarily to occur before certain nuclear types).

(b) The nuclear vowel derives in the normal way from OE [eo], with no need for ‘resyllabification’ or the creation of ‘rising diphthongs’.

(c) This account allows an etymology with no interim generation of trimoric nuclei, or the problem of maintaining vowel length when the first element of the nucleus is the first vowel of the diphthong that constitutes it. It therefore allows for the unproblematic derivation of both [ʃe:] (required for PDE [ʃi:]) and [ʃo:] (required for some regional types such as [ʃu:]).

(d) We claim that the so-called ‘*she* problem’ has been a problem mainly because of a misconception of the kind of etymology it is. The literature (and this is true even of Britton’s account, which is clearly the best) founders on the failure to separate the development of the word-onset and the development of the nuclear vowel.

The mistake has been the attempt to combine a vocalic story and a consonantal story and at the same time make phonological sense. We suggest that in this case it cannot be done, and that by separating the two stories we arrive at a clean and linguistically justifiable narrative.

Appendix 1: ME types retaining OE *h-*

Such spellings for SHE are still by far the majority in early ME.³³ The history of these forms is not the main focus of this article, but for completeness' sake we give a brief account of the main types as represented in LAEME CTT by the *h-* forms listed in Section 5.2. Each of the first three types takes as its starting point a different attested OE form as shown by the end points of Forks 1 (and 7), 4 and 6 in the OE etymology in Section 3.1.1. The fourth type is derived differently.

1. [hio] and [hi] types

These types are both Kt and are represented in texts in LAEME CTT by *hio* and *hi* themselves and by the reflexes *hy* and possibly *hye*.

hio survives as a single token in only one text: buryFft.tag (W Norfolk, C13b2, beside *heo* 14×, *he* 5× and *sche* 1×). It is surprising to find this originally Kt form so far North in East Anglia.

hi and its ME variant *hy* are found in the Kentish texts ayenbitet.tag (C14a2, *hi* 25× *hy* 12×) and in laud471kst.tag (C13b2, *hi* 2× beside *hye* 1×). When *hi* occurs in texts from other than the South East it is more likely to belong to the [hiy] type (see no. 3, below).

hye occurs only once in LAEME CTT, in laud471kst.tag. In the past it has been accounted for via so-called Kentish 'Diphthongisation'. We however think it is possible that this spelling may be a straightforward rendition of the [hje:] stage of development via ((EOM)) (see Section 4.3). For details of the complex developments of the reflexes of OE *īo/ēo* in Middle Kentish, see CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((KD)) and references there cited, including cross-references to other Kentish-specific changes. By early ME times 'y' normally stands not for [y(:)] but for [i(:)] or [j] (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((ORY))).

2. [heo] type

The OE [heo] type provides the starting point for all the ME reflexes dealt with in Sections 5.3.1–5.3.4. In addition, LAEME CTT shows a number of *h-* descendants: *he*, *ho*, *hoe*, *hoo*, and in (SE Midland texts only) *hie*. The form *heo* itself is represented by 970 tokens in 41 texts right across the

³³ Contrast LAEME, Maps, no. 00062518 SHE: spellings with initial *h-* and no. 00062517 SHE: spellings with initial *s-*.

southern half of the country, though it is of common occurrence only in those texts from the (S)W Midlands.³⁴

In LAEME CTT, the spelling *ho* is represented by 210 tokens across 15 texts, all of which are confined to the (S)W Midlands. The *he* form is less frequent but more widespread, being found in texts right across the southern half of the country but usually as a minority form in any text language. It is represented by 86 tokens across 23 texts. Both these forms may be explained via ((EOM)). So too can the form *hoe*, represented by 62 tokens across 7 texts, all from the SW Midlands, where *oe* may represent [ø:] via the monophthongisation version of ((EOM)) or [o:] via the merger version, in which case the final *-e* would be otiose.³⁵

The single example of *hoo* found in neroart.tag (W Worcs, C13a2) is almost certainly an error because it occurs in this text beside 111 tokens of *heo*. This scribe has no other evidence in his text language of the orthographic doubling of long vowels. Even in late ME the spelling *hoo* for *she* is vanishingly rare, occurring in *LALME* as a minor variant beside many others in only two Linguistic Profiles: LP 215 from Cheshire and LP 5040 from Devon. It is not until centuries later that the spelling *hoo* is commonly adopted to indicate the dialectal variant still found in North-Western and NW Midland English.

