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Published in:

Transactions of the Philological Society

DOI:

[10.1111/1467-968X.12205](https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-968X.12205)

Publication date:

2021

Citation for published version (APA):

Sims-Williams, P. (2021). 'Dark' and 'Clear' Y in Medieval Welsh Orthography: Caligula versus Teilo. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1191, 9-47. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-968X.12205>

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'DARK' AND 'CLEAR' Y IN MEDIEVAL WELSH ORTHOGRAPHY:
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(Submitted: 26 May, 2020; Accepted: 20 January, 2021)

ABSTRACT

A famous exception to the 'phonetic spelling system' of Welsh is the use of <y> for both /ə/ and the retracted high vowel /i(:)/. This double use of <y> was almost universally adopted by c. 1330, when a grammarian labelled /ə/ and /i/ as 'dark y' and 'clear y' and illustrated them with polysyllables such as *ystyr* /'əstir/ 'meaning', in which the value of <y> was predictable from the position of <y> in the word. At that time the three-way system of <i> for /i(:)/, 'dark' <y>, and 'clear' <y> was two centuries old, being first attested in *Braint Teilo* ('The Privilege of St Teilo'), c. 1130. Yet the 'Teilo' system is rarely attested before c. 1300; instead all three phonemes might be represented by <i>, as commonly before 1100, or by <y>; or <e> might be used for /ə/ and/or for /i(:)/, as had sometimes occurred in Old Welsh as well. This article argues that one reason, apart from scribal conservatism, for the delay in adopting the 'Teilo' system was its failure to distinguish the value of <y> in proclitics such as *y* /ə/ 'the' and *y* /i/ 'his/her' and 'to'. For this the ultimately abortive 'Caligula' system (c. 1250) had offered a solution.

1. INTRODUCTION

Like many languages, Welsh has struggled with a shortage of letters in the Roman alphabet. For example, for the dental series /t d θ ð/ it now uses <t d th dd>, but <dd> for /ð/ only started to be used in the thirteenth century (Charles-Edwards & Russell 1994; Russell 1993; 1995; 1999; 2009; Charles-Edwards 2016), and for many centuries <dd> for /ð/ competed with the obviously ambiguous <d> and <t>, and sometimes with <z>, over- or under-dotted <d>, or even <dh>, a digraph lacking sanction from Latin usage, or with special symbols such as <q̄> (see Conclusion), <ð̄>, and <δ̄>. In handwriting, some people still prefer **ð** to **dd**, which was already condemned as cumbrous and un-Classical in the first book printed in Welsh (Prise 1546). As with many other languages (cf. Sims-Williams 1992), the desire for one symbol per sound conflicted with a conservative resistance to the invention of new letters.

The five- or, with *y*,¹ six-vowel system of Latin has presented even more of a challenge than the consonants, as for most of its life Welsh has needed to represent /a e i i o u ũ/, both long and short – and also schwa /ə/, which lies somewhat outside the quantity system (Iosad 2017b: 323). After various experiments, including differentiating **6** and **v** (two forms of the

¹ Latin <y>, in words of Greek origin like *syllaba*, was known to early Welsh scribes, as noted by Kitson (2003: 53, n. 17), although he himself favours Old English <y> as the source of Welsh <y>, like Charles-Edwards & Russell (1994: 422). The latter would certainly have been known in Wales; see LL 266 where Archbishop Cynesige of York (fl. 1056) is called *Cynisi*. This is by Hand B, identified as Bishop Urban (Gwrgan) of Llandaf (d. 1134) by Davies (1998: 5 n. 25).

letter *v*), the language has finally settled on <a e i y o w u> for the historic² /a e i i o u u/, with a sporadic use of the circumflex for vowels that are not predictably long. Whereas Irish and Scottish Gaelic have to make extensive use of diacritics to mark length,³ this is less necessary in Welsh on account of the ‘New Quantity System’ (common to Welsh, Cornish, and Breton, and usually dated *c.* 600 or shortly before). Under the New Quantity System old long vowels were shortened in certain types of syllables (e.g. before consonant clusters) and old short vowels were lengthened in others (e.g. before single consonants). Therefore medieval Welsh *trist* ‘sad’ and *hynn* ‘these’ had predictably short vowels and *mis* ‘month’ and *hyn* ‘older’ had predictably long ones (assuming *nn* and *n* were distinguished in writing).⁴

The spelling of the standard literary language is often described as ‘phonetic’, with the exception of the letter <y> (Morris-Jones 1913: 11. Cf. Jones 1988: 135). This exception looks problematic, and is certainly a stumbling-block for beginners, since it represents both /ə/ and /i/, as, for example, in *mynydd* /‘mənið/ ‘mountain’. Yet the current system, first glimpsed in *Braint Teilo* (‘The Privilege of St Teilo’) in the twelfth century (subsection 3.3 below), works well since the value of <y> is predictable: <y> normally means /i(:)/ in stressed *monosyllables* and /ə/ in unstressed ones, e.g. *cynt* /kint/ ‘sooner’ versus *y* /ə/ ‘the’, while <y> in *polysyllables* normally means /i/ in the unstressed final syllable and /ə/ in all other syllables, as in *mynydd* /‘mənið/.⁵ Occasional attempts to differentiate the two values of <y>, by writing *y* with two different shapes of tail, were therefore regarded as superfluous, even in their own day (Huws 2004; cf. Morris-Jones 1913: 14).

It was discovered in the Middle Ages that the three vowels /i i ə/ could be efficiently represented by only two symbols, <i> and <y>, provided that /i/ and /ə/ were the pair chosen to share a symbol. The modern choice, <y>, was already in use *c.* 1330 in NLW Peniarth MS 20, which is the first manuscript to state, in its Bardic Grammar, that the letter *y* has two pronunciations, ‘dark’ (i.e. /ə/) and ‘clear’ (i.e. /i/), with *ystyr* ‘meaning’ /‘əstir/ and *llythyr* ‘letters’ /‘lθθir/ given as examples.⁶ This solution to the shortage of letters in the Latin alphabet was found to have a lasting morphological advantage: the same letters appear, for example, in the stem of singular *mynydd* and plural *mynyddoedd* /mə‘nəðoið/, despite the phonetic contrast between /‘mənið/ in the first and /mə‘nəð-/ in the second. So too the plural *ystryon* ‘meanings’ (/əs‘tər-/) and singulative *llythyren* ‘letter’ /‘lθθər-/ have ‘dark’ <y>.

In Middle Welsh this double use of <y> presented two problems, which no longer exist in Modern Welsh. The first was that <y> was also used for the epenthetic vowel /ə/ which broke up various consonant groups, for example /d/ and /r/ in MW *mydyr* ‘metre’. At face value, this might look as if it should be pronounced **/‘mədɪr/, whereas in fact MW *mydyr* represented /‘mɪdər/, and was usually counted as a monosyllable in poetry. Naturally the authors of the Bardic Grammars were aware of this, and even give the spelling *mydr* (although even within the Grammars

² ‘Historic’ because /i/ and /u/ merged with each other as /i/ in Early Modern Welsh (Watkins 1961: 74–5, 82) and /i/ then merged with /i/ as /i/ in many dialects in which e.g. *bys* /bi:s/ ‘finger’ and *mis* /mi:s/ ‘month’ fell together so far as the vowel was concerned – but not before /mi:s/ had changed to /mi:f/ in some dialects, thus contrasting with /bi:s/ (ibid. p. 22). Despite these changes, historic /i i u/ are still differentiated in writing as <i y u>. See further Wmffre (2013) and Iosad (2017b). (/i/ and /u/ correspond to /i/ and /ü/ in the notation of Jackson 1953.)

³ Old Irish also had the problem of representing *seven* long vowels (see Sims-Williams 1992: 57–62).

⁴ Which rarely happened in medieval or later Welsh. There are further complications. Some dialects have lengthened the vowel of words like *trist* and Mod.W. orthography favours the spelling *hyn* for ‘these’, making it necessary to add a circumflex to *hyn* ‘older’ in order to differentiate it (cf. Sims-Williams 2016a: 149–50). Moreover, contractions such as *bâm* ‘I was’ < *bu-um* (m) and loanwords further disrupted the system; see Hamp (1956). On the ‘New Quantity System’ and its date see Morris-Jones (1913: 67); Lewis & Pedersen (1961: 84–5); Jackson (1953: 338–44, 696); Sims-Williams (1990: 250–60; 2016b: 212 n. 289); Iosad (2017b: 322).

⁵ This distribution looks odd to speakers of other languages, who do not expect schwa to occur outside unstressed syllables. Indeed, that was the situation in Primitive Welsh, when ‘mountain’ was /mə‘ni(:)ð/. By *c.* 900, however, the Old Welsh accent shift resulted in /‘mənið/, with a stressed schwa. For evidence of the date of the accent shift see Schrijver (1998/2000). In the dialects the value of <y> varies in words like *mynydd* and *pyesen* ‘pea’.

⁶ GP 39. (In Modern Welsh *llythyr* means ‘letter’ in the sense ‘epistle’ while *llythyren* means ‘letter of the alphabet’.) See Charles-Edwards & Russell (1994: 431); Charles-Edwards (2016: 151, 154).

themselves, *mydr* jostles with the older spelling *mydyr*.⁷ Modern Welsh orthography similarly ignores the epenthesis in spelling words like *mydr*. As well as clarifying the value of <y>, this system clarifies the morphology: the plural of *mydr* is dissyllabic *mydrau* as opposed to trisyllabic *ystyron*, plural of *ystyr*, where the second <y> is not epenthetic but an integral part of the stem. (The medieval spelling of epenthetic vowels will not be discussed further in this article, except incidentally; neither will the medieval spelling of yod as <i> or <y>.)

The second problem, which is not noted in the Bardic Grammars, is that <y> in fourteenth-century Middle Welsh meant /ə/ in most unstressed monosyllables (e.g. *y* 'the' and the preverbal particle *y*), but /i/ in the very common *y* 'to' and *y* 'his/her'.⁸ Hence *y vrenhines* was ambiguously 'the queen', 'to a queen', 'his queen', or even 'to his queen'. Furthermore, in conjugated prepositions like *y mi* /'imi/ 'to me' a <y> in a penult anomalously represented /i/ rather than /ə/ (contrast *yn y* /'əni/ 'until').⁹ In Modern Welsh this problem fortuitously disappeared owing the development of /i/ to /i/ in the relevant words; hence 'to' and 'to me' could be, and are, spelt *i* and *imi*, while *i* /i/ 'his/her' was differentiated orthographically from *i* /i/ 'to' by the adoption of the artificial Latinate spelling *ei* (cf. Latin *eius*) in the sixteenth century (Morris-Jones 1913: 7, 15, 30, 75; Jones 1988: 142; Sims-Williams 2016a: 150). For Middle Welsh scribes these developments were in the future. Some thirteenth-century scribes attempted to differentiate /ə/ (article and particle) from /i/ ('his/her' and 'to') by spelling them as <e> and <y> respectively (the 'Caligula' system: Section 8 below), and a similar distinction was sometimes made between *eny* /əni/ 'until' and *y my* /imi/ 'to me'.¹⁰ These, in themselves intelligent, solutions to a minor orthographical problem conflicted with what would be codified in the fourteenth century as 'dark' and 'clear' <y>.

This article aims to elucidate the prehistory of the fourteenth-century (and subsequent) system by which <i> denoted /i/ and <y> denoted both /i/ and /ə/. I shall argue that, elegant and efficient though that system has proved to be, its emergence was delayed by its inability, unlike the 'Caligula' system, to discriminate between proclitic *y* /i/ and proclitic *y* /ə/.

Section 2 discusses the spelling of /i/ and /ə/ in Old Welsh to c. 1100. Sections 3 and 4 cover the end of the Old Welsh period in the twelfth century, with particular attention in Section 3 to the Book of Llandaf (c. 1130). Sections 5 and 6 discuss the Black Book of Carmarthen (c. 1250) and present an overview of the competing systems in other thirteenth-century Middle Welsh manuscripts. Section 7 shows that /i/ and /i/ were increasingly differentiated in spelling in the late thirteenth century. Section 8 shows how the 'Caligula' system for spelling /ə/ was superseded by the 'Teilo' system in the same period. The concluding Section 9 discusses the emergence of an increasingly standardised orthography for /i i ə/ in the fourteenth century.

2. OLD WELSH TO c. 1100

2.1. 'Clear' y /i(:)/ in Old Welsh

A phonemic distinction between /i(:)/ and /i(:)/ arose in the sixth century with the above-mentioned New Quantity System. The New Quantity System did not succeed in blurring the old distinction

⁷ Charles-Edwards (2016: 152, 156). See the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century prose corpora *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* and *Rhyddiaith y 15g* s.vv. *mydr* and *mydyr*. Morris-Jones (1913: 15, 17) represents Middle Welsh epenthetic <y> by ♣ and adds a dot above *y* 'his, her, to'. On epenthesis see Hannahs (2009) and Iosad (2017a).

⁸ On the many words spelt *y*, *yd*, *yn*, *ym*, *yr*, *yt*, etc. see Sims-Williams (2015, 2018: 132–5). For the etymological justification for /i/ in Old Welsh *di*, MW *y*, 'to', see Schrijver (1995: 125).

⁹ In *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* there are 752 examples of *ym(m)i* and 65 of *ym(m)y* versus 181 of *imi*. Some of the latter are due to a general preference for <i> over <y> or to a tendency to regard them as interchangeable, as in the Black Book of Carmarthen, which has *imi* ~ *imy* ~ *y mi* (Jarman 1982: 151). Some may mean /imi/ (proved by rhyme in some Early Modern verse, Morris-Jones 1913: 407), perhaps due to vowel harmony. Vowel harmony in the reverse direction, resulting in /imi/, could be a factor behind /i/ > /i/ in the non-conjugated *y* > *i*.

¹⁰ Examples from ByB 87 and 111 (which always uses <y> for /i/).

between words with long and short /i/ because short /i/ had previously been retracted to [i̠]; thus the vowels of /mi:s/ ‘month’ (Mod.W. *mis*), with original /i:/, and /Li:s/ ‘court’ (> Mod.W. *llys* /ʔi:s/) < [Li:s] < /Li:s/ continued to contrast, though now by quality rather than by quantity.¹¹

Early written evidence for /i̠/ is scarce. Even if it were abundant, we might not expect to see [i̠] and [i:] being differentiated before the New Quantity System created a phonemic distinction between them. In a fifth-century inscription from Barmouth, the name MONEDO/RIGI (‘Mountain-King’), with <e> rather than <i>, perhaps shows that the /i̠/ stage of *mynydd* has already arrived, although Jackson attributes it to the confusion of <e> and <i> in Vulgar Latin spelling.¹² Clearer examples of <e> for /i̠(:)/ are CELEN = *Celyn* and TRICET = *trigyd* ‘remains’ on the Tywyn Stone (c. 800) and RES = *Rhys* on the Houelt Cross at Llantwit Major (mid to late ninth century).¹³ In manuscript Old Welsh of the ninth and tenth centuries the only potentially relevant examples of monophthongal <e> are *cet* (× 2) and *celmed* (= Mod.W. *cyd* ‘although’ and *celfydd* ‘skilful’) in the Cambridge Juvencus (Hand C, s. ix/x)¹⁴ and *cen* (= Mod.W. *cyn* ‘although’) in the Cambridge Computus (s. x¹), as opposed to hundreds of examples of <i> for /i̠(:)/.¹⁵ There must a question mark over *cet/cyd* and *cen/cyn*, however, since their etymology is unclear (Greene 1969; Schrijver 1997: 78).

Thus <i> was normally regarded as an appropriate way to spell /i̠(:)/ in early Old Welsh, with <e> as a rare alternative. The spelling <i> could well be a convention dating back to before the phonemicisation of [i̠]. An obvious synchronic reason for reluctance to use <e> was that <e> was also employed to represent both /ə/ (see 2.2 below) and /e(:)/, as in OW *cemecid* ‘lapidaria, mill-pick’ = Mod.W. *cyfegydd* /kəʔvegið/ (EGOW 25). If <e> were also used for /i̠/, the latter word would be written ***cemeced*, with three values for <e> in a single word.

Although <y> would have provided a useful graph for /i̠(:)/, it is not attested in early Old Welsh for the monophthong /i̠(:)/. It is used, however, to spell the diphthong /oi/ in the Cambridge Computus (EGOW 107 and 157), which has *loyr* ‘moon’ (Mod.W. *lloer*) and *hoys* beside *hois* ‘is’ (Mod.W. *oes*), contrasting with <e> for /i̠/ in *cen* (see above). Compare also *oyr* as a letter-name in the ninth-century ‘Alphabet of Nemnius’ (Kitson 2003: 53). <y> also appears for the /i̠/ of /ui/ in *amdifyys* ‘wonderful’ (Mod.W. *amdiffwys*) in the late-eleventh-century Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 199, beside <i> for /i̠/ in *amdinnit* ‘defends’ (Williams 1980: 184, 186).

That <y> was particularly favoured in diphthongs is suggested by numerous forms in the genealogical and historical texts in BL Harley 3859 (c. 1100), a manuscript which is believed to be a fairly accurate copy of an exemplar written at St Davids c. 954 (Guy 2015; cf. Phillimore 1888: 146–9): *Poyuis* AC 822, *Himeyt* AC 892, *Loyr* AC 895, *Amguoloyt* HG 1, *Himeyt* and *Tancoyslt* HG 2, *Nougoy* HG 2 and 15, *Cynloyp* HG 5, *Coyl* HG 9, 10, 11, and 19 (MS *Gyl*), *Blydiud* HG 17, *Brocmayl* HG 22 and 27, *Mormayl* HG 25, *Loyt coyt* HG 25, *Artgloys* and *Iusay* HG 26, *Atroys* × 2 HG 28, *Abloyc* HG 32, *Pensa uel coyt* and *Luit coyt* (in the catalogue of cities following HG 33), *Dinguoaroy* HB 63, *Lumonoy* HB 67, *Guoy* HB 70, *Guhyr*, and *Loyngarth* HB 71.¹⁶ The first of these, *Poyuis* (cf. *Pouis* AC 808 and 854, Mod.W.

¹¹ ‘L’ is the conventional symbol for the fortis /l/ that became /ʎ/ (Schrijver 1995: 459). The ancestor of Cornish and Breton developed similarly, except that it is supposed to have had a ‘lowered high-front vowel’ /i(:)/ rather than the ‘retracted’ /i̠(:)/. See Jackson (1967: 91). Jackson placed /i/ > /i̠/ in the first half (Jackson 1967: 91) or middle of the sixth century (Jackson 1953: 696), but the evidence is inevitably chronologically vague – for example, English *glen*, being borrowed from **glinn* (with sound-substitution on the Anglo-Saxon side), rather than from earlier **glinn*. See Jackson (1953: 283–7); Sims-Williams (1990: 240, 252–3); Coates (1986).

¹² *Corpus* III no. MR1; Jackson (1953: 191, 355).

¹³ *Corpus* III no. MR25 and *Corpus* I no. G63.

¹⁴ Compare Old Breton *celmed*.

¹⁵ Lewis (1961: 54–8, 648); cf. Lloyd-Jones (1931–63: 118–19); Jackson (1953: 283 n. 2); Watkins (1982: 33 n. 14). Significantly, there are no Old Welsh examples of <e> written for /i̠(:)/ (Lewis 1961: 41–7). For references to the Old Welsh forms prior to the Book of Llandaf that are cited below see EGOW.

¹⁶ Lewis (1961: 58, 73–4, 81, 85, 87, 648, 653). See also the collection in Baudiš (1924: 28–51).

Powys), if not corrupt for **Pouys*, may be an attempt to represent Jackson’s **Pöwuis* (with rounded schwa in the first syllable: Jackson 1953: 444). Leaving that aside, the *y* element in all these diphthongs, except in *Himeyt* (cf. *Hiemid AC* 903, *Himeid* 939, Mod.W. *Hyfaidd*), seems to represent the /i/ in /ai/, /ui/, and /oi/,¹⁷ the last two of which were often confused in spelling (e.g. *Loyt coyt HG* 25 = Mod.W. *Llwytgoed* /*l̥uitgoid*/ ‘Lichfield’).¹⁸ The use of <y> in diphthongs but not for the monophthong /i/ is striking, and can be compared with Scribes F and H of the Black Book of Chirk in north Wales (c. 1250), who prefer <y> in diphthongs,¹⁹ as does the scribe of *Cronica de Wallia* soon afterwards in the south (T. Jones 1946). This looks like a long-lasting scribal convention, whose transmission is (to us) subterranean, owing to the scarcity of manuscripts. Why did it arise? A possible explanation is the extreme ambiguity of OW <ui> (Mod.W. <wy>) which could represent the falling diphthong /ui/ or the rising diphthongs /wi(:)/, /wi(:)/, or /wə/. Even in later Welsh, /ui/ and /wi:/ in *gwyr* ‘knows’ and *gwyr* ‘men’ could not be distinguished without adding diacritics. Perhaps, then, spellings like *amdifuyys* were intended to show that the diphthong was /ui/ rather than /wi(:)/, /wi(:)/, or /wə/. The use of <y> in <uy> /ui/ could have spread to <oi>, which frequently alternates with <ui> (see n. 18), resulting in <oy>, as in *Loyt* (*HG* 25) and *Loyn* (*HB* 71) (cf. Mod.W. *llwyd* ‘grey’ and *llwyn* ‘grove’). Unfortunately, conclusive data is in short supply.