For the form *hie* occurring outside the SE Midlands, see no. 3, below. When this form occurs in texts belonging in the SE Midlands it is unlikely to derive from OE [hiy]. It likely to derive rather from OE [heo] via ((EOM)) to [he:] with 'i' being used as a height diacritic, an orthographic device that typically operates in the SE Midlands (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((IAHD))). This spelling is found in four relevant texts: trhomAt.tag (NW Essex, C12b2), trhomBt.tag (W Suffolk, C12b2) vvAt.tag and vvbt.tag (both SW Essex, C13a1) with 238 tokens of *hie* between them. In trhomAt.tag and especially trhomBt.tag *ie* beside *e* and *eo* is commonly

³⁴ The numbers in this section include examples of subject forms with the sense IT, indicating survival of grammatical gender. They do not include non-subject forms. Note that *héo*, showing an accent as diacritic, found once in lamhomAlt.tag (NW Worcs, C13a1) is not a subject form, but is used for direct object IT, referring to *elmasdele* ALMS(DEAL) (< OE *ælmes*(se)) and showing retention of grammatical gender. This form appears in the CoNE etymology of /PI3N~she because the etymology deals with all the reflexes of OE *hēo*, regardless of their function, as is the case with the forms discussed in fns. 35 and 36.

³⁵ Note that the one occurrence of *hoe* found in a South Eastern text, digpmt.tag (Kent, C13a1), is not a subject form, but is used for direct object IT, referring to *senne* SIN (< OE *synn*) and showing retention of grammatical gender.

used for reflexes of OE *ēo*. In *vvat.tag* and *vvbt.tag* *ie* is commonly used also for reflexes of OE *ē*.

3. [hiy] type (non-Kentish texts)

OE [hiy] has surviving reflexes in the SW Midlands in two texts in LAEME CTT: *fmcpmnt.tag* (Central Gloucs, C13b2-C14a1 *hie* 5×, beside *hi* 2×) and *tr323dt.tag* (*hie* 2× beside *hue* 7× (see below): *tr323dt.tag* also has *he* 11×, *heo* 3×, *ho* 2× (for which see no. 2, above)). As with the Kentish examples in 1. above, OE [hiy] gives rise to the form *hi* via the unrounding version of ((IES)). *hi* occurs twice in *fmcpmnt.tag* and once in each of *cotowlat.tag* (Central Worcs, C13b2) and *jes29t.tag* (E Herefords, C13b2).³⁶ In the *hie* examples we assume the final 'e' is otiose.

In LAEME CTT, the form *hue* is confined to seven occurrences, all in *tr323dt.tag* (SE Herefords, C13b1). In this text, the rounding version of *ie*-Split ((IES)) gives [hy:] (cf. Section 3.2.8). The next stage is an orthographic change, Western *y*-Respelling, where reflexes of OE [y(:)] come to be spelled with 'u' (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((WYR))). We assume the final 'e' is otiose, perhaps by analogy with *hie*.

4. [ha] type

This type does not originate in OE, and *ha*(-) forms for any personal pronoun in ME are anomalous. They are however very numerous in the (S)W Midlands, especially for SHE (including subject pronouns with the sense IT showing survival of grammatical gender). *ha* is represented in LAEME CTT by 627 tokens across 19 texts.

We assume ME 3 pl *ha*- forms are by analogy with the demonstratives, that is, *ha* by analogy with *þā*, *har(e)* by analogy with *þāra*, and *ham* by analogy with *þām*.³⁷ We further assume fem sg *ha* is via Personal Pronoun Merger of these analogised forms (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((PPPA)) and ((PPM))). *ha* is separate from the following verb in the vast majority of cases. Eight tokens of *ha* in three texts are joined to the following verb showing possible clitic formation. The same process, with Initial *h*-Dropping, accounts for the nine tokens of *a* for SHE across four texts in

³⁶ Note that *hí*, showing an accent as diacritic, found twice in *egpmnt.tag* (SW Worcs, C13a2-b1) is not a subject form, but is used for direct object IT, referring to *ehte* TREASURE (< OE *āht*) and to *brede* MEAT (< OE *brēde*) and showing retention of grammatical gender.

³⁷ For distributions, mainly in the west and/or south of the country in both early and late ME see LAEME, Maps, no. 00064127 THEIR: 'har' type, incl. *ar*, no. 00063934 THEM all object types: 'ham' type, incl *am* and enclitic *+am* and no. 00002332 THEY: *ha*; and see eLALME, Dot Maps Item 9 THEIR: *har(e)*, *ar*; Item 8 THEM: *ham(e)*, *am* and item 7 THEY: *ha* and *a*.

LAEME CTT: *iacobt.tag* (NE Gloucs, C13b1, -a 1×); *titusskt.tag* (mixed language, C13a2, a 1×); *tr323at.tag* (E Herefords, C13b1, a- 2×, a 1×); *tr323bt.tag* (E Herefords, C13b1, a 2×, -a 1×, a- 1×). The leading and trailing hyphens indicate respectively enclitics and proclitics (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((IHD)) and ((CF))).

Appendix 2: Three oddities – Litteral Substitution Sets again³⁸

1. *scha*

This form occurs only once in LAEME CTT in *dulwicht.tag* (ca 1300) beside 19 tokens of *sc(h)o* (see Section 5.3.3). This Lincs text is late in the early ME period and is on the borderline of the area where the southerly rounding and raising of OE [a:] > [ɔ:] occurred (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((ARR))). Sporadic apparent failure of ((ARR)) in this text gives rise to ‘a’ rather than ‘o’ in some items, e.g. *halewid* HALLOWED (< OE *hālgian*), *laue* REMNANT (< OE *lāf*). If it is not simply a mistake, it seems most likely that ‘a’ in *scha* is a litteral substitution of ‘a’ for ‘o’ (albeit representing [o:] not [ɔ:]) in a system where there is some uncertainty in the spellings of long ‘o’ and ‘a’.³⁹

2. *poē, pie*

These forms occur once each in *arundel248t.tag* (E Cambs, C13b2). This scribal system was the subject of a detailed study in Laing (2008). In this system:

There is interchange both between initial <h> and zero, suggesting loss of historical initial [h]. This interchange happens in all classes of the lexicon. There is also interchange between initial <h> and <þ>. This interchange happens mostly in the pronominal system where one would expect low stress. (Laing 2008: 32)

Examples of loss of initial ‘h’ are: *auest* HAST (2×); *im-self* HIMSELF; *auen* HAVE, with inverse spellings further suggesting that ‘h’ is a null character: *houet* OWETH; *hure* OUR; *hosket* ASKETH. Examples of the use of ‘þ’ for his-

³⁸ See further CoNE s.v. Special Codes and then ([LS]) and references there cited.