Only in twelfth-century Old Welsh, in the Book of Llandaf (LL) in the 1130s and BL Cotton Vespasian A.xiv (Vesp.) in the last third of the century, do we start to see <y> (beside <i>) used for the monophthong /i(:)/.²⁰ This may be a twelfth-century innovation. By contrast, <e> for /i(:)/ is virtually absent from both manuscripts; the only exceptions seem to be two examples of *het* (= Mod.W. *hyd* ‘until’) in LL 156 and 182, presumably copied mechanically without modernisation.²¹ But Old Welsh <e> for /i(:)/ did not really disappear: note WLEDER (= *Gwledyr*) in a mid-twelfth-century inscription at Llanfihangel-y-traethau, Meirionnydd (ECMW no. 281 and Sims-Williams 2003: 104) and spellings such as *ret* (= Mod.W. *rhyd* ‘ford’) and *Kener* (= *Cynyr*) in the late-twelfth-century Ystrad Marchell charters (see Section 4 below).

The problem of writing /i(:)/ was not solved by the introduction of <y> in the Book of Llandaf, because nearly all the texts in it which use <y> for /i(:)/ also use <y> for /i(:)/ (see Section 3 below).²² This rampant and ambiguous use of <y>, which is found again in the thirteenth century, must have made <e> look like a still useful alternative for /i(:)/ and may explain its continued use in the mid thirteenth century and to some extent later (see Section 6 below).

2.2. ‘Dark’ y /ə/ in Old Welsh (and before)

As shown by Jackson (1953), the first environment in which Welsh schwa arose must have been the one shared with Cornish and Breton, namely proclitics, such as Welsh *y* /ə/ ‘the’ <

¹⁷ Cf. Morris-Jones (1913: 31–2); Hamp (1956: 34); Watkins (1961: 76); Charles-Edwards (1978: 50, n. 17); Kitson (2003: 55–6).

¹⁸ Jackson (1953: 327, 332). On <oi> for /ui/ see Lewis (1967); Sims-Williams (1991: 51, 2018: 11); Schrijver (2007: 307–15); Band (2015); Russell (2017: 156). In *Cronica de Wallia* (ed. T. Jones 1946) variation such as *Degannuy* ~ *Degannoy* is frequent. This lies behind *Lloyd* as the anglicised form of *Llwyd*: Morgan & Morgan (1985: 151–4).

¹⁹ Russell (1995: 153–4, 155–6). Rare exceptions in Hand H are *keuarhuidyt*, *lety*, and *byt* (× 2) at the foot of p. 42 of Peniarth 29. Hand F quite often has monophthongal <y>, e.g. *ydau*, *y* ‘his’, *y* ‘to’ (× 3), *dyn* (× 5) (see Section 7 below), *gilyd*, and *myn* (p. 50).

²⁰ See Sections 3–4 below. The many Old Welsh examples of <i> for /i/ are listed by Lewis (1961: 54–8, 279–83). An example of <y> for /i/ in Vesp. is *Pistyl Catuc* (VSB 120 = Mod.W. *pistyll* ‘waterfall’).

²¹ Without mentioning the first example, Lewis (1961: 677) suggests that *het* was influenced by the synonymous *bet*.

²² The statement by Watkins (1961: 76) that LL uses <y> consistently for /i/ and /ə/ is incorrect. This is only true of *Braint Teilo* from which all his examples are taken (see subsection 3.3 below).

**sindos*, and a small number of compounding ‘prefixes’, such as the Welsh intensives *rhy-* /r^hə/ from **ro-* < **pro-* and *try-* /trə/ from **trē-*. Three instances of these ‘prefixes’ appear in names recorded in the Roman period: *Regulbium* (Reculver, Kent) < **Ro-gulbio-* ‘great beak/headland’, *Rerigonion* (Stanraer, Wigtonshire?) < **Ro-rīgonio-* ‘very royal’, and *Trisantonā* (the river Trent).²³ These spellings show Classical writers rising to the challenge of representing schwa by using <e> or <i>, strategies seen later in Old Welsh. On the basis of later reflexes, Jackson correctly deduced that there were two types of pretonic schwa in the Roman period, rounded and unrounded. He also maintained that the rounded schwa deriving from /o/ could be spelt <u>. While Jackson’s phonological argument is irrefutable, his only evidence for the <u> spelling was the name *Rutupiae* (Richborough, Kent), which he derived from **Ro-* plus an obscure element. This etymology has been generally rejected in favour of **rutu-* (Welsh *rhwd* ‘rust; mud’). The remaining evidence only shows Jackson’s rounded schwa being spelt <e> (*Regulbium* and *Rerigonion*) and his unrounded one being spelt <i> (*Trisantonā*).²⁴ Obviously, the material is too meagre for any definite conclusions about Romano-British spelling.

Leaving aside the above proclitics and ‘prefixes’, the main source of Welsh schwa was the general sixth-century pretonic reductions of /i/ (< /i/) to an unrounded schwa and /u/²⁵ to a rounded schwa, two schwas which merged with the earlier schwas in the proclitics and ‘prefixes’. According to Jackson (1953: 698), the unrounded and rounded schwas then merged as /ə/ ‘perhaps’ as late as the tenth to eleventh century. This late date should be pushed back, for his ‘late’ documents with <o> and <u>, suggesting unrounded schwa, are clearly copies of much older charters using the spelling conventions of Archaic Old Welsh (seventh and eighth centuries).²⁶

Throughout the Old Welsh period from c. 800 to c. 1100 the normal spelling of schwa was <i>, or less commonly <e>. Exceptions with <o> or <u> either have schwa in a labial environment, which may have preserved or induced rounding (e.g. OW *couer* ‘complete’ = Mod.W. *cywair* and *Houil* = Mod.W. *Hywel*), or are derived forms in which etymological spelling is likely, e.g. OW *iurgchell* (= Mod.W. *iyrchell* ‘female roe deer’ < *iwrch* ‘roebuck’), or *Durngueir* ‘Dorchester’ (cf. Mod.W. *dwrn*, *dyrn-* ‘fist’ < **durno-*).²⁷

Towards c. 1100, the usual representation of schwa is still <i>, or less commonly <e>. The form *Ricemarch* (= Mod.W. *Rhygyfarch*) in two manuscripts of the late-eleventh- and early-twelfth centuries, both probably from Llanbadarn Fawr, near Aberystwyth, exemplifies both spellings (Trinity College Dublin 50 and BL Cotton Faustina C.i),²⁸ and further examples of <i> for /ə/ in twelfth-century manuscripts, are *cispelt* (= Mod.W. *cysbell* ‘seemly’) in Faustina C.i and *cindraid* (= MW *kyntraeth* ‘neap tide’) and *riberthi* (= Mod.W. *rhyferthi* ‘flood tide’) in NLW Peniarth 540, probably also from Llanbadarn.²⁹

²³ The Old Welsh form *Trahannon* is attributed to vowel harmony: Jackson (1953: 665–6).

²⁴ Jackson (1953: 656–64; 1967: 145–54). See Sims-Williams 2006: 30 and 104. The late-fifth-century ROCATI inscription on the Isle of Man mentioned in Jackson (1953: 662) is very probably Irish and therefore irrelevant; cf. Ziegler (1994: 227), comparing Old Irish *Cenél Rochada*; Sims-Williams (2003: 54, 305). Gaulish examples of *Re-* < *Ro-* have been proposed, but none are conclusive. See Fleuriot (1981: 97–8); Lambert (2002: 204).

²⁵ Including /u/ raised from /o/ as in MONEDO/RIGI above. Jackson (1953: 696) dates the pretonic reductions to the second half of the sixth century.

²⁶ On the charters in the Book of Llandaf and *Vita Cadoci* see Sims-Williams (1991: 47; 2003: 285, 290); cf. Jackson (1953: 669–70, 678–9). The only relevant inscription with <u> or <o> later than the early tenth century that is listed in Sims-Williams (2003: 146–50, 231) is CONBELANI (eleventh-century, *Corpus I* no. G98), whose scribe, *Sciloc*, may be a conservative speller, possibly Cornish or Breton (Sims-Williams 2003: 273). *Rodarchus*, cited by Jackson (1953: 658, 668), is from Geoffrey of Monmouth, and may reflect an old source; cf. *Rodercus* in Adomnán’s *Life of Columba* (Anderson & Anderson 1991), I.15. Geoffrey may also have been familiar with the Old Breton name *Rodarch* (Jackson 1967: 148).

²⁷ Jackson (1953: 668–9). Jackson’s *Huwel* (LL 248) is thirteenth-century (Huws 2000: 143).

²⁸ Cf. *Ricemarchus* in Vesp. (VSB 169), referring to the same person.

²⁹ Lapidge (1973/4: 88, 92); Peden (1981: 22); Huws (2000: 119); Haycock (2015 no. 13.45 and n).

Spellings of /ə/ by <y> first occur in the late-eleventh-century Corpus Christi College Cambridge 199, again from Llanbadarn; this has the spelling *Rycymarch* and three examples of intensive *try*.³⁰ There are many more spellings of /ə/ by <y> in the Book of Llandaf (LL) in the 1130s, although <i> is much more common than <y> there (Lewis 1961: 681–2), with other vowels continuing to pop up in labial environments, as in *touyssocion* ‘princes’ (= Mod.W. *tywysogion*) in LL 120 (3.3 below).

2.3. Summary of the Old Welsh system before c. 1100

- /i(:)/ is represented by <i>.
- /i(:)/ is also represented by <i>, and occasionally by <e>, but <y> is not yet used for /i/, except in diphthongs.
- /ə/ is also represented by <i>, and occasionally by <e>; and <y> for /ə/ is starting to appear at the end of the eleventh century. Other spellings of /ə/, <o> or <u>, are due to (i) rounding in labial environments or (ii) etymological spelling.

3. THE BOOK OF LLANDAF (*LIBER LANDAVENSIS*, NLW MS 17110E)

The most extensive source for twelfth-century Old Welsh orthography is the Book of Llandaf (LL), written at Llandaf, near Cardiff, in the 1130s, followed by BL Cotton Vespasian A.xiv (Vesp.) written in the last third of the century, probably at Monmouth. These contain *inter alia* copies of pre-800 charters including witness lists with archaic spellings such as <u> and <o> for what was to become an unrounded schwa, e.g. *Cunhearn* and *Conuelin*.³¹ Even when such fossils are set aside, the two manuscripts present a confusing picture. Whilst mostly using <i> for /i(:)/, they often represent the monophthong /i(:)/ by <y>. Yet they often employ <y> for /i(:)/ as well, as if it were simply a variant form of <i> (Lewis 1961: 674, 677). Thus for Mod.W. *disgyn* ‘descends’ the Book of Llandaf has *discynn*, *dyscin*, *dyscynn* (LL 134–5), and *discinn* (LL 154–5). Similarly, /ə/ and /i/ are promiscuously represented by <i> and <y>, so that Mod.W. *mynydd* /‘mənið/ ‘mountain’ appears as: *mynid*, *minid*, *mynydd*, and (with lenition) *uinydd* (LL 42, 78, 134, 146). There are certainly examples here of the monophthong /i/ being represented by <y> – for the first time, so far as we know. But is it a useful innovation when <y> is also used for /i/, as in *dyscin*?

To make some sense of this confusion we have to recognise that LL (like Vesp.) is a compilation of texts with different orthographies. In the Book of Llandaf we can distinguish between (1) the witness lists of the charters, (2) the bounds of the charters, and (3) other material.

3.1. The witness lists of the Book of Llandaf charters

The witness lists are agreed to be the most archaic part of the charters.³² Names with <y> are very scarce, and are suspicious when they occur. For example, *Trycan* in charter 148 was

³⁰ Lapidge (1973/4: 86); Williams (1980: 182). On CCCC 199 see subsection 2.1 above. Lewis (1961: 71) also lists *Cynuit* from Asser’s *Life of Alfred* §54, but this place was in Devon and there is no contemporary manuscript of Asser.

³¹ See Sims-Williams (1991: 38–47), where <a> for schwa before nasals is also discussed, e.g. *Canguaret*. This <a> is found later (e.g. Russell 1995: 139–40, 149–50; Morgan & Morgan 1985, s.nn. *Cynddelw* and *Cynddylan*); cf. *amherawdyr* < *imperator* (Evans 1964: 2; cf. Sims-Williams 2013: 21–2). In Old Welsh note *an* /ən/ ‘our’ in *dam ancalaur* ‘round our cauldron’ and *dam anpatel* ‘round our bowl’ (Williams 1980: 90). In these particular two examples there may be a degree of assimilation, as also in the case of *Canan* (LL passim, cf. Mod.W. *Cynan*) and thirteenth-century forms such as *Kanan* and *Vachan* (cf. Mod.W. *Cynan* and *Fychan*) in *Cronica de Wallia* (T. Jones 1946: 41). The wider use of <a> needs further examination.

³² Davies (1980); Sims-Williams (1991; 2019: 32–43). Charters are numbered according to the now standard system of numbering charters in Davies (1979); it is based upon the page of LL on which a charter starts, subdivided a, b, or c where necessary.

noted as an interpolation by Wendy Davies (on non-orthographic grounds), and she was suspicious of charter 157, where *Trychan* again appears (Davies 1979: 82, 84, 99, 102). The same *Trican* witnesses the eighth-century charter 175, which is not a suspicious document, but a second copy of this charter (186b) preserves what must have been the older, unmetathesised form, *Turchan* < *twrch* ‘boar’ + *-an* (Davies 1980: 556; Sims-Williams 2011b: 171; 2019: 96–7). A few examples of <y> occur in some late-eleventh-century witness lists (e.g. charters 269 and 271), and while these spellings are not impossible at so late a date, the charters in question are under suspicion of forgery on non-orthographical grounds.³³

3.2. The bounds of the Book of Llandaf charters

Within the bounds a basic division can be made between what may be called ‘y-texts’ and ‘i-texts’. The bounds claimed for the Llandaf bishopric provide a good example, as they are included twice, once by the main scribe (Hand A) at LL 134–5, within the *Vita Oudocei*, and once within a bull of Pope Honorius (A.D. 1129) at LL 42–3, copied by the contemporary editor and corrector of LL (Hand B), who was possibly Bishop Urban of Llandaf (d. 1134).³⁴ See Table 1. The bounds are numbered as in Coe’s edition and translation.³⁵

Table 1. The bounds of the bishopric of Llandaf

42 Bull of Honorius, A.D. 1129 – Hand B	134ii <i>Vita Oudocei</i> – Hand A
Ab hostio <u>tyui</u> inmare. sursum usque iblain.	O aper <u>Tyui</u> <u>nyhyt</u> . <u>hyt</u> <u>aper</u> <u>pyscotvc</u> . <u>yntyui</u> . O <u>pyscotuc</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>teirguernen</u> <u>buell</u> . O <u>teirguernen</u> <u>buell</u> <u>y</u> <u>uynyd</u> <u>nyhyt</u> <u>dy</u> <u>castell</u> <u>teirtut</u> . idest cantref <u>bychan</u> . ha cantref <u>selif</u> . ha <u>buell</u> . O <u>castell</u> <u>teirtut</u> <u>iuynyd</u>
Deinde adpendouluin helic adblain huisc. admynid du. adblain turc. usque tauu sursum. usque cingleis. Deinde halunguernen. ad blain peurdin. deorsum. usque ned. sursum usque meldou.	<u>nyhyt</u> <u>dydouluy</u> n <u>helic</u> . O <u>douluy</u> n <u>helic</u> <u>y</u> <u>blayn</u> <u>uysc</u> . <u>hyt</u> <u>y</u> <u>mynyd</u> <u>du</u> . <u>Y</u> <u>mynyd</u> <u>du</u> <u>ny</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>blain</u> <u>turch</u> . <u>Turch</u> <u>nyhyt</u> <u>yguair</u> & <u>hyt</u> <u>Tauuy</u> . <u>Tauuy</u> <u>nyhyt</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>cingleis</u> . <u>Cingleis</u> <u>nyhyt</u> <u>bet</u> <u>yblayn</u> . O <u>blayn</u> <u>cycleis</u> <u>y</u> <u>all</u> <u>unguernenn</u> . O <u>all</u> <u>unguern</u> <u>nenn</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>blayn</u> <u>peurdin</u> . O <u>peurdin</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>pandiscynn</u> <u>yn</u> <u>ned</u> . <u>Ned</u> <u>iuynyd</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>melltou</u> . <u>Melltou</u> <u>ny</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>yynyd</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>hepstur</u> . <u>Hepstur</u> <u>y</u> <u>uynyd</u> <u>dygyragon</u> . <u>Gyragon</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>y</u> <u>blayn</u> . O <u>y</u> <u>blain</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>gauanhauc</u> . O <u>gauanau</u> c <u>bet</u> <u>deri</u> <u>emreis</u> . O <u>deri</u> <u>emreis</u> <u>ycecin</u> <u>clysty</u> . <u>Cecycin</u> ³⁶ <u>clysti</u> <u>nyhyt</u> <u>bet</u> <u>blain</u> <u>frut</u> <u>yguidon</u> . <u>aryhyt</u> <u>bet</u> <u>taf</u> <u>maur</u> . <u>Taf</u> <u>maur</u> <u>yguayret</u> <u>hyt</u> <u>cymer</u> . O <u>cymer</u> <u>iuynyd</u> <u>arhyt</u> <u>taf</u> <u>bechan</u> . <u>Taf</u> <u>bechan</u> <u>nyhyt</u> <u>bet</u> <u>ryt</u> <u>y</u> <u>cambrenn</u> .
adgauannauc ad deri emreis. ad cechenlisti. adblainfrutiguidon. usque tafmaur. usque ychimer.	

(continued)

³³ Maund (1991: 202–3). It is also likely that no. 253 (supposedly c. 1025), which has place-names with <y>, is a fake in its extant form: Davies (1979: 126); Maund (1991: 188–9).

³⁴ Davies (1998; 2003: 142); Huws (2000: 156).

³⁵ Coe (2001). His numbering is a modification of the system of numbering charters in Davies (1979) (see n. 32 above). His † denotes an obsolete place-name.

³⁶ *Cecycin* seems to be a hesitation between *cecyn* and *cecin* ‘back, ridge’, for which see GPC s.vv. *cegin*³, *ceginnderw*, *ceginwrych*, and *gorchegin*, LL 390–1, AMR s.v. **cegin**, CA 362–3, and Coe (2001: 148–51, 915). The etymology **Kakûd-sno-* given by Lloyd-Jones (1928: 96) implies a link with the reduplicated **ka-k(e)u-* supposed to underlie Latin *cacumen* and Sanskrit *kakûd-* ‘peak’ (cf. Pokorny 1959: 588–9, comparing Old Irish *cúar* ‘curved’ < **ku-kro-*). Hand B’s *cechen* is odd and perhaps just a mistake. Despite the form *cecn* at LL 268 (written *cecin* with deleting dots under and above the *i*), it is unlikely that B’s *cechen* has an epenthetic vowel; Lewis (1961: 319) has no examples from LL of <e> for the epenthetic vowel, though this is quite common in Vesp., e.g. VSB 98 *Catgualader* and 140 *Cheneder*. Moreover, Iolo Goch scans *kegin* as a dissyllable in *keginwrych* (R 1407.23 = Johnston 1988 no. XXIV.6). Judging by that spelling, and the spelling *cheginwrych* in the Peniarth 6, White Book, and Red Book versions of *Manawydan* (cf. Williams 1951: 55, 236–7, 306), the word is *cegin* with /j/, not /i/. In CA lines 1339–41 the compound *gorchegin* rhymes in *-in*.