³⁹ OED3 s.v. *she*, *pron.1*, *n.*, and *adj.* under Forms γ, has a curious section, including the *dulwicht.tag* form, and amalgamating “ME *scha* [the *dulwicht.tag* form], ME *shae*; *Eng. regional* 18– *sha* (*north.*); *Sc.* 19– *shae*”. Given the difficulties in interpreting these rare, geographically and temporally isolated spellings, they would seem scarcely to form a group. Until C18, -a forms seem to be extremely rare. There are none at all amongst the 64 variants listed in *LALME*.

torical [h] and \emptyset are: *þe* HE (2×); *þauet* HAVETH; *þar-þan* ERETHAT. Note also *hin* THINE *hese* THIS and *hare* THERE. Laing explains (2008: 33) that if ‘h’ is a null character then its use ‘in contexts where one would expect [θ~ð] suggests that historical initial [θ~ð] may sometimes also be reduced to zero’.

These examples strongly suggest the operation of Theta Lenition in this system. As the [θ] value of ‘þ’ becomes lenited to [h], ‘þ’ can come to stand for historical [h] and thence (via Initial h-Dropping) even for zero (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((TL))). We therefore assume that both *þoe* and *þie* descend from OE [heo]. Both show litteral substitution of ‘þ’ for historical [h], which may or may not have completed the lenition sequence to zero. We assume the *oe* in *þoe* to be for [ø:] via the monophthongisation version of ((EOM)) or for [o:] via the merger version with otiose final *-e*. In *þie*, ((EOM)) has produced [he:] and the ‘i’ is a diacritic for height as is commonly found in SE Midland texts such as this, which also has *hier* 4× beside *her(e)* 4× for HERE (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((IAHD))).

3. *yo*

This occurs three times in clericot.tag (NW Lincs, ca 1300) in which <y> for historical [θ] is found also in *yai*, *yay* for THEY (beside *hay*). We assume that in these forms <y> represents [θ, ð] via the orthographic practice common in the North and North Midlands of using a <y>-like *figura* for both ‘y’ and ‘þ’ (see further CoNE s.v. The CC and then ((ORT))). This <y> for ‘þ’ is then associable also with [h] via Theta Lenition as follows: as the [θ] becomes lenited to [h], <y> can come also to stand for historical [h] by litteral substitution. This interchange of word-initial ‘h’ and ‘y’ for ‘þ’ is evident in this text also in *hyn* THINE vs *yi* THY.

This is a very short text of only 529 words. The scribe uses ‘y’ for [i(:)] as well as for [θ, ð] and [h]. There are no examples in the text of words with initial [j] so it is not certain whether or not ‘y’ would also function for that in his system. The scribe does not anywhere use ‘z’: his spellings for historical [ç, x] (only occurring before [t]) are *micht-*, *michc*, and *mithe* MIGHT (verb), *nayct* POSSESSIONS (< OE *æht*) *nicht* NIGHT, *nouct* NOT, *noth* NAUGHT (both < OE *nōht*), *sayct* ACCORDED (< OE *sehtan*). It seems very unlikely (though theoretically possible) that ‘y’ in *yo* could represent [ç] in this text although the entry in *OED3* may suggest it.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *OED3* s.v. *hoo*, *pron.* and *n.1* under Forms δ , has a section that includes the clericot.tag form, and amalgamates “eME *yio* (*Irish English*), eME *yo* (*north-east midl.*) [the clericot.tag form],

Abbreviations of OE texts cited

- Li = Lindisfarne Gospels
 Ru¹ = Rushworth Gospels (Merc portion)
 Ru² = Rushworth Gospels (Nth portion)
 VP = Vespasian Psalter

LAEME tagged texts cited

- adde6at.tag** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Additional E.6, Hand A: *The Sayings of St Bernard*
arundel248t.tag London, British Library, Arundel 248: religious verse and prose
ayenbitet.tag London, British Library, Arundel 57: *Ayenbyte of Inwyt*
bestiaryt.tag London, British Library, Arundel 292, fols. 4r–10v: *The Bestiary*
buryFft.tag Cambridge University Library Ff.II.33: Sacrist's Register of Bury St Edmunds
clericot.tag London, British Library, Additional 23986 (roll): *Interludium de Clerico et Puella*
corp145selt.tag Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 145: *South English Legendary*
cotowlat.tag London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A ix, part II: *Owl and the Nightingale*, language 1
cotvespcmat.tag London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A iii, Hand A: *Cursor Mundi*
digpmt.tag Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 4: *Poema Morale*
dulwicht.tag London, Dulwich College MS XXII: *La Estorie del Euangelie*
edincmat.tag Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, MS of *Cursor Mundi*, Hand A: *Cursor Mundi*
edincmbt.tag Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, MS of *Cursor Mundi*, Hand A: *Northern Homily Collection*
edincmct.tag Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, MS of *Cursor Mundi*, Hand C: *Cursor Mundi*

ME **3eo** (*south-west.*), ME **3heo** (*south-west. and south-west midl.*), ME **3ho**, ME **3o** (chiefly *south-west. and south-west midl.*), ME **3oe** (*south-west.*).¹⁷ The *yio* example is from Cambridge, University Library Gg.I.1 written in medieval Hiberno-English. Although the listed clericot.tag *yo* does *not* apparently belong in this set, it seems that *yio* plausibly does. Michael Benskin (pers. comm.) explains that the scribal system of Gg.I.1 has 'y' for 'þ' and also alternates this 'y' with 'th' for [θ, ð]. It therefore exhibits one-for-two and two-for-one substitutions. Anything (or any two things) that can represent more than one *potestas* can therefore substitute for others that also stand for those sounds. Here, 'y' can also represent [j] and [i] (which latter of course may also be represented by 'i'). '3' can also stand for [j] (as well as [ç, x]) so 'yi' in this word may be taken to be equivalent to '3' and *yio* thus marches with *3o* in other systems.

- egpmt.tag** London, British Library, Egerton 613, fols. 64r–70v: *Poema Morale*
- fmcgmt.tag** Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, McClean 123: *Poema Morale*
- genexodt.tag** Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 444: *Genesis and Exodus*
- havelokt.tag** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc 108: *Havelok*
- iacobt.tag** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 652: *Iacob and Iosep*
- jes29t.tag** Oxford, Jesus College 29, part II: includes *Owl and the Nightingale* and *Poema Morale*
- lamhomAlt.tag** London, Lambeth Palace Library 487: Lambeth Homilies, language 1
- laud471kst.tag** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc 471: *Kentish Sermons*
- layamonBOt.tag** London, British Library, Cotton Otho C xiii: *Lazamon's Brut* (Lazamon B)
- merton248t.tag** Oxford, Merton College 248, Hand C, fols. 166r–167r: lyrics and a sermon
- neroart.tag** London, British Library, Cotton Nero A xiv: *Ancrene Riwe*
- ormt.tag** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 1: *Ormulum*
- petchronr.tag** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc 636, fols. 88v–91v: Final Continuation of the Peterborough Chronicle
- titusskt.tag** London, British Library, Cotton Titus D xviii: *St Katherine*
- tr323at.tag** Cambridge, Trinity College B.14.39 (323), Hand A: *Old Testament History, Life of Christ* and lyrics
- tr323bt.tag** Cambridge, Trinity College B.14.39 (323), Hand B: *Life of St Margaret* and lyrics
- tr323dt.tag** Cambridge, Trinity College B.14.39 (323), Hand D: *Orison to Our Lady and Proverbs of Alfred*
- trhomAt.tag** Cambridge, Trinity College B.14.52 (335), Hand A: Trinity Homilies
- trhomBt.tag** Cambridge, Trinity College B.14.52 (335), Hand B: Trinity Homilies
- trinleoDt.tag** Cambridge, Trinity College 43 (B.1.45) and London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra C vi: the work of Hand D
- vvat.tag** London, British Library, Stowe 34, Hand A: *Vices and Virtues*
- vvbt.tag** London, British Library, Stowe 34, Hand B: *Vices and Virtues*

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