Table 1. (continued)

42 Bull of Honorius, A.D. 1129 – Hand B	134ii <i>Vita Oudocei</i> – Hand A
Sursum riticambren. adhaldu.	Oryt y camprenn hyt hal du.
dinant cranfant.	Or hal du dyr hir cemyn.
arhit usque husc. trui huise dichilidris. diralt luit. dilech bichlit. i pinnmarch. diguornoid. diritnant. di hanner. dinmarchtan. dioligabr. dibronn cateir neueni. di licat guerinou. diguarthaf buch. dirmincul. dirpridell. di halruua. di main i bard. nant i bard nihit usque dour. ni hit usque guormui. ni hit usque hiblain. Deinde adcair rein adblain taratyr. <i>per longitudinem usque guy. et per longitudinem fluminis gui.</i> admare hafren.	dy nant cranfant hyt cranfell bet pandiscynn yn uysc. Truy uysc dycilydris. dyr all luyt. dy lech bychlyt dy cecyn y pennypyn march diguornoŷd dyrytnant. dy hanher din march lythan. dyol ygabr dy bron cateir neueni. dy latguerinou. dyguarthafbuch. dyr uyncl. dyr brydell. dy hal ruma. dy main ybard ynlycat nant y bard. nant ybard nihyt vrguayret hyt pandyscin yn dour. dour nyhyt y guairet hyt pandyscynn y guormuy. guormuy ny hyt iuynŷd hyt vblayn. O blayn guormuy dicayr rein. O cayr rein dyblayn taratyr. taratyr nyhyt youayret hyt pandiscynn yguy. Guy ny hyt. hyt pandiscynn ynn Hafren. Hafren nyhyt can ynys Echni bet aper Tyui.
deinde ad hostivm fluminis tywi ubi landauensis episcopatus parrochia incipit.	‘From the mouth of the Towy along as far as the mouth of the †Pyscotuc on the Towy. From the †Pyscotuc as far as †Teir Guernen Buell. From †Teir Guernen Buell upwards, along to †Castell Teir Tut (i.e. Cantref Bychan, Cantref Selyf, and Buellt). From †Castell Teir Tut upwards along to †Douluin Helic. From †Douluin Helic to the source of the Usk, as far as Fan Brycheiniog. Fan Brycheiniog along as far as the source of the Twrch. Along the Twrch downwards as far as the Tawe. Along the Tawe as far as the Cynlais. Along the Cynlais as far as its source. From the source of the Cynlais to †Hal Un Guernen. From †Hal Un Guernen as far as the source of the Pyrddin. From the Pyrddin until it falls into the Neath. Up [read “down”] the Neath as far as the Mellte. Along the Mellte upwards as far as the Hepste. Up the Hepste to the †Guyragon. The †Guyragon as far as its source. From its source as far as †Gauanhauc. From †Gauanhauc as far as †Deri Emreis. From †Deri Emreis to †Cecin Clysty. Along †Cecin Clysty as far as the source of †Frut i Guidon. Along it as far as the Taf Fawr. Down the Taf Fawr as far as [the] confluence. From [the] confluence upwards along the Taf Fechan. Along the Taf Fechan as far as †Rit i Cambren. From †Rit i Cambren as far as †Hal Du. From the †Hal Du to the †Hir Cemyn, to the stream Crawnnon, the length of the Caerfanell until it falls into the Usk. Across the Usk to †Cil Idris, to the †Alt Luit, to †Lech Bichlit, to the ridge at the end of the millstream, to †Guornoid, to the †Ritnant, to the middle of †Din March Lythan, to †Ol i Gabr, to the breast of †Cateir Neueni, to the source of the Grwyne, to the head of the Bwch, to the †Mincul, to the †Pridell, to †Hal Ruma, to †Main i Bard at the source of Nant-y-bar. Down along Nant-y-bar until it falls into the Dore. Down along the Dore until it falls into the Worm. Up along the Worm as far as its source. From the source of the Worm to †Cair Rein. From †Cair Rein to the source of the †Taratir. Down along the †Taratir until it falls into the Wye. Along the Wye until it falls into the Severn. Along the Severn, by †Ynys Echni, as far as the mouth of the Towy.’

There are 194 examples of *y* (versus 52 *i*) in Hand A's version of the bishopric bounds as opposed to only six of *y* (versus 77 *i*) in the slightly shorter version by Hand B which mostly avoids <y>. Hand B's exceptions are three *y* for /ə/ (*Tyui*, *Tywi*, *mynid* 'mountain' versus *Cingleis*, etc.), one *y* for /i/ (*y* | *chimer*³⁷ 'her confluence' versus '*ni hit* 'in her length', etc.), one *y* for /i/ in the diphthong /ui/ (*Guy* versus *Gui* and *Guormui*), and one *y* for the epenthetic vowel in *Taratyr*; it has nil *y* for /i/. By contrast, the Hand A version is profligate with <y>, but not systematic, with both *dyscin/dyscynn* and *discynn* 'descends', for example. Yet it does not use <y> in all circumstances; there are no examples of <ey> as against twelve of <ei>, where the second element of the diphthong may have been yod (cf. Morris-Jones 1913: 32).

Hand B was not necessarily responsible for the *y*-shy spelling of his version. After all, it came from a papal document whose source – supplied by Llandaf – was not necessarily written by Hand B himself.³⁸ Here the four other bounds copied by Hand B³⁹ are relevant. They show that he did not impose a personal preference for <y> or <i>:

77ii Finis territorii Lann Teiliau maur. **Y** finnaun ida. **ypenn y**glaspull. **artyui**. arpenn arall nir **hytyr** melin. Or **hytyr** melin hit **yn** euurdil. Euurdil nihit bet indubleis. Odugleis hit icimer. **Ycimer y**nniaun bet inant luit. Onant luit icec**yn** meryrc. O cecin meirch nihit bet icruc petill bechan. O dina hit irhebauc mein. Orhebauc mein **y**ndugleis bisgueiliauc. O dugleis bis gueiliauc bet nant ireilin. O nant ireilin bet ichruc cust. O cruc cust icruc corn cam. O dina bet imblain isceuliauc. isceuliauc nihit bet ar ueithini iniaun irhen alt. O dina icil ir adar ilicat tauern iniaun ibistill deui nihit bet igueithtineur. O gueithtineur dirgairt bet inletuer cell **artyui**.

(‘The boundary of the land of Llandeilo Fawr: From †Finnaun i Da at the end of the †Glaspull on the Towy, and the other end in the †Hytyr Melin. From the †Hytyr Melin as far as the Erddyl. Along the Erddyl as far as the Dulais. From the Dulais to the confluence. The confluence straight to Nant Llŵyd. From Nant Llŵyd to †Cecin Meirch. From †Cecin Meirch along as far as †Cruc Petill Bechan. From there to the †Hebaucmein. From the †Hebaucmein into †Dugleis Bisgueiliauc. From †Dugleis Bisgueiliauc as far as †Nant ir Eilin. From †Nant ir Eilin as far as †Cruc Cust. From †Cruc Cust to †Cruc Corncam. From there as far as the source of the †Isceuliauc. Along the †Isceuliauc as far as the Myddyfi. Right along to the †Hen Alt. From there to †Cil ir Adar, to †Licat Tauern, straight to †Pistill Deui, along as far as Dynevor Castle. From Dynevor Castle down as far as †Letuer Cell on the Towy.’)

Here the examples of *y* comprise nine for /ə/ (*y* | *glaspull* 'the green pool', *Tyui* × 2, *hytyr* 'cornland' × 2, *yn(n)* × 3, *Y* | *cimer* 'the confluence'), three for /i/ (*i* | *cecyn*, *hytyr* × 2), one for /i/ (*Y* 'From'),⁴⁰ and two for the epenthetic vowel in *Eurdil* and *?meryrc* 'horses').⁴¹ A broadly similar variant version of this boundary is found in Vesp. 58v, which is generally believed to be copied from a lost final draft of parts of LL, so the spelling in the above Hand B extract was presumably in his exemplar and does not necessarily reflect his own ideas about spelling. On 77ii see further Table 4 below.

³⁷ In '*y* | *chimer*' etc., | indicates a word separation not found in the MS.

³⁸ A papal bull of 1119, that of Calixtus (LL 89–92), makes generous use of <y> in its place-names.

³⁹ Davies (1998: 3–4). He adds 246 and 249a to the examples in Huws (2000: 142; cf. *ibid.* 156).

⁴⁰ *y* | *penn* is ambiguous (Coe 2001: 281–2).

⁴¹ Cf. MW *meirych* (see below). The Vesp. reading is identical (*meryrc*). The writer of the exemplar presumably intended to write *meryc* or *merych* (cf. *castell merych* in 74 (*castell meyrch* in the Vesp. 57v copy, but *castell meirch* in 171bi) but then started to confuse *meryc(h)* with *merych* or *meirch* (without epenthesis) and ended up writing *meryrc* with <r> twice. On <-rc> for /-rx/; see n. 48 below.

190b Fin imain brith dir claud. bet ipillou bichein. di dibleis. dirdrausguern. arihit bet y penniguern du diluch edilbiv arhit iclaud bet imor.

(‘The boundary: The †Main Brith, to the dyke, as far as the †Pillou Bichein, to the †Dibleis, to the †Drausguern. Along it as far as the end of the †Guern Du, to †Luch Edilbiu. Along the dyke as far as the sea.’)

Here there is only one example of *y*, for the preposition *y* /i/ ‘to’, although an *i*-shy scribe might have used it for /ə/ and /i/ in many other words in the passage.

246 Finis illius est. O ryt ycerr bet cecyn bet finnaun guaidan. or finnaun hit y cecgyn bet targuus. tru y targuus hit dou ceuiou ynntraus bet finnaun he collenn. ynn traus bet celli rudan hint. hieuen bet taruus. Otaruus bet tref gloyiud hit ieuEN bet minugui. *idest* teir eru iss rit deueit.

(‘Its boundary is: From †Ryt y Cerr as far as [the] ridge, as far as †Finnaun Guaidan. From the spring as far as the ridge, as far as the †Targuus. Through the †Targuus as far as the two joint-fields, across as far as †Finnaun he Collenn, across as far as †Celli Rudanhint. The †IeuEN as far as the †Targuus. From the †Targuus as far as †Tref Gloyiud, as far as the †IeuEN, as far as the Monnow (that is, the three acres below †Rit Deueit).’)

Here the examples of *y* comprise four for /ə/ (*y* | *cerr* ‘the carts’, *ycecgyn* ‘the ridge, *yn(n) × 2*), two for /i/ (*cecyn* / *cecgyn*), one for /i/ (*ryt* ‘ford’), and two for /i/ in the diphthongs of *tru**y* ‘through’ and *Gloyiud*.

249a Finis illius est. alata uia usque adcrucglas. & atref marchan usque adiguern.

(‘Its boundary is: From the broad road as far as †Cruc Glas. And from †Tref Marchan as far as the alder marsh.’)

Here *i* | *guern* has <i> for the definite article /ə/. Probably, then, Hand B did not favour a particular orthography; he simply happened to copy some *y*-texts and rather more *i*-texts, which are far more frequent than *y*-texts in LL as a whole. So the presence of two scribes does not explain the variation in orthography.

To put matters in context, Table 2 lists the occurrences of <i> and <y>, irrespective of their phonetic value, in the vernacular parts of all the LL boundary clauses.⁴² It will be seen that <y> is more common than <i> in only a few texts (the shaded ones): 134i, 134ii, 141, 144, 145, 146, and 200 (the last by a statistically insignificant margin). These *y*-texts do not seem to have much in common other than spelling. Those with witness lists belong to Wendy Davies’s Sequence ii (approximately eighth-century),⁴³ but few scholars would argue that their appended boundary clauses are as old as the charters and their witness lists; they have none of the archaic spellings that distinguish the latter.⁴⁴ Moreover, some of the texts attached to the *Vitae*, such as the bounds of the alleged bishopric (Table 1), can hardly have been composed before the late eleventh century. Nor do the *y*-texts point to an orthography limited to any particular region, even if they ultimately depended on local informants. The main impression is rather that the exemplar copied by Hand A had made a generous use of

⁴² Latin words and the headings (e.g. 147ii ‘Finis Riugraenauc’) are not counted.

⁴³ Davies (1979: 31–89). Cf. Sims-Williams (2019: 50–8, 179–82, and 47–8 on dating the bounds).

⁴⁴ See Coe (2004). He puts 144 in his Period I or III, and 145 and 146 in his Period IV. He regards <y> rather than <i> as a mark of the latest boundary clauses (p. 27). While this is plausible, given what we know about Old Welsh spelling, it may nevertheless be the case that some <y> spellings were changed to <i> in the *i*-texts.

Table 2. <i> and <y> in the LL bounds (V = Vesp.)

Boundary	Location	Sequence	Historic Shire	<i>	<y>
42 [= 134ii] Hand B	Bishopric of Llandaf	<i>Papal Bull</i>	-	77	6
69 [= V 56r]	Llandaf	<i>Vita</i>	Glamorgan	6	0
72b [= V 57r]	<i>Lann Cerniu</i>	i.5	Hereford	26 [25 V]	3
73a [= V 57r]	Llandinabo	i.6	Hereford	19 [20 V]	1 [0 V]
73b [= V 57v]	<i>Cum Barruc</i>	i.7	Hereford	1	0
74 [= V 57v] [= 171bi]	Llanfocha	iii.6	Monmouth	12	1
75 [= V 57v]	<i>Cil Hal</i>	i.1	Hereford	0	0
76a [= V 58r]	<i>Tir Conloc</i>	i.4	Hereford	3	1
77i [= V 58v]	Llanddowror	i.2	Carmarthen	38 [27 V]	0
77ii [= V 58v]	Llandeilo Fawr	i.2	Carmarthen	89 [88 V]	16 [6 V]
Hand B					
121	Llan-arth	i.10	Monmouth	13	1
122	Llandeilo Bertholau	i.11	Monmouth	63	0
123	Llandeilo Gresynni	<i>Vita</i>	Monmouth	35	2
124 [= 255]	<i>Lann Rath, Lann Cronnguern, & the 3 territories of Amroth</i>	<i>Vita</i>	Pembroke	1	0
125bi	<i>Tref Carn</i>	<i>Vita</i>	Pembroke	13	3
125bii	<i>Laihti Teliau</i>	<i>Vita</i>	Pembroke	6	0
125biii	<i>Menechi</i>	<i>Vita</i>	Pembroke	11	0
127a	<i>Cil Tutuc & Penn Clecir</i>	<i>Vita</i>	Pembroke	6	1
134i	Anergyng	<i>Vita</i>	Hereford	0	4
134ii [= 42]	Bishopric of Llandaf	<i>Vita</i>	-	52	194
140i	<i>Lann Gemei</i>	ii.2	Glamorgan	3	2
140ii	Llandeilo Tal-y-bont	ii.2	Glamorgan	32	23
141	Matharn	<i>Vita</i>	Monmouth	25	49
143	<i>Ecclesia Guruid</i>	ii.3	Monmouth	3	0
144	<i>Lann Cingualan</i>	ii.1	Glamorgan	4	7
145	Llandeilo Ferwallt / Bishopston	ii.17	Glamorgan	16	37
146	Llan-gors	ii.12	Brecon	19	32
147i	<i>Villa Gurberdh</i>	ii.4	Glamorgan	1	0
147ii	<i>Riu Graenauc</i>	ii.4	Glamorgan	0	0
148	<i>Villa Guilbiu</i>	ii.14	Glamorgan	1	1
154	Llandeilo'r-fân	ii.13	Brecon	102	0
155	<i>Lann Cincirill</i>	ii.6	Glamorgan	5	2
156	Llandogo	ii.18	Monmouth	24	2
157	St Lythans & <i>Guocob</i>	ii.11	Glamorgan	121	1
158	Cas-gwent/Chepstow	ii.30	Monmouth	23	4
159a	Llanerthill	<i>Vita</i>	Monmouth	37	1
159bi	<i>Lann Menechi</i>	ii.10	Glamorgan	6	0
159bii	[...] <i>nuc Bacan</i>	ii.10	Glamorgan	10	0
160	Llancillo	i.16	Hereford	30	0
162b [= 171bvi]	<i>Mafurn</i>	i.13	Hereford	1	0
164	<i>Lann Budgualan</i>	i.18	Hereford	2	1
165	St Kingsmark	i.19	Monmouth	28	2
167 [= 237b]	<i>Tref Ceriau</i>	(8c?)	Brecon	2	0
170	<i>Cum Mouric</i>	iii.1	Hereford	1	0
171bi [= 74]	Llanfocha/St Maughans	iii.5	Monmouth	12	0
171bii	Llanfable/Llanvapley	iii.5	Monmouth	10	0
171biii	<i>Lann Tipallai</i>	iii.5	Monmouth?	33	0
171biv	Llangunville	iii.5	Hereford	40	0
171bv	Llanddinol/Itton	iii.5	Monmouth	41	0
171bvi [= 162b]	<i>Mafurn</i>	iii.5	Hereford	1	0
173	Llan-gwm	iii.7	Monmouth	52	1
174a	Unnamed territory on the Gamber	iii.4	Hereford	1	1
174b	<i>Ecclesia Istrat Hafren</i> ≠ 229b	ii.21	Gloucester	4	0
176a	<i>Villa Conuc</i>	ii.22	Glamorgan	2	0
180b	<i>Lann Catgualtir</i>	ii.25	Monmouth	83	3
183a	<i>Lann Tidiuc</i>	ii.37	Monmouth	2	1

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Boundary	Location	Sequence	Historic Shire	<i>	<y>
183b	Cemais/Kemeys Inferior	ii.20	Monmouth	31	1
187	Llan-soe	ii.31	Monmouth	53	0
188b	Tyllgoed/Fairwater	ii.26	Glamorgan	2	0
190b Hand B	Maerun/Marshfield	ii.23	Monmouth	22	1
195 [= V 86r]	Clodock	ii.41	Hereford	107 [100 V]	4 [3 V]
197a [= V 85r]	<i>Lech Luit</i>	<i>Vita</i>	Hereford	7 [9 V]	1 [0 V]
199b[iii]	Trelleck Grange	iii.16	Monmouth	5	0
200	<i>Hen Lenhic</i>	ii.55	Hereford	0	1
201	Llanwarw/Wonastow	ii.50	Monmouth	38	0
202	<i>Villa Ellgnou</i>	ii.45	Glamorgan	3	0
204a	<i>Strat Elei</i>	ii.47	Glamorgan	4	0
206	<i>Lann Uuien</i>	ii.61	Monmouth	98	0
208	<i>Mathenni</i>	ii.64	Monmouth	34	0
209b	Tyndyrn/Tintern Parva	ii.58	Monmouth	25	3
210a	<i>Cair Riou</i>	ii.63	Monmouth	10	0
212	Merthyr Mawr	iii.9	Glamorgan	82	0
216b	Saint-y-nyll	iii.17	Glamorgan	16	0
218	<i>Lann Bedeui</i>	iii.39	Monmouth	50	0
223	<i>Villa Segan</i>	iii.36	Glamorgan	5	0
224	<i>Tref Ret</i>	iii.35	Glamorgan	6	0
225	<i>Merthir Iun et Aaron</i>	iii.12	Monmouth	48	0
227a	<i>Villa Eliau</i>	iii.11	Glamorgan	2	0
227b	Llanddingad/Dingestow	iii.19	Monmouth	67	0
228	Llanwytherin/ Llanvetherine	iii.21	Monmouth	71	1
229b	<i>Ystrat Hafren</i> ≠ 174b	iii.22	Gloucester	3	0
233	Llanfihangel Rogiet	iii.30	Monmouth	15	0
235b	<i>Castell Conscuit & Eccluis Sant Breit</i>	iii.27	Monmouth	28	0
237a	<i>Cair Birran</i>	iii.25	Glamorgan	4	0
237b [= 167]	<i>Tref Ceriau</i>	iii.34	Brecon	3	0
239	<i>Penn i Bei</i>	iii.33	Glamorgan	7	0
240i	Llan-llwydd	(10c)	Monmouth	37	1
240ii	Llanfaenor	(10c)	Monmouth	22	0
240iii	<i>Lann Guoronui</i> ≠ 246	(10c)	Monmouth	39	0
240iv	<i>Lann Tituil</i>	(10c)	Monmouth	28	1
240v	Llanfihangel Crucornau	(10c)	Monmouth	35	0
240vi	<i>Lann Mihacgel i Pull</i>	(10c)	Monmouth	18	0
240vii	Llanisien	(10c)	Monmouth	77	0
240viii	<i>Lann Guern Cinuc</i>	(10c)	Monmouth	103	1
244i	<i>Lann Mihacgel Lichrit</i>	iii.42	Monmouth	42	0
244ii	<i>Villa Stifilat</i>	iii.42	Monmouth	5	0
246	<i>Lann Guoronui</i> ≠ 240iii	iii.46	Monmouth	19	9
Hand B					
249a	<i>Villa Elcu</i>	iii.54	Glamorgan	1	0
Hand B					
249bi	<i>Villa Iunuhic</i>	iii.45	Monmouth	6	0
249bii	<i>Villa Iunuhic</i>	iii.45	Monmouth	21	0
251i	<i>Penn Celli Guenhuc</i>	iii.44	Monmouth	5	0
251ii	<i>Hen Lenic Cinauc</i>	iii.44	Monmouth	28	0
255 [= 124]	<i>Lann Rath, Lann Cronnguern, & the 3 territories of Amroth</i>	iii.51	Pembroke	1	0
255i	Cwm Nofydd	iii.51	Glamorgan	24	0
255ii	<i>Tref Eliau</i>	iii.51	Glamorgan	2	0
255iii	<i>Lann Tiuauc</i>	iii.51	Glamorgan	1	0
257i	<i>Riu Brein</i>	iii.50	Glamorgan	25	0
257ii	<i>Inis Peithan</i>	iii.50	Glamorgan	34	0
258	<i>Tref Ginhill</i>	iii.52	Glamorgan	2	0

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Boundary	Location	Sequence	Historic Shire	<i>	<y>
259	<i>Tref Gulich</i>	iii.55	Glamorgan	37	1
260	<i>Villa Fratrus</i>	(11c)	Glamorgan	42	1
261	<i>Henriiu</i>	iii.56	Monmouth	39	3
262	<i>Villa Crucou Morcan</i>	iii.47	Monmouth	52	0
263	Llansanffraid-ar-Elái / St Brides-super-Ely	iii.53	Glamorgan	5	0
264a	<i>Cecin Penn Ros</i>	iii.49	Monmouth	26	0
264b	<i>Cecin Penn i Celli</i>	iii.48	Monmouth	25	0
267	<i>Henriu Gunma</i>	iii.58	Glamorgan	79	0
271	<i>Tref Miluc</i>	iii.60	Glamorgan	80	1
274	<i>Villa Gunnuc</i>	iii.61	Monmouth	5	0
Total				3,059	433

<y> from 134i to 146, that is, in material appended to the *Vita Oudocei*.⁴⁵ Presumably the person who drafted the exemplar of this section had favoured the use of <y> and either preserved it when it appeared in his sources or introduced it when it did not (cf. n. 55 below).

Perhaps some Llandaf scribes thought that <y> was inappropriate in the context of a Latin charter whereas others were aware that <y> often appeared – especially in vernacular boundary clauses – in the Anglo-Saxon cartularies on which the Book of Llandaf was partly modelled (cf. Davies 2003: 98–108, 143–7; Sims-Williams 2019: 71).

A little more light on the scribal process is cast by the bounds of four charters which (like the bounds of the bishopric, Table 1) were copied twice in LL, possibly by mistake (Table 3).⁴⁶

These pairs of texts, all in Hand A, are quite similar, suggesting careful copying of their exemplars' orthography, at least so far as *i* is concerned. With the exception of 74, they need not be discussed further as they all avoid <y> entirely. In 74 *castell merych* ('castle of the horses') seems likely to be the original reading, with <y> for epenthetic schwa between /r/ and /x/ and the typically OW <e> for MW <ei>, modernised, in respect of the diphthong, to *meirch* in 171b and to *meyrch* in the Vesp. version of 74. This is not regarded as a normal environment for epenthesis in Modern Welsh – Hannahs (2009: 27) cites *iwrch* /jɨrɨx/ 'roebuck' as an example of a tolerated coda cluster – but the rules seem to have differed in the earlier language; note *iwrwch* in Llanrwst c. 1700 (Morris 1909–11: I 22). In Middle Welsh forms such as *meirych* and *merich* occur occasionally in a variety of manuscripts, as does *kylych* corresponding to Mod.W. *cylch* 'circuit' (Morris-Jones 1913: 17; Evans 1964: 12; Sims-Williams 2017: 91–3).

The *i*-texts in the parts of LL which only occasionally have <y> are listed in Table 4, where the phonetic values of their examples of <y> are noted (the sections of LL with the heaviest use of <y> are shaded in Table 4 and not discussed here). The first things to observe are that the *i*-texts make no use of <y> for yod, and no use of <y> for /i(:)/ (except in *hytyr* 'corn-land'

⁴⁵ Given the small numbers, it is hardly significant that 143 in this section has no examples of <y> versus three of <i>: 'Finis autem huius agri est. apalude nigro usque ad sedem cetjau. & ahescenn iudie usque ad arbores foton'. *Cetiau* (also mentioned in the *Vita Oudocei*, LL 132), is later *Ceidio* (Coe 2001: 779). Coe (2001: 370) takes *Iudie* as 'an error for *Iudic* (modern *Iddig*), or perhaps *Iudiu/Iudio* (a witness to charters 169b and 170)'. Even in the *y*-heavy 246 the element *iud* is not written with <y> in *Gloyiud* and no names in *Yud-* are listed in LL 406–7 (cf. Sims-Williams 1991: 79–86).

⁴⁶ On the doublets see Sims-Williams (2019: 93–103). Again I follow the edition and translation of Coe (2001).

Table 3. Bounds given twice by Hand A

<p>74 [= Vesp. 57v]⁴⁷ Finis istius podi est de fossa ad castell merych. exhinc tendit aduallem lembi usque aduallem cilcirch⁴⁸ recte tendit inlongitudinem uallis usque adbaudur. deinde inlongitudine uallis eclin⁴⁹ usque adcaput siluæ. deinde medium siluæ usque adcaput nan pedecon. & inhit dirtnou guinn usque aduadem rufum sata tinnu huc dirauallen hendreb iouoniū deinde exit adrubum saliculum & destendit inprimam fossam ubi inceptus est finis agri istius podij.</p>	<p>171bi Finis illius est. Incipit afossa usque ad castell meirch. Exhinc tendit ad uallem lembi usque ad uallem cilcirch. recte inlongitvdine uallis usque baudur. deinde in longitudine eilin usque ad caput siluæ. deinde permedium siluæ tendit usque adcaput nant pedecou. deinde dirtnouguinn usque adrufum uadam. [space] sata tinnu huc diraballen henntre iguonui deinde ad rubum desalicibus descendit inprimam fossam ubi inceptus finis est.</p>
<p>‘Its boundary is: From the ditch as far as †Castell Meirch. Thence it extends to †Vallis Lembi, as far as †Vallis Cilcirch. It runs straight the length of the valley as far as the †Baudur. Then the length of the valley of the †Eilin as far as the head of the wood. Then through the middle of the wood it extends, as far as the head of †Nant Pedecou. And right along to the †Tnou Guinn, as far as †Vadam Rufum. †Sata Tinnuhuc to the apple tree. †Henntre Biguonui. Then to the bramble bush. From the willows it extends to the original ditch where the boundary began.’</p>	
<p>124 Finis illorum o frut gurcant hit glann rath.</p>	<p>255 Finis illarum ofrut gurcant hitglan rath.</p>
<p>‘Their boundary: From †Frut Gurcant as far as the bank of the †Rath.’</p>	
<p>162b Finis illius est mafurn di guar alt rudlan [space] dour.</p>	<p>171bi Finis mafurn Diguarr alt rudlan [space] dour.</p>
<p>‘The boundary of †Mafurn: From on †Alt Rudlan [...] the Dore.’</p>	
<p>167 Finis illius est deuia magna quæ est ab austro per spineum rubum inde usque ad riululm taugel. qui est abaquilone. inde per riululm orientem uersus usque ad fontem ceneian. postea afonte ceneian persiccam uallem quæ ducit sursum usque ad predictam uiam magnam. iterum quæ est ab austro ubi inceptus.</p>	<p>237b Finis illius est deuia magna quæ est abauastro per spinium rubum. inde usque ad riululm taugel qui est abaquilone inde perriululm orientem uersus usque ad fontem cheneian. postea afonte cheneian per siccam uallem quæ ducit sursum usque ad predictam uiam magnam iterum quæ est abauastro.</p>
<p>‘Its boundary is: From the great road which is to the south through the thorny bramble bush, thence as far as Nant Tawel which is to the north, thence along the stream eastwards in the direction of †Fons Ceneian. Afterwards from †Fons Ceneian through †Sicca Vallis which leads upwards as far as the aforesaid great road again (which is to the south) where it began.’</p>	

in 77ii, a fairly y-heavy text, and *cecyn* passim), unlike the ‘y-texts’ (which have *hynyawn*⁵⁰ with yod in 141 and *dyscin(n)* ‘descends’ with /i/ in 134ii, for example).

It will be seen from Table 4 that while the *i*-texts generally avoid <y>, it appears in some often well-known proper names like the rivers *Guy*, *Gurmuy*, *Tywi*, *Taradyr*, *Amyr* (cf. LL 225 *Amir*), *Dyfleis*, *Euyrdil*, *Myngui*, *Yl(g)ui*, and *Epyrthun*,⁵¹ and also in some frequent proclitics like the definite article and various prepositions and particles, as in 140i *mallylduc* ‘as it leads’ (with the preverbal particle *y* /ə/). In 240i this is written *mali yduc*, as if the scribe was hesitating between <i> and <y>. *Ynys* /ənis/ ‘island, river-meadow’, frequent in place-

⁴⁷ Here is Vesp. 57v for comparison: ‘Finis istius podi <i. pagi> est de fossa ad castell merych. exhinc tendit ad uallem lembi usque aduallem cilcirch recte tendit in longitudinem uallis usque ad baudur. deinde in longitudinem uallis eclin usque ad caput siluæ. deinde medium siluæ. usque. ad caput nanpedecon. ⁊ inhit dirtnon guin usque ad uallem rufini sata tinnu huc dira uallem hendreb iouoniū deinde exiit ad rubum saliculum. ⁊ destendit in primam fossam; ubi inceptus est finis. podii’.

⁴⁸ The *h* is written above the *c* in LL and Vesp. has *cilcire*, perhaps the reading of the exemplar. For <rc> rather than <rhc> compare *meryrc* in 77ii (see above) and an eleventh-century inscription GURMARC (*Corpus* II no. P103; Sims-Williams 2003: 141). Such spellings occur much later, e.g. Peniarth 29 (s. xiii med.) p. 42: *meyrc* ‘horses’.

⁴⁹ *eclin* (also in Vesp.) seems to be an error for *eilin* (as in 171b); see Coe (2001: 259). Evans, LL p. 348, notes that the *e* in 74 is ‘not well formed. ?altered [late]r from *c*’. Perhaps the exemplar was hard to read here.

⁵⁰ i.e. *yn iawn* ‘directly’ (with GPC s.v. *iawn* and Coe 2001, passim), not *uniawn/union* as apparently assumed by Lewis (1961: 290–1).

⁵¹ The etymology of the last is uncertain (Thomas 1938: 298–9) so the value of its <y> is uncertain.

Table 4. Use of <y> in LL Bounds which have Few Examples of <y>

Bounds	<i>i</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>y = /i/</i>	<i>y = /i/</i>	<i>y = schwa</i>	<i>y = epenthetic schwa</i>
42 [= 134ii]	77	6		ylchimer 'her' Guy	Tyui mynid Tywi	Taratyr
72b [= V 57r]	26 [25 V]	3		dy 'to' [di V]	yrleguic ynlhiaun	
73a [= V 57r]	19 [20 V]	1 [0 V]		Guy [Gui V]		
74 [= V 57v] [= 171bi]	12	1				Merych [meyrch V; meirch 171bi]
76a [= V 58r]	3	1			ynlis stratdour [ynlis start dour V]	
77ii [= V 58v]	89 [88 V]	16 [6 V]	hytyr × 2 [hitir, thir V] cecyn ilcecyn [hi cecyn V]	y 'from'	ypenn 'in' yglaspull 'the' [e V] ar!Tyui × 2 ylcimer 'the' ynnliaun [inniaunt V] yn × 2 hytyr × 2 [hitir, thir V]	meryc euyrdil
121	13	1	irlcecyn			
123	35	2		nylhit 'its'	ynnliaun	
125bi	13	3		oluinyd yrlguairet	y 'the'	
127a	6	1		locnhty		
134i	0	4		Guy × 2 Gurmuy		Taratyr
134ii = 42	52	194				
140i	3	2			mallylduc (particle) betlylmor 'the'	
140ii	32	23				
141	25	49				
144	4	7				
145	16	37				
146	19	32				
148	1	1			Cynuetu	
155	5	2			Cynfall Trycan	
156	24	2			ad!Ylui ad!Trylec Ynis	
157	121	1				
158	23	4		Guy x4		
159a	37	1			Ylgui	
164	2	1		Guy		
165	28	2		Guy × 2		
173	52	1			yrllonnen 'the'	
174a	1	1				Amyr
180b	83	3	cecyn × 3			
183a	2	1		Guy		
183b	31	1		ny! [= dy 'to']		
190b	22	1		y 'to'		
195 [= V 86r]	107 [100 V]	4 [3 V]		ynys	ynys Mynui [Minui V] Mynugui [Mynigui V] [+ Mynigui V, Mynigui LL] Mynigui [Mynigui V]	
197a [= V 85r]	7 [9 V]	1 [0 V]				
200	0	1				
209b	25	3		Guy × 3		Amyr
228	71	1			Pull Lyfann	
240i	37	1			mali yduc (!)	

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

Bounds	<i>i</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>y</i> = /i/	<i>y</i> = /i/	<i>y</i> = <i>schwa</i>	<i>y</i> = <i>epenthetic schwa</i>
240iv	28	1	cecyn			
240viii	103	1	cecyn			
246	19	9	cecyn cecgyn	ryt truy Gloyiud	ryt ylcerr ‘the’ y cecgyn ‘the’ ynntraus ynn traus ynis Epyrthun ? y ‘the’ Dyfleis	
259	37	1				
260	42	1				
261	39	3	cecyn			
271	80	1	cecyn			

names, has <y> a few times, and this spelling seems to have affected the spelling of **yn Istrad Dour* ‘in Ystrad Dŵr’ which seems to be misunderstood in 76a as *ynis stratdour* and is further corrupted by Vesp. to *ynis start dour*. The *y* is surprisingly frequent in *cecyn* ‘ridge’ where it seems to represent /i/ (see n. 36 above), but this should be seen in proportion: it is a very common element, and is spelt *cecyn* much more often (see the following bounds, in some of which *cecyn* occurs multiple times: 77ii, 134ii, 145, 154, 173, 195, 206, 216b, 227b, 228, 240iii, 240vi, 264a, and 267).

The only environment in the LL bounds where there *may* be a consistent pattern is in auslaut:

- i. The diphthong /-ui/ is always -uy in the *y*-texts (*truy*, *Guy*, *Guormuy*/*Gourmuy*, *Tauuy*), but the *i*-texts also have *Guy* (42, 158, 164, 165, 183a, 209b) alongside *trui*, *Gui*, etc. Possibly this continues the Old Welsh custom of using <y> in diphthongs (see subsection 2.1. above). But perhaps the spelling of *Guy* (river Wye) with <y> was so well established (cf. *HB* 70 *Guoy*) that it was even used by scribes who elsewhere favoured <ui>.
- ii. Even in the *y*-texts (134ii, 140ii, 146), /-i/ is always <i> in *deri* ‘oaks’, *Inis Echni*, and the river-names *Camguili*, *Lyfni*, *Minchei*, and *Tyui*; even the last (the frequently mentioned river Tywi) is never spelt **Tyuy* or **Tiuy* in LL.⁵² Leaving aside proclitics such as *dy* ‘to’ and *y* ‘the’, the only examples of monophthongal -y in the boundaries are the obscure *lochnhty* in 127a (an *i*-text) and *Cecin Clysty* (~ *Clysti*) in 134ii (a *y*-text). Both could be compounds of *ty* /ti:/ ‘house’.⁵³ We may see here the beginnings of the distinction between <i> /i/ and <-y> /i/. This may be an illusion, however, because there are few occurrences of the non-proclitic monophthong /-i/.⁵⁴

3.3. Other material in the Book of Llandaf

Spellings with <y> occur sporadically in parts of LL which probably reached their current form at a late date. One of these is the tract *De Terra Ercyng* in Hand B (LL 275–80), which

⁵² For *Echni* and the river-names see Thomas (1938: 127, 147–8, 159, 171). *Minchei* (140ii), possibly a river-name, seems to be a scribal error for *Minechi*/*Mynechi* (Coe 2001: 69–70). I do not include *Cateir Neueni* (134ii) as it seems to be a misreading of *Neuein*. In the *i*-texts -i, never -y, is frequent in many other river-names as well.

⁵³ Coe (2001: 1047) suggests ‘boathouse’ (cf. GPC *llongdy*). *Clysty* is perhaps *glw(y)sty* ‘holy house, monastery’.

⁵⁴ *Tauu* (42, line 21) refers to the Tawy/Tawe (*Tauuy* elsewhere), but, as noted by Coe (2001: 803), it is a correction of *tyui* by a later scribe (cf. LL p. 346) who saw that *tyui* had been written by mistake under the influence of *tywi* (= *Tywi*) earlier in the same bounds at line 19.

probably dates from 1129 (Sims-Williams 2019: 19). Another comprises sections of the *Vita Teiliavi*, absent from the version in Vesp., which seem to have been inserted at Llandaf at a very late stage.⁵⁵ Similarly, the *Vita Clitauci* (LL 193–7) has spellings (*Myngui* and *Lybiau*) which are absent from the version in Vesp., 84v–86r, which was ‘compiled from preliminary notes’ to LL (Davies 2003: 124). Not enough vernacular appears in the above material for us to perceive its orthographical system. The position is quite different, however, with the extensive *Braint Teilo* (‘Privilege of St Teilo’). This is the last of three documents (two in Latin, one in Welsh) that were copied by Hand A no earlier than 1129 and were inserted on an additional leaf (fol. 63):⁵⁶

Lymma y cymreith ha bryein ecluys teliau o lanntaf arodes breenhined hinn ha touyssocion cymry yntrycyguidaul dy ecluys teliau hac dir escip oll gueti ef amcytarnedic⁵⁷ oaudurdaut papou rumein yholl cyfreith didi hac dy thir. hac di dair. ryd o popguasanaith breennin bydaul. heb mair. heb cyghellaur. heb cyhoith. dadlma ymeun gulat hac nydieithyr. heb luyd. heb gauayl. heb guylma ycyfreith idi ynholaul [*sic*]. o leityr o latrat. otreis. odyunnyorn ocynluyn hac o losc. oamryson canguayt ahebguyt. y diruy hay camcul yndi didi yn holaul. odorri naud ynn lann hac yndieythyr lann. orachot ynn luhyn hac yndieithyr luhyn. ocyrch ypopmynnyc artir teliau. hay guir. hay braut dy lytu yrecluys ygundy teliau ynnlantaf. hac ny lys. dufyr ha guell. hae choyt ha mays yncyfrytin dy lytu teliau. cyfnofut habathoriayth ynn lanntaf hac aperua ardir teliau dyr loggou adiscynno nythir ypopmynnyc yt uoy. ryd rac breennin aracpaup namyn dy teliau a dyeccluys lantam. ha dy escyp. harmefyl harsarhayt harcam. har ennuet agunech breennhin morcannhuc hay gur hay guas dy escop teliau hac dygur hac dy guas. dyuot breennhin morcannhuc ygundy teliau yn lanntaf. dygunethur guir ha cyfreith. hadiguadef braut diam y cam adiconher dyescop teliau ha dy gur ha dyguas. ythir hay dayr dy luyd. dy unner. digauayl. hapop cyfreith auo dy breennin morcannhuc yn lys. oubot oll ynholaul [*sic*] dyescop teliau ny lys yntou. haybot ynemelldicetic hac ynscumunetic yr neb atorro hac aydimanuo ybryeint hunn. hac ef hay plant guety ef. Hynn bendicetic hac ef hay plant ay enrydedocao ybreint hunn hac aycatvy AMEN

Remarkably, so far as the use of <i> for /i(:)/ and <y> for /i(:)/ and /ə/ is concerned, the ‘Teilo system’ of *Braint Teilo* confirms to the familiar fourteenth-century Middle Welsh and Modern Welsh usage,⁵⁸ with the exceptions marked in **bold**:

- i. *a | rodes breenhined hinn ha touyssocion Cymry* ‘which *these*(?) kings and the princes of Wales gave’ is grammatically odd as the definite article *y* is missing before *breenhined*. Possibly the scribe or a predecessor misread the passage and assumed it was *a | rodes breenhined ha touyssocion Cymry* ‘which the kings and the princes of Wales gave’, with regular omission of the article before nouns followed by a dependent genitive. This would be a reasonable assumption since ‘these’ makes no sense, in that no kings have been mentioned in the immediately preceding Latin document. It only makes sense as a

⁵⁵ See LL 115 (*Cynmur, Tyfhei*) and 118 (*Ynyr Guent*); cf. Doble (1971: 188–90, 193); Davies (2003: 118–19). The name of *Ynyr Guent* is carried over into a charter (121) attached to the *Vita Teiliavi*. In the same way names like *Cilcyuhynn* (140), *Dindyrn* (141), *Cyngualan* (144), and *Cynuetu* (147) appear in the charters immediately following the *Vita Oudocei*, charters which received extra editorial attention at a very late stage (cf. Sims-Williams 2019: 83–4).

⁵⁶ Davies (2003: 70). I quote the text from Russell (2016: 48–50), rather than LL 120–1, where some late medieval alterations are included. Russell and Davies (1975) both give complete translations, but the phrases relevant to this discussion are translated below.

⁵⁷ *amcytarnedic* may be an error for *amcatarnedic* (Russell 2016: 56), but compare *ymgydarnhau* < *ymgadarnhau* in Cardiff 1.362 (s. xiv med.), 104v.

⁵⁸ Compare the Middle Welsh and Modern Welsh versions of Strachan (1909: 222–4) and E. D. Jones (1946: 132–3).

translation of the Latin of the *first* of the documents on the inserted fol. 63: ‘Priuilegium . . . datum . . . a l regibus *istis* & principibus brittaniae’. There ‘those kings’ surely referred back to the list of ‘kings and princes’ which concluded fol. 62.⁵⁹ Presumably Hand A, or a predecessor, was puzzled by *hinn* and in his puzzlement failed to change it to *hynn* /hinn/.

- ii. We might expect *escyp* (as later in the text) rather than *escip* ‘bishops’ (MW *esgyb* /esgib/ < *episcopi*). The spelling may be due to the influence of Latin *episcopi*. Compare a rare Middle Welsh occurrence of *esgib* in BL Cotton Cleopatra B.v Part i (s. xiv¹), 84v.⁶⁰
- iii. We might expect *guety* (as later in the text) rather than *gueti* (cf. n. 91 below).
- iv. The preposition /ði/ ‘to’ is frequently spelt *di* (once *i-* in *idi* ‘to her’) although *dy* also occurs throughout.
- v. The spacing in *dy luyd. dy uuner. digauayl* suggests that the privative *di-* /di/ in **diluyd. *diuuner. digauayl* ‘exempt from hosting, exempt from taxation, exempt from distraint’ was at first misunderstood and treated as *di/dy* /ði/ ‘to’.
- vi. *yncyfrytin* (= Mod.W. *yn gyffredin* ‘generally’) looks like a mistaken ‘modernisation’ of *e* to *y* in an exemplar which often used <e> for /ə/ (Russell 2016: 56), although a genuine variant cannot be ruled out; compare MW *cyfrydec* < *cyfredeg* ‘running with’.⁶¹

Braint Teilo is remarkably consistent in reserving <i> for /i(:)/, despite minor inconsistencies, such as *hinn*, *escip* and *gueti* near the beginning, when the scribe or his source may have been getting into his stride.⁶² As a result the reader has a safe guide as to when to pronounce /i(:)/, /i(:)/, and /ə/; nothing so systematic is found before *Brut Dingestow* a century and a half later (see Section 8 below). Is it significant that there is evidence that *Braint Teilo* was read out from the Book of Llandaf in the later Middle Ages and was marked up then in order to avoid mispronunciations (Russell 2016: 53)? (These changes are omitted in the text quoted above.) *Braint Teilo*’s main ambiguity, as in fourteenth-century Middle Welsh, is that proclitic *y* may represent /ə/ as in *y(r)* ‘the’ or /i/ as in *y* ‘his/her; to’. As noted earlier (see Section 1 above), the spelling of the preposition *y* /i/ ‘to’ was particularly troublesome in conjugated prepositions like MW *ymi* /’imi/ ‘to me’ where <y> in the penult anomalously represented /i/ rather than /ə/. This anomaly may have troubled our writer, and explain his use of <i> in *ididi* /ðiði/ ~ *idi* /ði/ ‘to her’, and also in the compound preposition *diam* /ðiam/ ‘concerning’, lit. ‘from around’ (= MW *y am*, Williams 1948: 5–6; GPC *i*⁴).

To sum up, in the Book of Llandaf *c.* 1130:

- many texts make little or no use of the letter <y> and consequently have difficulty in differentiating /i(:)/, /i(:)/, and /ə/; and
- *Braint Teilo*, however, is more systematic, for the most part employing <i> for /i(:)/ and <y> for both /i(:)/ and /ə/ – the system generally adopted in the fourteenth century onwards.

⁵⁹ LL 118. Cf., slightly differently on *istis*, Russell (2016: 59–60). I agree with him that the Welsh *Braint Teilo* translates the Latin *Privilegium*, not vice versa.

⁶⁰ The Black Book of Carmarthen’s *escib*, *esgip*, and *escyp* (Jarman 1982: 141) are not relevant to normal Middle Welsh usage, as it generally prefers <i> to <y> (see Section 5 below).

⁶¹ *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* s.vv.

⁶² Wendy Davies (1975: 132) cites *escip* and *gueti* (also *dair* = Mod.W. *daear*, which is less relevant) as evidence that the first part is later (*sic!*) than the second, but see J. R. Davies (2003: 70); Rodway (2013: 11); Russell (2009: 171; 2016: 45, 56–7, and 62–3).

4. OLD WELSH IN THE LATER TWELFTH CENTURY

In the 1130s, in the Book of Llandaf, we saw both <i> and <y> in use for /i(:)/, /i(:)/, and /ə/ (including epenthetic /ə/), with a few texts preferring <y> more than the majority did. There was hardly any trace of <e> for /i(:)/ or /ə/. In the last third of the century, Vesp., from Monmouth, is very similar, except that it also has a few examples of <e> for /ə/ (e.g. *Brecheniauc* = Mod.W. *Brycheiniog*, VSB 28, 78, and 226, and *Terchan* = Mod.W. *Tyrchan*, VSB 134; Davies 1980: 556 n. 5), including epenthetic /ə/ (e.g. *Catgualader* = Mod.W. *Cadwaladr*, VSB 98; Lewis 1961: 279–81, 301). The similarity between Vesp. and LL is not surprising, considering that most of the texts in Vesp. are copies of texts of about the same date and area as those in LL.

That other orthographies were current in mid-twelfth-century north Wales is indicated by the survival of <e> for /i(:)/ in WLEDER (= *Gwledyr*) in the Llanfihangel-y-traethau inscription, mentioned earlier (subsection 2.1 above), and by the names in the original charters from the Cistercian monastery of Ystrad Marchell (near Welshpool) dated between 1176 and the end of the century (Thomas 1997). In these, alongside <i> for /i(:)/, we see /i(:)/ denoted by <i> or <y>, as in *Ritdolwen*, *Penllin*, *Meilyr*, *Berwin*, and *Henir* (nos. 5, 11, 15, and 16). So far, this system is like LL. But <y> also denotes yod, as in *Yoruerd*, *Yaruord* (nos. 5 and 17), whereas LL has no names with <y> for yod. Moreover, we see <e> as well as <i> and <y> for /i(:)/ (cf. WLEDER), as in *Ret e l voch*, *Kener*, and *Meiler* (nos. 11, 16, 20, and 21). Alongside <y> for /ə/ (including epenthetic /ə/), as in *Pullydan*, *Ednyuet*, and *Katwaladyr* (nos. 11 and 18), we see <e> as in *Keveyllauc* (= Mod.W. *Cyfeilliog*), *Ret e l voch* (= Mod.W. *Rhyd-y-foch*), *Kener* (= Mod.W. *Cynyr*), and *Llewarch* (= Mod.W. *Llywarch*) (nos. 11 and 20). However, <i> seems not to be used for /ə/ at Ystrad Marchell, unlike Llandaf. But we do see it, not later than 1230, in the inscription at Pentrefoelas, in *di* ‘thy’ (= Mod.W. *dy*) alongside the particle *Ed*, which also has schwa (Williams 1940). The main impression is that *e*-spellings, as in Old Welsh, are much more in evidence than in LL.

5. EARLY MIDDLE WELSH: THE BLACK BOOK OF CARMARTHEN, c. 1250

The Black Book of Carmarthen (NLW Peniarth 1), written in south-west Wales c. 1250, has the first extended pieces of Welsh since LL, over a century earlier. It shows more similarities to the orthography of LL than to that of Old Welsh and the Ystrad Marchell charters. Paul Russell’s statistics (Russell 2009: 159), based on generous samples of all the Black Book poems (ibid. 158), show that /i(:)/ and /i(:)/ are represented mainly by <i> and to a lesser extent by <y>, much as in the *i*-texts of LL. Unlike the latter, however, /ə/ is more often denoted by <y> than by <i>:

- /i(:)/ is <i> in 91 per cent of cases and <y> in 6 per cent. No poem has less than 70 per cent <i> for /i(:)/.
- /i(:)/ is <i> in 79 per cent of cases and <y> in 20 per cent.
- /ə/ is <y> in 54 per cent of cases and <i> in 43 per cent.

Even though the volume of <i> is strange to modern eyes, a move towards the modern system where <i> denotes /i(:)/ and <y> denotes both /i(:)/ and /ə/ may – at first sight – be detected in these overall statistics. Matters are less clear, however, at the level of the individual Black Book poem.

All poems prefer <i> to <y> for /i(:)/, and all poems but one⁶³ also prefer <i> to <y> for /i(:)/. With /ə/ there is more differentiation. For /ə/, <y> is preferred to <i> in poems 1–4, 7,

⁶³ Poem 39, with six <i> versus seven <y> for /i(:)/, is statistically insignificant. I follow Russell in counting item 6 as a ‘poem’ for convenience.

10, 13–16, 18, 22–28, 31, 35, 35, and 37–38. In poems 6–8, 11, 17, 19–21, 29–30, 32–34, 36, and 39 <i> is preferred to <y> for /ə/. Poems 5, 12, and 40 show no preference. Poems 3–4, 22, and 25–28 have the highest percentages of <y> = /ə/ – between 73 per cent and 95 per cent – but of these seven poems only poems 22 and 25–26 rise above the average of 20 per cent of <y> = /i(:)/, and that predominantly in the diphthong /ui/. In other words, the poems that differentiate /i(:)/ and /ə/ in spelling are *not* the ones that differentiate /i(:)/ and /i(:)/. With only two vowel symbols – <i> and <y> – in use, it was impossible to disambiguate three phonemes, unless advantage were taken of the phonological fact that /i(:)/ and /ə/ were in complementary distribution and could therefore be denoted by the same symbol, as Modern Welsh does with <y> (see Section 1 above). Even poems 22 and 25–26 did not hit on that solution, unlike *Braint Teilo* a century earlier (subsection 3.3 above).

Like LL, the Black Book hardly uses <e> except for /e(:)/. Russell found just one example of <e> for /i(:)/ in his sample.⁶⁴ He found 15 instances of <e> for /i(:)/. These all seem to be confined to the affixed pronouns, 1sg. *e*, 2sg. *de/te*, 1pl. *ne* (= Mod.W. *i*, *di*, *ni*).⁶⁵ Such pronouns were enclitic and had therefore been attached to stressed words in Old Welsh (*gurt trichiti* ‘you decide’, *helgati* ‘hunt!’, *itdarnesti* ‘you agitated’, *nerthiti* ‘you strengthen’).⁶⁶ Especially when reading poetry, it was important to recognise the presence of affixed pronouns, partly perhaps because they might have to be omitted for metrical reasons, and more certainly because a form like *nerthiti* ‘strengthen-you’ might be mispronounced *nerthiti*, and so on. Spelling the enclitic pronouns with <e> may have been a clever way of indicating their presence, for hardly any polysyllabic words ended in /e/,⁶⁷ whereas a vast number ended in /i/. Spelling affixed pronouns with <e> made it obvious that they were present and that forms like *prinude* (5.52 = *prinud di* ‘you used to buy’) and *genhide* (5.82 = *genhid di* ‘with you’) were to be stressed *prinude* and *génhide*, not ***prinúde* and ***genhíde*. This <e> spelling-convention for affixed pronouns is remarked on in the fourteenth-century Gwysanau Bardic Grammar (Parry Owen 2010: 13, 18, 26, 31; 2016: 192, 197, 199).

Russell’s sample includes just seventeen examples of <e> for /ə/. These seem to be: 5.156 *deginullemne* ‘may we gather’; 11.14 *vedissyawd* ‘Christendom’ (but in this word /e/ was the original vowel, and Mod.W. *bydysawd* is remodelled on *byd* ‘world’); 18.1, 4, and 7 *E betev* ‘The graves’; 21.10 *En llogborth*, 22 and 25 *En llogporth*, ‘In Llongborth’, 28, 31, 46, and 49 *rere(i)nt* ‘used to prance’;⁶⁸ and 38.37 *kedyndemteith* ‘companion’, plus examples in poems 13 and 29 which I cannot confirm. I would add *en* ‘our’ at 7.7 and *en* ‘in’ at 17.215, so on my calculation there are thirteen examples of <e> for /ə/ in Russell’s sample, namely *deginullemne*, *kedyndemteith* (a scribal error suggestive of hesitation between **kedemteith* and **kedynteith*), *en* × 2, *re* × 4, and his five examples of *E* ‘the’ and *En* ‘in’ in poems 18 and 21. Whatever the exact tally, <e> for /ə/ is very rare.

The five examples of *E* ‘The’ and *En* ‘In’ in poems 18 and 21 are interesting and are paralleled outside Russell’s sample. In poem 18 the normal form of the article is *y/yr/ir*, but

⁶⁴ He cites Poem 17, presumably the 3pl. affixed pronoun *ve* /ui/ in line 113 (cf. 8.12 and 21.27). The scribe’s sources may have used <e> for /i(:)/; that would explain his error *bid* (= *byd* ‘world’) in Poem 18.39, apparently made when copying **bed* (= *bedd* ‘grave’).

⁶⁵ For references see Jarman (1982: 139, 134, and 158 respectively). Cf. Evans (1964: 57). Morris-Jones (1913: 280 and 282) maintained that the affixed pronouns had a different etymology from the independent pronouns, comparing *i* and *mi* with Latin *ego* and *me*, which no one would accept now (cf. Sims-Williams 2016a: 141), taking the Early Middle Welsh <e> to mean /i/. Note that the <e> spellings never occur after conjugated prepositions in thirteenth-century prose; see collections in Sims-Williams (2013: 44–7).

⁶⁶ EGOW 40, 76–7, 82, and 119; Mac Cana (1975/6). On affixed pronouns in poetry see Andrews (1989).

⁶⁷ The Black Book has only *arvere*, *bore*, *Corbre*, *dabre*, *duire*, *graeande*, *olre*, *pelre*, and *tagde*, plus the very rare subjunctive *credde* (on which see Rodway 2013: 81 n. 265) and, at 7.37, *an eirolve ne* = Mod.W. *a’n eirolwy ni* (note the gap before *ne* here, cf. 36.16 *dabre de*, which is one word in the manuscript). For rare non-Black Book examples of affixed pronouns spelt -e see Williams (1953) 52, line 68 (MS ‘ethniwe’), Lloyd-Jones (1931–63), s.v. *arbet*, and Haycock 2021, line 29.

⁶⁸ *re-* = the particle *ry* /r^hə/: Isaac (2000: 274).

when the article appears at the start of a stanza it is *E* (lines 1, 4, 7, 87, 96, 121, and 197), e.g. line 1 *E beteu ae gulich y glav* ‘The graves which the rain wets’.⁶⁹ Poem 18 is the only poem to spell the article with <e>. Similarly the preposition ‘in’ is normally *yn/yg/ym/in/ig/im*, etc. in poem 18, but it is *En* at the start of a stanza (lines 20 and 194). The only other poem in which <en> ‘in’ appears regularly is poem 21, and here too *En* is always at the start of a stanza (lines 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25). Again the copula is *is* or *ys(s)* throughout the manuscript, except for one example of *Es* at the start of a stanza in poem 18: *Es cul y bet ac ys hir* ‘Narrow is the grave and it is long’ (line 57); the contrast between *Es* and *ys* is striking here. The easiest way to explain this is to suppose that poems 18 and 21 were copied from exemplars in which initial letters were capitalised or rubricated, and that this distracted the copyist from changing their orthography to his normal system. He can hardly have himself preferred the look of *E* to the look of *I* and *Y*, as he has *I* and *Y* elsewhere (as in Poems 11–12),⁷⁰ but his exemplar for poems 18 and 21 may have preferred *E*. The same phenomenon can be seen in the oldest stratum of the Hendregadredd Manuscript (NLW 6680B, s. xiii/xiv). A capital *Y* is common enough here,⁷¹ but there are also significant variations such as . . . *yn rutglan* ‘. . . in Rhuddlan’ at the end of one stanza echoed by *En rutglan* . . . (rubricated) at the start of the next, followed by another poem which has *yn* throughout (lines 37, 89, 115, 121, 128), except where rubricated *En* begins two stanzas (lines 121 and 125).⁷² A distinction between lower case *y*, *yn*, *yny*, and *yr* and upper case *E*, *En*, *Eny*, and *Er* can in fact be seen in many manuscripts. For example, the scribe of the Dingestow Manuscript (NLW 5266, s. xiii²), who normally prefers the spelling *yn* /ən/ (2,458 lower-case examples) to *en* (5 lower-case examples), has no examples of *Yn* but 18 examples of *En*, and 4 examples of *e* ‘the’ versus numerous *E*.⁷³ For him and scribes like him *E* effectively functioned as a capital form of *y*.

So, to conclude, the scribe of the Black Book, with a few exceptions (e.g. *deginullemne* and *rere(i)nt*), avoids using <e> for any vowel other than /e(:)/, although for some poems he may have had exemplars which did use <e> for /ə/, like the Strata Marcella charters. Unlike those charters, he barely uses <e> for /i(:)/.⁷⁴ His overall spelling is not unlike the Book of Llandaf in the extensive use of <i> and <y>, varying from poem to poem. Both manuscripts (except in *Braint Teilo*) fail to take advantage of the availability of <i> and <y>. Instead of using them to differentiate, say, /i/ and /i:/, or /i/ and /ə/, they use them indiscriminately, despite the fact that Welsh ideally needed to distinguish minimal pairs such as *gwir* ‘true’ with /i:/ and *gwyrr* ‘men’ with /i:/.⁷⁵

In these circumstances, where <y> was not meaningfully distinct from <i>, it is not surprising that thirteenth-century vernacular manuscripts contemporary or later than the Black Book of Carmarthen (mostly or entirely from north Wales)⁷⁶ make more use of <e>.

⁶⁹ Line 213, *Y beddeu* . . ., is by a second scribe.

⁷⁰ Nor were earlier scribes averse to *Y* in the vernacular, e.g. *Y mynyd* in the LL 134ii boundary clause (LL col. 156).

⁷¹ H 4b *Ystwyll*, 17b *Yssym*, 22b *Ysymy*, 26a *Ysyt*, 56a *Ym*, 70b *Yn*, 71b *Yg*, etc. (the current foliation for the MS varies from the one in H). A rubricator distinct from the main scribe is believed to have been involved: Huws 2000: 200.

⁷² H 68b and 70b; CBT IV 7.20–21 and IV 5.121 and 125.

⁷³ *Rhyddiaith y 13g*. For more examples, see Williams (1940: 4) and Section 8 below.

⁷⁴ Opinion based on checking the glossary of Jarman (1982) for monosyllabic words in the alphabetic position of *Consonant + Y*. A possible exception is *chen* (= Mod.W. *chym*) in poem 18.190, and note *ced* (= Mod.W. *cyd*) in poem 31.37. But on these two words see subsection 2.1 above.

⁷⁵ These are spelt with the same vowel (*guir/gwir*) in the Black Book (Jarman 1982: 147–8) and continued to be confused (see ByB 93, where both are spelt *gwyr*).

⁷⁶ It is not easy to judge whether it is significant that all these manuscripts may be northern, unlike the Black Book of Carmarthen, as the latter is the only surviving southern vernacular manuscript with which they can be compared. Note, however, in a Latin context, c. 1280, names such as *Kenan* and *bechan* with <e> for /ə/, and *Res Kreg* and *Meruen Wrech* with <e> for /i(:)/, in Exeter, Cathedral Library, MS 3514, from the southern Cistercian monastery of Whitland, Carmarthenshire (T. Jones 1946; Thornton 1992: 11). Here <y> is avoided, except in the diphthong *uy*, but <i> may occur for /i:/, as in *Hirvryn* (= Hirfryn).

for /i/ and/or for /ə/, as already in Old Welsh, the WLEDER inscription, and the Ystrad Marchell charters. Increased use of <e> for /i/ and for /ə/, brought its own problems, however, as <e> was also needed for /e(:)/ and Welsh had minimal pairs such as *hedd* ‘peace’: *hydd* ‘stag’ and *lles* ‘advantage’: *llys* ‘court’ (/e:/ : /i:/), *llenn* ‘cloak’: *llynn* ‘lake’ (/e/ : /i/), and *de* ‘burns’ : *dy* ‘thy’ (/e:/ : /ə/).

6. THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY: AN OVERVIEW

Manuscripts will be dealt with in the chronological order established by Daniel Huws on palaeographic grounds.⁷⁷ Table 5, for rough-and-ready characterisation, gives the percentage distribution of all occurrences of <y>, <e>, and <i> irrespective of context and phonetic values in the short passages of prose in the Black Book of Carmarthen and the Book of Aneirin (Scribe A) and in extracts from the Latin laws (which contain passages in Welsh), from the vernacular law manuscripts BL Cotton Caligula A.iii and Llyfr Colan, and from the Dingestow Court manuscript of the *Brut* (i.e. Welsh translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae*), plus – for comparison with later usage – the corresponding passage in the *Brut* in NLW 3036, written by the fourteenth-century Book of Taliesin scribe.⁷⁸ *Braint Teilo* is also included for comparison.

It will be seen that Latin C is *y*-shy, while Latin A, Caligula, and Colan are *i*-shy, so much so that none of them can have any chance of efficiently distinguishing the three phonemes /i(:)/, /i(:)/, and /ə/. (NLW Peniarth 44 and Llanstephan 1, which are also by the Caligula scribe, are equally *i*-shy throughout.)⁷⁹ The Black Book and Book of Aneirin prose passages, Latin B, and Dingestow, by availing themselves of all three letters, should have a better chance of distinguishing the three phonemes but, as we have already seen in the case of the Black Book poems, that does not mean that they will necessarily use them efficiently. In fact, while Dingestow (like NLW 3036) does (see below), Scribe A of the Book of Aneirin, though

Table 5. percentages of <y>, <e>, and <i> in some thirteenth-century manuscripts, with *Braint Teilo* (s. xii¹) and NLW 3036 (s. xiv¹) for comparison

	y	e	i	Characterisation
<i>Braint Teilo</i>	47	27	26	<i>y</i> -text
Black Book of Carmarthen (NLW Peniarth 1)	11	37	52	<i>i</i> -text
Latin Laws C (BL Harley 1796)	0	55	45	<i>y</i> -shy
Latin Laws B (BL Cotton Vesp. E.xi)	30	43	27	<i>e</i> -text
Latin Laws A (NLW Peniarth 28)	55	44	1	<i>i</i> -shy
BL Cotton Caligula A.iii	49	51	0 ⁸⁰	<i>i</i> -shy
Llyfr Colan (Peniarth 30)	52	42	6	<i>i</i> -shy
Book of Aneirin (Cardiff 2.81), Scribe A	21	65	14	<i>e</i> -text
Dingestow <i>Brut</i> (NLW 5266)	48	39	13	<i>y</i> -text
NLW 3036 <i>Brut</i> (s. xiv ¹)	47	38	15	<i>y</i> -text

Bold is the largest figure per line.

⁷⁷ Huws (2000: 58–64). There will be minor corrections in Huws (2022).

⁷⁸ For *Braint Teilo* see above. The extracts from the Black Book of Carmarthen, the Latin Laws, and the Book of Aneirin are the passages in *Rhyddiaith y 13g*. The other samples are: Cotton Caligula A.iii 149r–153r; Peniarth 30 cols. 1–20; NLW 5266 pp. 48–55; and NLW 3036 pp. 51.7–58.11. On Scribes A and B of the Book of Aneirin see Huws (1989: 34, 44–7).

⁷⁹ Their only words containing <i> (excluding Latin and proper names) are *distryw*, *digryf*, *dinassoed*, *erchi*, and *gallei*, and each of these is only attested once.

⁸⁰ 0% since there is only one example in the sample: *breinhines* (153r col. 2), the only occurrence of <i> in the entire manuscript.

quite modern in using <i> consistently for /i(:)/ (*Gododin* × 2; *Aneirin*; *tri* ‘three’ × 2; *riuedi* ‘number’; *Talyessin*), overuses <e>, more than any other scribe in Table 5 does: he uses it for /e/ (e.g. *tervyna*, *mynet*), /i/ (*e Gatraeth* ‘to Catraeth’, *mynet e amrysson* ‘going to a contest’), and /ə/ (*eman e tervyna* ‘here ends’, *e Gododin* ‘the Gododdin’, *e Gorchanau* ‘the Gorchanau’, *e gwyr* ‘the men’, *dele* ‘ought’), despite the fact that he also uses <y> for /i(:)/ (*gwyr* ‘men’) and /ə/ (*y gerd* ‘the poem’, *tervyna*, *mynet*). Denoting /i/ with both <e> and <y> and /ə/ with both <e> and <y> is clearly inefficient. Differentiating /i/ ‘to’ and /ə/ ‘the’ was always a problem (see Section 1 above), and *e Gatraeth* ‘to Catraeth’ might have been a rational way of differentiating the preposition, but only if <e> was not also used for /ə/ ‘the’.

The fact that <e> is used for /i/ in a prose rubric by Scribe A in the Book of Aneirin is significant. It shows that it was part of the current scribal repertoire, not just a fossilised feature of the older *Canu Aneirin* poetry transmitted in the manuscript, in which it occurs fairly often – *ket* ‘although’, CA lines 43, 61, 72, 138, 139, *e* ‘his’, lines 32, 33, 34, 54, 60, 108, 111, 115, 118, 138, *e* ‘to’, lines 13(?), 53 (× 2), 54 (× 2), 61 (× 2), 72 (× 2), 76, and 137 (these are all the certain examples in CA stanzas I–XV, by Hand A) – although <y> for /i/ is much more common, e.g. *gwrhwt* ‘valour’, *kynt y waet* ‘sooner his blood’, *kynt y vwynt y vrein* ‘sooner for food for ravens’, *nogyt y neithyawr* ‘than to a wedding’, *kwl y uot* ‘a shame his being’, CA lines 2–18, etc. While *ket* corresponds to an Old Welsh form (*cet* in the Juvencus) and might be dismissed as a fossilised spelling,⁸¹ that does not apply to *e* ‘his’ and *e* ‘to’ which were usually *i/hi* and *di* in Old Welsh (see EGOW). They are a living part of Scribe A’s orthography. Scribe B was probably similar; we know what his normal orthography was from the other manuscripts he wrote (Peniarth MSS 14.1–44 and 17), where he too uses <i> for /i(:)/ and <e> for /e(:), /i(:)/, and /ə/. In the Book of Aneirin this picture is somewhat obscured because Scribe B is copying from old exemplars which used <i> more liberally, in the Old Welsh fashion.

Another manuscript in Table 5 that uses all three letters extensively is Latin B. This is also inconsistent. As in the Book of Aneirin, /i(:)/ is represented by <i>. The Latin B scribe may represent /ə/ by <e> (e.g. *enteu* ‘he’, *kemell* ‘force’, *kennewedi* ‘coupling’, *tewessiau* ‘leading’, *emdwyn* ‘carrying’, *keweithas* ‘accompanying’, *keuaruot* ‘meeting’, *keghor* ‘counsel’) or by <i> (e.g. *kimello* ‘force’, *pimhet* ‘fifth’), as well as, most commonly, by <y> (*argywet* ‘harm’, *kyrywedi*, *y(r)* ‘the’, *kymell*, etc.). /i(:)/ may be represented by <i> (e.g. *yssid* ‘which is’ (Mod.W. *ysydd*), *odin* ‘kiln’) or <y> (e.g. *yssyd*, *y* ‘his’, *ny* ‘not’), as well as (rarely) by <e>, assuming that this sound occurs in *ket* ‘although’, as in the Book of Aneirin. In fact, the Latin B scribe seems to be familiar with, and alternates between, several orthographical systems, of which one used <i> for /ə/ and /i/ (compare *pimhed* ‘fifth’ and *yssit* ‘which is’ in the Black Book of Carmarthen, poem 17.23 and 34), a second used <y> for both phonemes, as in *yssyd* /əsið/, and a third used <e> for both /ə/ and /e/, as in the first and second syllables of *kemell* /kəmeɫ/, and occasionally for /i:/ as well, if this is its value in *ket*.

The contrast between Latin C and Latin A is striking. Perhaps the scribe of Latin C felt that the letter <y> was out of place in a Latin text, whereas the scribe of Latin A realised that copious use of it would help to differentiate the Latin and vernacular clauses?

7. SPELLING /i/ AND /i/ IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY AND BEYOND

In order to give an overall impression of the thirteenth-century spelling of /i/ and /i/ (deferring /ə/ to Section 8 below), Table 6 shows the manuscript spellings of what in Modern Welsh are

⁸¹ Compare *chen* (= Mod.W. *chyn*) in the Black Book, poem 18.190, possibly a throwback to OW *cen* in the Computus, also *ced* in poem 31.37. See above, n. 74.

Table 6. /i:/ and /i:/ in the thirteenth century (significant spellings are in bold)

	/i:/	/i:/
Saec. XIII med.		
Peniarth 1 (<i>Black Book of Carmarthen</i>)	din	tir
Peniarth 44 + Llanstephan 1, pp. 102–45	dyn	tyr
rest of Llanstephan 1	dyn	tyr
BL Cotton Caligula A.iii	dyn	tyr
BL Harley 1796 (Latin Laws C) ⁸²	[din]	tir
BL Cotton Vesp. E.xi (Latin Laws B) ⁸³	dyn	tir
Peniarth 28 (Latin Laws A)	hyt	tyr
Peniarth 29 (<i>Black Book of Chirk</i>) ⁸⁴	dyn 100, din 45	tyr 79, tir 29
Peniarth 30 (<i>Llyfr Colan</i>)	dyn 313, den 20	tyr 152, tir 1
Saec. XIII²		
Cardiff 2.81 (<i>Book of Aneirin</i>)	hyt 4, hit 1	mil
Peniarth 14, pp. 1–44	den 9, dyn 4	tir
Peniarth 17	den 10, dyn 7	tir
Peniarth 6i	hyd 2, hid 1	-
Peniarth 6ii	dyn	mil
BL Cotton Titus D.ii (<i>Llyfr Iorwerth</i>)	den 173, dyn 35	tyr
BL Add. 14931	dyn 185, den 2, din 1	tyr 122, tir 5
NLW 5266 (<i>Dingestow</i>) + Peniarth 16iv	dyn	tir
Peniarth 3i ⁸⁵	dyn	myl
Peniarth 6iii	hyd	tir
Peniarth 16iii	den	tir
Peniarth 14, pp. 45–78	den	tir
Peniarth 14, pp. 79–90	hyt	myl

dyn /di:n/ ‘person’ (or, if not attested, *hyd* /hi:d/ ‘length’) and *tir* /ti:r/ ‘land’ (or, if not attested, *mil* /mi:l/ ‘thousand; animal’).⁸⁶ These words were chosen because they are of frequent occurrence and had stressed long vowels in which differences of quality are likely to have been very distinctly audible to the scribes.

Many scribes are remarkably consistent in spelling these words; the Black Book of Carmarthen always has *din* and *tir*, for example, and the single scribe (Russell 1993) who copied Peniarth 44, Llanstephan 1, and Caligula A.iii always writes *dyn* and *tyr*. Peniarth 30 is rather similar, except for one example of *tir* in col. 5, when the scribe was still getting into his stride, and twenty examples of *den* between col. 211 and the end of the manuscript at col. 328 (alternating with 132 examples of *dyn* in that section). Clearly such scribes were not attempting to distinguish the vowels of *dyn* and *tir*.

At first sight Peniarth 29 (the Black Book of Chirk), with *din* ~ *dyn* and *tir* ~ *tyr*, looks completely inconsistent, with *dyn* and *tir* being spelt ‘correctly’ or ‘incorrectly’ (by later standards) only by chance. This impression is partly due to existence of multiple scribes, referred to as scribes A to I.⁸⁷ The main scribe (Hand A), who has been identified with the

⁸² *tir* at Emanuel (1967: 286) (*din* is not attested, but the scribe never uses <y>).

⁸³ Examples from Emanuel (1967: 251, 230).

⁸⁴ Including two examples of *dyn* in the Dafydd Benfras poem: CBT VI 27.17 and 63 (p. 431).

⁸⁵ *dyn* is at p. 5 = CBT IV 9.208; *myl* is in the same poem, passim.

⁸⁶ Unmutated forms only. Peniarth 6i (a fragment of *Branwen*) has *hyd* and *hid*, but no form of *tir* or *mil*. In other words, however, it regularly uses <i> for /i(:)/. Potentially, sampling other words might give a different impression. Thus, only *den* occurs in Peniarth 16iii and Peniarth 14.75–78 (six examples apiece, but no *dyn*), yet they have respectively 32 and 13 examples of *hyt*.

⁸⁷ On the scribes of Peniarth 29 (the Black Book of Chirk) see Russell 1995 (cf. Sims-Williams 2013: 35–6). Russell lists Scribe A as having <y> ~ <e> for /i/ and <i> for /i(:)/ (138–9). His examples of <e> for /i/ – *hynne*, *ken*, and *ecch* – demonstrate that sampling single words like *dyn* does not tell the whole story. Sampling for spellings of *hyd* turns up one example of *het* at Peniarth 29 p. 49.35, by scribe D.

scribe of Peniarth 30, always has *dyn* and *tyr*, as does Scribe G. Hands B-D and F are inconsistent, alternating *din* and *dyn*. Hand E has only *din*, while Hand I has only *dyn*, but they have only two examples apiece.⁸⁸ Hand C has *tyr*, but is inconsistent in spelling other words with /i(:)/, such as *dillat* ~ *dyllat* (= Mod.W. *dillad* ‘clothes’) and *hi* ~ *hy* (= Mod.W. *hi* ‘she’). Conversely Hands D and F only have *tir*, but their preference for <i> for /i:/ in that word is contradicted by their spelling of other words with /i(:)/, such as *uechny* in D (= Mod.W. *mechni* ‘surety’), and *amdyffin* ~ *amdiffin* and *menegy* in F (= Mod.W. *amddiffyn* ‘defend’ and *menegi* ‘mention’). There are no examples of *tir* or *tyr* in B, E, or I, but note ‘incorrect’ spellings of /i(:)/ like *edyuar* and *hy* (= Mod.W. *edifar* ‘regret’ and *hi* ‘she’) in Hand E and *cryst* and *tryst* (= Mod.W. *Crist* and *trist* ‘sad’) in Hand I (CBT VI, p. 431). Hand B seems to denote /i/ by <i> in the modern way, but this may be a coincidence as he wrote only a few lines. In short, most of Peniarth 29 – the part written by Hands A and G – has *dyn/tyr* orthography like Peniarth 30, but the overall picture is complicated by interventions by other hands which use <i> and <y> inconsistently in various ways.

Vesp. E.xi (s. xiii med.) looks consistent so far as *dyn* and *tir* are concerned, but in fact its spelling of /i(:)/ is quite inconsistent (e.g. *yssid* ~ *yssyd* = Mod.W. *ysydd* ‘which is’).

The only phonetically significant spelling in the middle of the century – one which carries on into the second half – is *den* with <e> /i:/ in Peniarth 30. This spelling is significant because ***ter* is nowhere found for /ti:r/. The *den* spelling is found sporadically through the s. xiii² period shown in Table 6, though it always occurs beside *dyn* (or beside *hyt* in the case of Peniarth 16iii and Peniarth 14.45–78).⁸⁹ Evidently, then, Old Welsh <e> for /i(:)/ was still in use in the thirteenth century.

The manuscripts which consistently distinguish /i:/ in *tir* (or *mil*) from /i:/ in *dyn/den* (or *hyd*) are all from the second half of the century: the Book of Aneirin (Scribe A), Peniarth 14.1–44, Peniarth 17, Peniarth 6ii,⁹⁰ NLW 5266 + Peniarth 16iv, Peniarth 6iii, Peniarth 16iii, and Peniarth 14.45–78.

In general, apart from the Book of Aneirin, which preserves poems with Old Welsh features (*hit* is in Scribe B’s text, CA line 1195), these manuscripts all restrict <i> to /i(:)/, with only a few slips where <i> is used for /i(:)/, e.g. *gedi* (beside *gbedy*)⁹¹ and *kewilid* (= Mod.W. *cywilydd*) in NLW 5266 pp. 3 and 17, and *gilid* (= Mod.W. *gilydd*) in Peniarth 16iii passim and Peniarth 14 pp. 46, 51, and 52, and only occasionally do they use <y> for /i(:)/, e.g. NLW 5266 pp. 5 and 7 *myl* (= Mod.W. *mil* ‘thousand’) and pp. 3, 5, 8, and 9–10 (*h*)*erchy* (= Mod.W. *erchi* ‘ask’). Such slips occur especially in the first few pages of NLW 5266, where the spelling of an exemplar seems to have been followed more slavishly than subsequently (cf. Thomas 1993: 41, n. 1; Russell 1999).

So, to sum up,

- mid-thirteenth-century MSS do not distinguish between /i/ and /i:/, except occasionally when they use <e> for /i(:)/; and
- in the second half of the century, some scribes start to distinguish <i> for /i(:)/ from <y> (or sometimes <e>) for /i(:)/.

⁸⁸ Hand I wrote the Dafydd Benfras poem (CBT VI, pp. 431–2). There is no data for Hand H.

⁸⁹ The examples of *den* and *din* (in *deudin* ‘two persons’) in BL Add. 14931 are in a passage on p. 107 added by another scribe. See Russell 1995: 144, 165–6, and 171.

⁹⁰ Peniarth 6i (a fragment) is also consistent in using <i> for /i(:)/ with the exception of *hyd* ~ *hid*, noted in Table 6.

⁹¹ MW *gwedy* is the original form (Schrijver 1995: 113) and the *-i* of Mod.W. *wedi* is an innovation (Morris-Jones 1913: 409). In Peniarth 3ii (s. xiii/xiv) *wedi* already rhymes in *-i* (Williams 1928: 120; cf. R 583.3). In *kewilid* and *gilid* vowel harmony/assimilation is conceivable. For *gilid* and *digewilid* in later manuscripts see Rejhon (1984: 75 and 77).

From the turn of the thirteenth/fourteenth century onwards,⁹² the distinction between <y> for /i:/ in *dyn* and <i> for /i:/ in *tir* is rigorously applied; for example, in the 1300–1425 prose corpus, *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* (including Peniarth MS 164), there are 5,852 examples of *dyn* and 3,603 of *tir*. Only a few exceptions occur:

Peniarth 35 (Laws MS G, xiv¹), fols 52–70 (a separate manuscript from the rest of Peniarth 35), has innumerable examples of *den* and *tyr*, alongside one example of *tir* near the start (52v) and a few examples of *dyn* towards the end (from 67v to 70v). The main text in question, *Llyfr Cynghawseidd*, shares a lost common source (William 1988) with Cotton Titus D.ii (s. xiii²), which had favoured *den* and *tyr*. Presumably the scribe followed a thirteenth-century exemplar, but lapsed into the spelling *tir* before he got into his stride, and lapsed again towards the end of *Llyfr Cynghawseidd*, writing *dyn* once at 67v. The examples of *dyn* at 69v and *tyr* at 70r are part of a distinct text, absent from Titus D.ii (William 1953: 101).⁹³

The scribe who wrote the rest of Peniarth 35 and also Peniarth 45 and Peniarth 37, normally writes *dyn* and *tir*. However, at Peniarth 37 (s. xiv¹), 72v, copying *Llyfr y Damweiniau*, a thirteenth-century lawtext from Gwynedd (Jenkins 1986: xxv), he has a solitary example of *den*: ‘O deruyd y / *den* dyuot yn tr6ydet y ty *dyn* arall . . .’ (‘If a *person* happens to come as a permitted one to the house of another *person* . . .’).⁹⁴ Probably he failed for once to modernise his exemplar’s *den* to *dyn* here.

Cardiff 1.363 (Hafod 2) (s. xiv¹) is a careful transcript of the Llanstephan Version of the *Brut*, almost identical to that in the thirteenth-century Llanstephan 1 with which it probably shares a common exemplar (ByB xxxvii), and this explains why it uses the spelling *tyr* throughout.

Harley 958 (s. xiv med.) has three examples of *tyr* (versus 141 *tir*), presumably carried over from an earlier copy of the law book in question (*Llyfr Blegywryd*).

The Red Book of Hergest (Jesus College Oxford 111, s. xiv/xv) has hundreds of examples of *dyn*, but only one possible example of *din*, in the obscure expression *dincleir* (R 1048.13) in the ancient *Canu Heledd* poetry; this spelling is probably due to the exemplar. (See Lloyd-Jones 1931–63 s.v. *dincleir*; Williams 1953: 234; Sims-Williams 2011b: 88.)

Peniarth 32 (s. xiv/xv) has one example of *tyr* (p. 98.18), but this is an error for *ty* ‘house’. Cf. *ty* in Titus D.ii 38r; Caligula 176r col. 1; BL Add. 14931 p. 61; Peniarth 36A 16r.

So, to conclude,

- judging by *dyn* and *tir*, the modern distinction between <y> for /i:/ and <i> for /i:/ was already becoming established in the second half of the thirteenth century, and was the norm in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, except in the slavish copies of thirteenth-century texts in Peniarth 35, fols 52–70, and Cardiff 1.363; and

⁹² I have searched *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* (including Peniarth 164) and *Rhyddiaith y 15g*, plus the concordances for the Hendregadredd Manuscript (Owen & Williams 1989), Book of Taliesin (Haycock 1979), and Red Book of Hergest (Williams 1985), and the printed editions of poems in NLW Peniarth 4 (Phillimore 1886), Jesus College Oxford 20 (CC no. 30), and NLW Llanstephan 27 (Williams 1924 and CC nos. 13, 29, and 31). The Welsh passages in Latin Laws D (Oxford Rawlinson C 821 (s. xiii/xiv)) also have *dyn* and *tir* (Emanuel 1967: 336, 355, etc.). A few manuscripts lacked *dyn* or *tir*, so other words were searched for: *byt* in Peniarth 3ii (Williams 1928: 117); *hyt* in BL Cotton Cleopatra B.v iii and Peniarth 47i; *hir* in Peniarth 47i; *blin* in Oxford Rawlinson B 467 and Cardiff 3.242; *mil* in Llanstephan 3, NLW 5267B, and Peniarth 24; *gyt* in Peniarth 24; *hyd* in Jesus College Oxford 141; and *mis* in Peniarth 27ii. These manuscripts do not have **bit*, **hit*, **hyr*, **blyn*, etc.

⁹³ There might appear to be another example of *den* in Peniarth 35 at 80r, by a different scribe: ‘Cany dylyir *den* daly am yr un ll6gyr’ (line 8), but this is either a scribal error for *deu* ‘two’ or should actually be read as *deu* (cf. the form of the *u* of *eu* at line 23). Cf. Titus D.ii, 61v: ‘cany deleyr *deu* dale am un llugyr’; Peniarth 29 p. 94 ‘kanyd yaun *deude* (sic) am lluguyr’; Caligula A.iii 198r col. 1 ‘kanyd ny deleyr *de6* dal6 am er 6n ll6gyr’; Peniarth 32 p. 159 ‘kanny dylyir *deu* daly am yr yn ll6gyr’; Jenkins 1986: 208: ‘since there is no right to *two* takings for one damage’. In Wynnstay MS 36 (s. xv¹), 32vb, *den* is another error for *deu* (cf. parallels in *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* s.v. *palledic*); Dr Sara Elin Roberts informs me that it is an interlinear insertion.

⁹⁴ Cf. Peniarth 30 (s. xiii med.) col. 192: ‘O *deruyd*. y *dyn* deuot e ty arall en trwytet’; BL Add. 14931 (s. xiii²) p. 104: ‘O deruyd y *dyn* dyuot yn truydet *dyn* arall’. These two manuscripts occasionally have *den* (see Table 6), though not here.

- the spelling <e> for /i(:)/ completely disappeared in the same period, except for some occasional slips in texts updated from thirteenth-century exemplars (e.g. Rejhon 1984: 75–6) plus the arguably fossilised spellings *ehun* ‘himself/herself’ (if = *y hun*, Mod.W. *ei hun*) and *ell deu* ‘they two’ (if = *yll deu*, Mod.W. *ill dau*), which are still found throughout the fifteenth century (see below, n. 99).

8. SPELLING /ə/ IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY AND BEYOND

A fundamental problem with all the thirteenth-century orthographies was the simultaneous currency of two competing spellings of /ə/: <e> and <y>.

The use of <y> for /ə/ as well as for /i/, would generally work well, as it does in Modern Welsh, owing to their complementary distribution in different syllables (see Section 1 above), barring an important exception: proclitic /ə/ and /i/. In the Black Book of Carmarthen and texts like the Dingestow *Brut*, the article *y*, the preverbal particle *y*, the possessive *y* ‘his/her’, and prepositional *y* ‘to’ (including the *y* element originally meaning ‘to’ or ‘from’ in compound prepositions such as *y gan*) all looked the same even though they had to be pronounced differently. By contrast, scribes of manuscripts such as Cotton Caligula A.iii made it a priority to differentiate proclitic <e> /ə/ in the article and particle from proclitic possessive and prepositional <y> /i/.⁹⁵ See Table 7.

In Caligula the aim seems to be to avoid the ambiguity of *y* in these monosyllables by consistently choosing <e> for /ə/ – a letter employed for /ə/ from Romano-British times, through Old Welsh down to names like *Keveyllauc* in the Ystrad Marchell charters (see subsections 2.2, 3, and 4 above).

It is worth stressing that otherwise the Caligula scribe, who is generally supposed to have been located at Valle Crucis in the north-east (his dialect agrees with that: Sims-Williams 2013: 19), normally uses <y> for both /i/ and /ə/. Typical spellings of /i(:)/ from another of his

Table 7. Spelling proclitic /ə/ and /i/ in the thirteenth century

	article /ə/	particle /ə/	3 sg possessive /i/	prepositional /i/
Black Book of Carmarthen ⁹⁶	y × 97 (+ e × 7 in poem 18)	y × 68	y × 141 (+ i × 3)	y × 81 (+ i × 4)
Caligula ⁹⁷	e × 157 (+ y × 1)	e × 20	y × 81	y × 64
Dingestow ⁹⁸	y	y	y (+ i × 1)	y

⁹⁵ Cf. Morris-Jones (1913: 16, quoting Peniarth 29 p. 6); Armstrong (1987/8: 23–4). As the <e> spelling occurs widely it is unlikely to reflect a dialectal pronunciation, despite Edward Lhuyd’s comparison with the *e* for *y* which he heard in Gwent in words like *yna* and *gyda* (Williams 1961: 131–2). **geda*/**geta* is not attested in *Rhyddiaith y 13g*.

⁹⁶ Figures based on Jarman (1982: 151, 168). Here I do not include the compound prepositions *y am*, *y ar*, etc. (Williams 1948), but they also favour <y>.

⁹⁷ Figures based on the same extract as was used above for Table 55. The exceptional *y* ‘the’ is at 150r col. 2: ‘6n ... y gan e brenyn. ac arall y gan y brenhynnes’ (‘one ... from the king and another from the queen’); the context shows that this *y* must be ‘the’ not ‘his’.

⁹⁸ The same extract as was used above for Table 55. Figures are not given as *y* cannot always be parsed unambiguously. The exceptional *i* is *i gilyd* (p. 54), normally *y gilyd*.

Table 8. Alternations of ‘clear’ and ‘dark’ <y> in the Caligula system, with <y> /i(:)/ for comparison

	/i(:)/		/ə/	
singular	<i>dyd</i> ‘day’	plural	<i>dydyev</i>	/i:/ → /ə/
singular	<i>dyn</i> ‘person’	plural	<i>dynyon</i>	/i:/ → /ə/
singular	<i>llys</i> ‘court’	plural	<i>llyssgoed</i>	/i:/ → /ə/
singular	<i>nyth</i> ‘nest’	plural	<i>nythot</i>	/i:/ → /ə/
singular	<i>enys</i> ‘island’	plural	<i>enysedd</i>	/i:/ → /ə/
3rd singular	<i>mynn</i> ‘wants’	impersonal	<i>mynnnyr</i>	/i:/ → /ə/
substantive	<i>kylch</i> ‘circuit’	verbal noun	<i>kylchynv</i> ‘to surround’	/i:/ → /ə/
Compare:	/i(:)/		/i/	
singular	<i>myl</i> ‘thousand’	plural	<i>mylyoed</i>	/i:/ → /i/
substantive	<i>gwysc</i> ‘dress’	verbal noun	<i>gwyscav</i> ‘to dress’	/i/

manuscripts, Llanstephan 1, are *amgylch*, *brynn*, *bryt*, *byrr*, *byt*, *byth*, *dy* ‘to’, *dyd*, *dyn*, etc., and there are almost no exceptions in which <e> is used for it.⁹⁹ Typical examples of /ə/ from the same manuscript are: *anryded*, *artymherv*, *bydyn* (with *vedyn* a rare exception), *cybydydet*, *damkylchynv*, *damplygv*, etc. There are, however, a few exceptions where <e> is used for /ə/. These exceptional spellings can easily be understood as having spread from the article *e* and particle *e*¹⁰⁰ and their pre-vocalic variants *er* and *ed/er* to other proclitics and then to similar-looking words, namely: *edyw*, *es*,¹⁰¹ and *essyd* ‘is’ (and various other words in *es-* such as *escavyn* ‘light’ and *escol* ‘school’, although *ys-* occasionally occurs, e.g. *yscolhegyon* ‘scholars’); *ema/eman* ‘here’; *ech* ‘your’ (and even *echydyd* /*echedyd* ‘few’); the reflexive prefix *em-* (although *ym-* also occurs); the various proclitics *en*, including the preposition *en/em*; *entev* ‘he’, *ena* ‘then’, *eno* ‘there’, *eny* ‘until’ (and even *enys*, *enysedd*, ‘island(s)’); and *e(r) rwng* ‘between’ (and its conjugated forms). There is clearly a system at work; <e> for /ə/ is limited to a very few environments. While initial position may be a factor, there are counter-examples such as *yskwyd* ‘shoulder’ and *yspeyt* ‘interval’. It is significant that none of the above words are ones in which /ə/ is involved in a paradigmatic alternation with /i(:)/, unlike those in Table 8. The only oddity in the selection of Llanstephan 1 studied here, apart from *echydyd* and *enys*, is *vedyn* /vəðin/, which occurs just once beside the scribe’s normal *bydyn* (ByB lines 510–11); compare *bedin* (cited below) in the Book of Aneirin (= Mod.W. *byddin* ‘army’).

⁹⁹ For references see glossary to ByB. Rare exceptions, where <e> may be used for /i(:)/, are the pronouns *ehvn*, *ehvnan*, *ehvneyn* and *ell* (for which see Morris-Jones 1913: 16, 275–6 and Evans 1964: 89–90, 99; on the etymology of the *hun* ‘self’ element cf. Lewis & Pedersen 1961: 122, 187; Schrijver 1997: 83). These spellings, which remain more popular than *y hun*, *yll*, etc., throughout the Middle Ages (see *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* and *Rhyddiaith y 15g*), may be stereotyped spellings that go back to a period when <e> was commonly used for /i(:)/. In the orthography of the Black Book of Carmarthen *Duu y hun* (Jarman 1982: no. 10.32) is clearly ‘God himself [lit. ‘his self’] with /i/, and in early manuscripts favouring <e> it seems reasonable similarly to understand <e> as /i/, e.g. Peniarth 14, p. 21 *e lad e hun* lit. ‘his killing of his self’ (s. xiii²). But matters are complicated by some persons where the expected possessives resemble independent pronouns, e.g. Llanstephan 1 (s. xiii med.) p. 162 *en hen tadev ny ny hvneyn* ‘our own ancestors’, in the light of which *e* in *e hun* might be compared with the pronoun *ef* ‘he’. Note in particular Cotton Cleopatra Bv i (s. xiv¹), 20r, where *y gwnaeth hy hun y lleith. nyt amgen nogyd y brathu hy hun* ‘she did/effected herself her death – that is she stabbed herself’ contrasts with *y dyn y llad ehun* ‘for a person to kill himself’ (translation from Irslinger 2020: 303; NLW 7006B p. 69 has only *e hun*). Was *e* reinterpreted as a masculine pronoun? This will not work in earlier texts, however; e.g. Peniarth 21 (s. xiii/xiv) 10v1.4 *ynyllaw ehvn* ‘into her own hand [lit. ‘her hand her self’]’. More research is needed.

¹⁰⁰ The spelling of the particle as *y* in ByB line 32 is the only exception. Is it significant that it is the first word after a page turn, where a scribe might lapse?

¹⁰¹ In *esef* < *es ef*. The copula *ys/es* on its own does not occur in ByB 79–80, but see Llanstephan 1 p. 101 for *es*. It seems unlikely that the alternation seen in *ystyn* ~ *estyn* (Morris-Jones 1913: 16) can explain all these *es-* spellings.

Although the ‘Caligula’ system looks complex at first sight, it succeeds in differentiating the article and particle /ə/ from possessive and prepositional /i/, while at the same time keeping various paradigmatic relations explicit, such as those in Table 8.¹⁰²

To sum up, the Caligula system uses <e> and <y> systematically to represent /ə/ depending on the nature of the syllable in question, probably having started with the intention of differentiating a limited number of proclitics with /ə/ (written <e>) from proclitics with /i/ (written <y>).

Where the Caligula scribe is less successful is in differentiating /i/ and /i/. He writes both as <y>, and does not use <i> at all (see Section 7 above). By contrast, Hand A of the Book of Aneirin succeeds in using <i> systematically for /i/, but is unsystematic in denoting /i/ both by <e> – a representation also seen in Old Welsh and forms like *ret* (= Mod.W. *rhyd* ‘ford’) in the Ystrad Marchell charters – and by <y>, and in denoting /ə/ both by <y> e.g. *myngwas*, *dilynei*, *gomynei*, *kynnyvyat*, *gymhell*, *ysgeth*, *ysgwyt*, etc. (CA lines 3, 24, 26, 30, 35, 36) and also by <e> e.g. *megyrwas*, *lledan*, *bedin*, etc. (CA lines 4, 5, 65).

To give a general impression of the mixed success of the ‘Caligula’ system by which /ə/ is spelt <e> or <y> depending on the context, Table 9 gives the thirteenth-century spellings of words corresponding to Mod.W. *yna* ‘there, then’,¹⁰³ *yma(n)* ‘here’, and (unlenited instances of) *myned* ‘go’. (Obviously a slightly different impression might be gained by examining the entire lexicon.)

Table 9. /ə/ in *yna* ‘there’, *yma(n)* ‘here’, and *mynet/myned* ‘go’ in the thirteenth century

	ena	ema	eman	menet/d	yna	yma	yman	mynet/d
Saec. XIII med.								
Peniarth 1 (<i>Black Book of Carmarthen</i>)	0	0	0	0	3 <i>ina</i> + 2 <i>inaeth</i>	1 <i>yma</i> + 1 <i>ima</i>	0	11
Peniarth 44 + Llanstephan 1, pp. 102–45	743	12	5	0	0	0	0	108
rest of Llanstephan 1	135	3	1	0	0	0	5	59
BL Cotton Caligula A.iii	62	8	1	0	0	0	0	11
Peniarth 29 (<i>Black Book of Chirk</i>)	82	8	2	29	0	0	0	0
Peniarth 30 (<i>Llyfr Colan</i>)	139	5	0	50	3	0	0	0
Saec. XIII ²								
<i>Book of Aneirin</i> ¹⁰⁴	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	2
Peniarth 14, pp. 1–44	38	4	2	8	0	0	0	6
Peniarth 17	25	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Peniarth 6i	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peniarth 6ii	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
BL Cotton Titus D.ii (<i>Llyfr Iorwerth</i>)	85	17	5	17	48	5	0	23
BL Add. 14931	1	0	1	1	97	8	4	36
NLW 5266 (<i>Dingestow</i>) + Peniarth 16iv	19	0	4	0	290	10	5	98
	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Peniarth 3i ¹⁰⁵	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peniarth 6iii	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1
Peniarth 16iii	31	2	1	2	0	0	0	1
Peniarth 14, pp. 45–78	78	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Peniarth 14, pp. 79–90	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

¹⁰² The examples are from the glossary to Llanstephan 1 in ByB 84–103, except for *mynn* and *mynnyr* (= Mod.W. *myn* and *mynir*) which are from Caligula A.iii, 156v col. 1 and 182r col. 2.

¹⁰³ Examples of *odena*, *od ena*, etc. are not included. The Latin law manuscripts (Peniarth 28, Vespasian E.xi, and Harley 1796) are omitted from the Table as they have no relevant data.

¹⁰⁴ Prose rubrics only; there are no examples in the verse.

¹⁰⁵ Lloyd (1949).

Table 9 shows that, following the 'Caligula' system, thirteenth-century manuscripts have more *y*-spellings for *myned* than for *yna* and *yma(n)*. The Black Book of Carmarthen has <i> in *ina* (and *inaeth*, arguably an older form of *ina*),¹⁰⁶ but always <y> in *myned* and in one of its two examples of *yma/ima*. These *i*-spellings are not found again. The other manuscripts, like the Black Book, overwhelmingly have <y> in *mynet/myned*, with the major exception of Peniarth 29–30 (s. xiii med.). In the second half of the century Peniarth 14.1–44, Titus D.ii, and Peniarth 16iii are still quite favourable to *menet/mened*, but overall it is in decline. The preference for <y> in this word in BL Add. 14931 and the Dingestow *Brut* is particularly striking.

By contrast, <e> for /ə/ lasts much longer in words such as *ena*. It is only in BL Add. 14931 and the Dingestow *Brut* that *yna*, etc. take over decisively. In using <y> for /ə/ in both *myned* and *yna* these two manuscripts thus anticipate the fourteenth century – and Modern Welsh. Add. 14931, however, still favours <y> for /i:/ in words like *tyr* (see Table 6), whereas the Dingestow *Brut* distinguishes *tir* and *dyn* as Modern Welsh does, using <i> for /i(:)/ and <y> for /i(:)/ and /ə/ – the way of the future (see Section 7 above). Admittedly, it has some departures from this system, especially in the first pages where the scribe seems to be finding his feet, but they are few and far between. Of Dingestow's exceptional examples of <e> for /ə/ or /i(:)/ claimed by Henry Lewis (1942: xxxii–xxxiii), the only ones occurring more than four times are as follows:

<e> for /ə/ 303 *enys* 'island' versus five *ynys*; ten *emdeith* 'away' versus seven *ymdeith*; eight *eny* 'until' versus 115 *yny*; six lower case *er* 'the' (5 of them on p. 1) versus numerous *yr*. – The number of examples of *enys* is surprising. Perhaps *enys* was so familiar and stereotyped a spelling (see on Llanstephan 1 above) that the scribe rarely thought of changing it.¹⁰⁷

<e> for /i(:)/ 20 *kedymdeyth/kedymdeith/ketymdeith* 'companion' and derivatives of it (never written with *ky*-); thirteen *ket* 'together; although' versus two *kyt*; five *ell deu* 'they two'. – Throughout the Middle Ages *ell* is preferred to *yll* (see n. 99). Similarly, in the 1300–1425 prose corpus *kedymdeyth*- etc., have <e> in the first syllable far more often than <y> (448:127).¹⁰⁸ Like *enys* above, the spelling *ket*, if = /ki(:)d/, may be a fossil (cf. OW *cet* and *cen*). In the mid fourteenth century, Peniarth 46 still has seven examples of *ket* spelt with <e> to two with <y>.¹⁰⁹ It is not impossible that some of the above forms are unstressed and have /ə/ rather than /i(:)/ as Lewis supposed.¹¹⁰

From the turn of the thirteenth/fourteenth century onwards *menet* virtually disappears.¹¹¹ I can find no examples in poetry.¹¹² There are 2,565 examples of *mynet/myned* in the 1300–1425 prose corpus¹¹³ and 449 in the incomplete fifteenth-century prose corpus. By contrast these corpora have only eleven instances of *menet*, a vanishingly small number:

¹⁰⁶ But see Fleuriot & Evans (1985: I, 225, II, 492; cf. Morris-Jones 1913: 431–2; Evans 1964: 221).

¹⁰⁷ Except for the slavish copy of the Llanstephan *Brut* in Cardiff 1.363, there are no examples of *enys* in *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* except for one on p. 294 of Peniarth 20, on which see the Conclusion. (The examples from Peniarth 46 are all from leaves copied from Peniarth 29 and inserted by J. G. Evans!) The plural *enyssed/enyssoned* is attested more widely, however; the quality of its unstressed initial vowel may have been obscured. Regarding Dingestow's six *emyl* versus 0 *ymyl* note that GPC regards *emyl* as a genuine variant.

¹⁰⁸ Calculated from the examples in *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* s. *ced*/cet** and *cyd*/cyr**. On this see above, n. 74.

¹⁰⁹ *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425*. These are *not* from the leaves inserted by Evans (for which see the *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* metadata).

¹¹⁰ While Lewis (1942: xxxiii) discusses *kedymdeyth* under /i/, Morris-Jones (1913: 16) regards it as /ə/ (cf. Mod.W. *cydymaith*, OIG 7) and invokes [ə] ~ [e] alternation (cf. Evans 1964: 1) which is hard to prove.

¹¹¹ There are no examples of *mened*, *minet*, or *mined* in *Rhyddiaith 1300–1425* or *Rhyddiaith y 15g*.

¹¹² Prof. Ann Parry Owen confirms this.

¹¹³ Including Peniarth 164. Again, lenited examples are ignored.

- Peniarth 35, fols 52–70 (s. xiv¹), whose conservative copying has already been noted, has three *menet* versus three *mynet*.
- BL Cotton Titus D.ix (s. xiv med.), another law text, has one *menet* versus thirteen *mynet*.
- Peniarth 15 (s. xiv/xv) has two *menet* versus three *mynet* in the *Life* of St Beuno and two *menet* in the *Elucidarium* versus twelve *mynet*. The whole manuscript has thirty one examples of *mynet/myned*.
- Oxford, Rawlinson B 467 (s. xiv/xv), a medical manuscript, has one *menet* versus one *mynet*.
- Shrewsbury School 11 (s. xiv/xv) has one *menet* in *Y Groglith* versus five *mynet*. The whole manuscript has seventeen examples of *mynet*.
- Llanstephan 27 (s. xiv/xv) has one *menet* versus 0 *mynet* in *Adrian ac Ipotis*. The whole manuscript has seventy nine examples of *mynet*.

Thus spellings like *menet* were typical only of a few thirteenth century lawbooks, notably Peniarth 29–30 (s. xiii med.) and, to a lesser extent, Titus D.ii (s. xiii²), and by s. xiii/xiv they have virtually disappeared.

By contrast, the ‘Caligula’ system, with <y> for /ə/ in words like *mynet*, but <e> for /ə/ in words like *ena*, *ema*, *eman*, lasted throughout the thirteenth century, with the major exceptions of BL Add. 14931 and NLW 5266 (s. xiii²). It barely continues into the fourteenth century, however. Most manuscripts now have *yna* (also *ynaeth* in verse),¹¹⁴ *yma*, and *yman*. Exceptions in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century prose corpora are so rare that a complete list may be given:

- Peniarth 16i (s. xiii/xiv) has 1 *Ena* (with rubricated **E**), continuing the avoidance of **Y** discussed earlier. Its examples of *yna* (1) and *yma* (2) have lower-case **y**.
- Peniarth 35, fols 52–70 (s. xiv¹), mostly copying the thirteenth-century *Llyfr Cynghawssedd* (see Section 7 above), has thirty *ena* and thirteen *ema*, all but one of them lower-case (versus 7 *yna* and 1 *yma*). As usual these must reflect its exemplar.
- Peniarth 20 (s. xiv¹), mostly has *yna* (157 examples), but it has seven examples of *ena* (lower-case) by a second hand (Scribe B, ‘X89’) on pp. 292–93, and a further one on p. 132 (col. 2.23: *ac ena*) in a correction by the same hand. See discussion in the Conclusion.
- Cleopatra B.v i (s. xiv¹), mostly has *yna* (677 examples), but on 62r–64r it has ten *Ena* (with capital **E**) in Merlin’s prophecy. The scribe is again ‘X89’.
- Cardiff 1.363 (Hafod 2) (s. xiv¹), a careful copy of the thirteenth-century Llanstephan Version of the *Brut*, has eighty six *ena*, three *ema* and nine *eman* (versus 102 *yna*, 2 *yma*, and 4 *yman*). The <e> spellings are presumably from the scribe’s exemplar; but note that he is less strict about using them than the Llanstephan 1 scribe was (cf. Table 9 above).
- Peniarth 14, 101–90 (s. xiv¹), has 7 *Ena* (all with capital **E**) in the *Life* of Margaret and Merlin’s prophecy, versus 161 *yna* in the manuscript as a whole (only 6 of them with an arguably capital **Y**).
- Peniarth 18 (s. xiv med.) has one *ena* at 38r (as opposed to 213 *yna*) in the chronicle *Brut y Tywysogyon*, s.a. 1170/1 (*Ac ena yd aeth rys ... ‘And then Rhys went ...’*), presumably a one-off failure to modernise an exemplar. None of the other manuscripts have *ena* here, presumably having modernised.

¹¹⁴ There is one *ynaeth* in the Hendregadredd Manuscript (H 89b) (see Owen & Williams 1989), six in the Peniarth 3ii poems (Williams 1928: *Cyfoesi* lines 12, 23, 140, and 204, *Afallennau* lines 174 and 222), three in the Peniarth 4 poems (Phillimore 1886: 125–6), and two in the Red Book of Hergest (CBT IV 16.55 and 74; Williams 1985). The Red Book also has one example of *enaeth* (R 1273.9), in a poem by Madog Dwygraig in the second half of the fourteenth century – a very late instance of <e> for /ə/.

- Peniarth 5, fols 1–57 (s. xiv med.),¹¹⁵ has nine *ena* (as opposed to 396 *yna*) and one *eman* (as opposed to 12 *yman*). Apart from three instances of *ena*, a capital **E** is used in *Ena* and *Eman*. The three lower-case examples of *ena* (in *Mabinogi Iesu Grist*, *Efengyl Nicodemus*, and *Ystoria Titus*) are presumably slips when modernising older texts. The error *Eynteu* in *Ystoria Titus* (36v) suggests hesitation between *Enteu* and *Ynteu* when modernising.
- NLW 3035 (s. xiv²) has one example of *Ena* (as opposed to 667 *yna*); this lone *Ena* (in Merlin’s prophecy, 85r) has rubricated **E**.
- In Peniarth 11 the professional scribe Hywel Fychan (c. 1380) has fifteen *ema* (as opposed to 387 *yma*). These fifteen are all cases of rubricated *Emā*. Evidently **E** was still regarded as appropriate in this environment.
- In Peniarth 263 (s. xv¹) there is one example of *ena* (versus 145 *yna*). It is in a difficult passage (*duw a l elwit enabifrontis/iani* ‘a god called then Two-Faced Janus’, col. 145) which may have puzzled the copyist and caused him to slip.¹¹⁶
- Llanstephan 116 (s. xv med.) has 1 *ena* in *Llyfr y Damweiniau* (44r, versus 75 *yna*), presumably a rare slip when modernising an older text similar to that in Peniarth 30 (s. xiii med.), which has *ena* at this point (col. 196). BL Add. 14931 (s. xiii²) p. 105 has *yna*.
- Peniarth 24 (dated 1477) has one *ena* (and no examples of *yna*) at 10v. This is a fragment of an otherwise unattested translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth with old orthography throughout (Sims-Williams 2011a: 48–55), evidently copied carefully from a lost manuscript. It retains, for example, *ene* (for *yny* /əni/ ‘until’), a thirteenth-century spelling otherwise found after 1300 only in the similarly conservative manuscripts Peniarth 35, at 59r, and in Cardiff 1.363, *passim*.

In short, the thirteenth-century ‘Caligula’ system of spelling /ə/ by <y> in words like *mynet* and by <e> in words like *ena* rapidly became obsolete in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with very few exceptions, mostly in copies of thirteenth-century texts.

9. CONCLUSION

In Old Welsh before c. 1100 <i> and <e> were both used to represent monophthongal /i(:)/ and /ə/, and <y> was confined to diphthongs so far as we know, only starting to be used for monophthongal /ə/ at Llanbadarn in the late eleventh century. After that many twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscripts used <i> and <y> indiscriminately for both /i(:)/ and /ə/, while others continued to use <e> for both sounds, as in Old Welsh. After c. 1330 those uses of <e> died out, barring a few spellings such as *ehun* /i’hū:n/ ‘himself’ and *Ema* /’əma/ ‘here’ (with capital **E**); these had presumably become fixed in scribal tradition.

In the mid thirteenth century an abortive attempt was made to use <e> for /ə/ in proclitics such as *e* ‘the’ and various other short words versus <y> for proclitics such as *y* /i/ ‘his’ – and also for /i(:)/ ~ /ə/ as in *nyth* /ni:θ/ ‘nest’, plural *nythot* /’nəθod/. I have called this the ‘Caligula’ system after one of the three manuscripts, thought to have been written at Valle Crucis, in which it first appears. While the ‘Caligula’ system solved the problem of differentiating the proclitics, it was probably over-complex, and suffered because the scribes who used it tended to employ <y> for /i(:)/ as well. The modern system, by which <i> represents /i(:)/ and <y> represents /i(:)/ and /ə/, is first glimpsed in the mid twelfth century in *Braint Teilo* in the Book of Llandaf and comes into view again towards the end of the thirteenth century in NLW 5266 (the Dingestow *Brut*).¹¹⁷ The scribe of this manuscript,

¹¹⁵ A separate manuscript from the rest of the White Book of Rhydderch (Huws 2000: 244–5 and 252–3).

¹¹⁶ On this passage see Sims-Williams (2011a: 33–9).

¹¹⁷ See Section 8 above. Of course, fortuitous ‘correct’ spellings appear earlier, e.g. *tydyn* (= Mod.W. *tyddyn*) in MS B of the Latin Laws (Emanuel 1967: 227; cf. *tygdyn* in MS A, *ibid.* 132), but they are not systematic.

though often careless – and condemned by Gwenogvryn Evans as a ‘toothless old monk’ (see Russell 1999: 83) – was both traditional in upholding the ‘Teilo’ system and ahead of his time, anticipating Modern Welsh orthography.

Barring occasional slips, post-*c.* 1300 scribes continued to distinguish <y> for /i(:)/ in *dyn* ‘person’ etc. from <i> for /i(:)/ in *tir* ‘land’ etc., except for the scribes of Peniarth 35, fols 52–70 (s. xiv¹), and Cardiff 1.363 (s. xiv¹). These two manuscripts are copies of texts in thirteenth-century orthography by scribes who followed their exemplars faithfully, perhaps working for patrons accustomed to reading old texts. – Peniarth 35 was still being used by a practising lawyer in Breconshire as late as *c.* 1500 (Huws 2022).

By *c.* 1300 spellings of schwa by <e> in words like *menet* ‘go’ – a convention up to the mid thirteenth century – have also disappeared, barring rare scribal lapses, except, once again, for Peniarth 35, fols 52–70, and Cardiff 1.363. Spellings with <e> in words like *ena* ‘then’, following the ‘Caligula’ system, last a little longer, being found regularly not only in those same two manuscripts, but also in the contributions to Peniarth 20 (s. xiv¹) by its Scribe B, discussed further below, and in Peniarth 24 (dated 1477). The latter fragment, possibly from Basingwerk, Flintshire (not far from Valle Crucis),¹¹⁸ seems to be a careful copy of a lost text in thirteenth-century orthography.

Leaving aside conservative copyists, the last scribe to make active use of the thirteenth-century ‘Caligula’ system (*ena* alongside *mynet*, etc.) is Scribe B of Peniarth 20, writing at Valle Crucis, Denbighshire, *c.* 1330. This is interesting because its Scribe A is the first person (so far as we know) to state, in the Bardic Grammar on p. 305, that the letter *y* has two pronunciations, *tywyll* ‘dark’ and *eghur* ‘clear’, as in *ystyr* ‘meaning’ and *llythyr* ‘letters’ (see Section 1 above). He also proposes **q₃** (the Latin abbreviation for *que*) as a Welsh letter for /ð/ and even employs it himself in his copy of the chronicle *Brut y Tywysogyon* from AD 681 to 1282 in the same manuscript (Peniarth 20, pp. 65–291).¹¹⁹ His dialect suggests that he came from the south (Jones 1952: xlvi–xliv; Charles-Edwards & Charles-Edwards 1994: 301–2). Scribe B, who was perhaps of superior status at Valle Crucis,¹²⁰ had contrary orthographical opinions. He nowhere employs his colleague’s new letter, and sticks to old-fashioned spellings like *ena*, both when correcting Scribe A’s copy of the chronicle (at p. 132) and in continuing the annals beyond AD 1282 (on pp. 292–302). Scribe B wrote these annals in four stints: AD 1282–90; 1291–1330; 1331; and 1332 (Charles-Edwards & Charles-Edwards 1994; Stephenson 2020). Up to and including 1331, he regularly used old spellings like *en*. But in 1332 he prefers *yn* for /əɲ/ (4 examples) and only has *En* once, with a capital **E** – a special case, as we have seen repeatedly. In his copies of other historical writings, in BL Cotton Cleopatra B.v, part i, Scribe B favours the modern system, with 677 examples of *yna*, for instance, and not a single instance of *ena* unless capitalised (he has 10 examples of *Ena*).

¹¹⁸ John Jones of Gellilyfdy, who made a copy of Peniarth 24 (see Peniarth 314), saw and copied two other manuscripts dated to the 1470s (see Llanstephan 88 and Cardiff 2.633 (Hafod 23)), and from one of these, which he says was from Basingwerk, he copied *Y Groglith*, in Cardiff 2.633. The Basingwerk *Y Groglith* was probably copied from Peniarth 14, pp. 79–81 (s. xiii²), and preserved its old orthography. See Mittendorf (1999) and Huws (2022). Perhaps Peniarth 24 was copied in 1477 from a lost part of what is now Peniarth 14, pp. 79–90?

¹¹⁹ See Charles-Edwards (2016: 157–9). He argues that **q₃** /*que* was invented to replace &jet /eð/ as a name for /ð/ after the letter *t* had ceased to denote /ð/. The only other reference to the letter **q₃** is in the Gwysanau Bardic Grammar (s. xiv²), whose author may have drawn on Peniarth 20 directly. Parry Owen (2010: 13–14, 18, 26–27, 31; 2016: 184–5, 197, and 199) thinks it likely that the letter was devised by Scribe A of Peniarth 20 himself. I leave aside the vexed question of the relationship between Scribe A, the Gwysanau Grammar, and the attribution of a Grammar to Dafydd Ddu of Hiraddug (cf. Gruffydd 1996).

¹²⁰ Huws (2022, s. Scribe X89) says: ‘His handwriting is singularly assured. Everything points to his having been a decisive editor and historian as well as a scribe’. Cf. Charles-Edwards & Charles-Edwards (1994: 303): ‘the principal historian of Valle Crucis *c.* 1330’. The orthography of the lost manuscript Hengwrt 33 seems to have been similar to Scribe B’s, and it may have been of similar date and provenance (Guy 2016: 84–5).

So AD 1331 seems to mark the last gasp of the Caligula system, at least so far as creative writers were concerned (as opposed to a handful of copyists),¹²¹ and the triumph of what is still the current system of 'dark' and 'clear' y, seven centuries later – basically the mid-twelfth-century Teilo system. The main advantage of the Caligula system was in differentiating proclitic y /i/ ('to', etc.) from proclitic e /ə/ ('the', etc.), both spelt y in the Teilo system. Fortuitously, the Modern Welsh development of /i/ to /i/ in the relevant words made it easy to differentiate i 'to' from y 'the' and obviated the Caligula system's only advantage.

Whereas it is possible to trace the standardisation of Modern Welsh orthography between the 'Oxford Welsh' recommendations of the 1890s and the decisions of the University of Wales Board of Celtic Studies in 1928 (Jones 1988: 134–5; OIG), the success of the Teilo system cannot yet be traced in geographical or institutional terms, owing to a lack of data. Monophthongal <y> is first seen in mid-Wales at the scriptorium of Llanbadarn c. 1100, and 'dark' and 'clear' y are already contrasted with i at Llandaf in *Braint Teilo* in the mid twelfth century. Also in south Wales (but in the south-west), the Black Book of Carmarthen has a completely different system, or rather lack of system, a century later. Unfortunately, the provenance of the Dingestow *Brut*, in which the Teilo system re-emerges towards the end of the thirteenth century, is unknown.¹²² One might expect the Cistercian Order, which did so much to promote the vernacular in Wales, to have played a role in standardising its orthography.¹²³ Yet the Cistercians of twelfth-century Ystrad Marchell and thirteenth-century Whitland (n. 76 above) were still using <e> for /i(:)/ and /ə/ in the Old Welsh fashion, and as late as 1331 at Valle Crucis Scribe B of Peniarth 20 was still adhering to the Caligula system. Further palaeographical work is required in order to trace the geographical spread of the Teilo system.¹²⁴ The chronological situation is much clearer: the Teilo system of spelling 'dark' and 'clear' y came to prevail over the Caligula system everywhere in the generation between c. 1300 and c. 1330.¹²⁵

10. NON-BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS

BL = British Library, London
 Mod.W. = Modern Welsh
 MW = Middle Welsh
 NLW = National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
 OW = Old Welsh

11. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS

AC = *Annales Cambriae*. See Phillimore 1888.

AMR = *Archif Melville Richards: Place-names database*. <http://www.e-gymraeg.co.uk/enwaulleoedd/amr>

ByB = Roberts, Brynley F. (ed.), 1971. *Brut y Brenhinedd, Llanstephan MS. 1 Version: Selections*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

¹²¹ Note, however, the stray *enaeth* in Madog Dwygraig (n. 114 above), a poet from Penllyn, Meirionnydd. A sporadic development of [ə] to [e], as in *Llanecil* < *Llanycil* (Morris-Jones 1913: 16, 59), cannot be ruled out.

¹²² The dialectal evidence is ambiguous (Thomas 1993: 40–1; Russell 1999; Sims-Williams 2013: 21, 36–7).

¹²³ Huws (2000: 14–15). In 1228 Cistercians from Whitland were condemned for speaking Welsh rather than French (Sims-Williams 2011b: 18–19). Cf. Charles-Edwards & Russell (1994: 431): 'Even at Valle Crucis, c. 1330, only hand B of Peniarth MS 20 made much use of e, alongside y, for /ə/, whereas, c. 1250, e was standard for /ə/. It may be that the change was encouraged by the spread of new scribal practices in Cistercian houses'.

¹²⁴ On manuscripts see especially Huws (2000) and Huws (2022).

¹²⁵ I am grateful for many helpful comments to Professors Marged Haycock, Ann Parry Owen, Paul Russell, and David Willis.

CA = Williams, Ifor (ed.), 1938. *Canu Aneirin*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

CBT = Gruffydd, R. Geraint (general ed.), 1991–96. *Cyfres Beirdd y Tywysogion*. 7 vols. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

CC = Haycock, Marged (ed.), 1994. *Blodeugerdd Barddas o ganu crefyddol cynnar*. Llandybie: Cyhoeddiadau Barddas.

Corpus = Redknap, M., J. M. Lewis, & Nancy Edwards (eds.), 2007–13. *A corpus of Early Medieval inscribed stones and stone sculpture in Wales*. 3 vols. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

ECMW = Nash-Williams, V. E., 1950. *The early Christian monuments of Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

EGOW = Falileyev, Alexander, 2000. *Etymological glossary of Old Welsh*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

GP = Williams, G. J., & E. J. Jones (eds.), 1934. *Gramadegau'r penceirddiaid*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

GPC = *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru: A dictionary of the Welsh language*. www.geiriadur.ac.uk

H = Morris-Jones, Rhiannon, John Morris-Jones, & T. H. Parry-Williams (eds.), 1933. *Llawysgrif Hendregadredd*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

HB = *Historia Brittonum*, in Morris, John (ed.), 1980. *Nennius: British history and the Welsh annals*. London & Chichester: Phillimore.

HG = *Harley Genealogies*. See Phillimore 1888.

LL = Evans, J. Gwenogvryn, & John Rhys (eds.), 1979. *The text of the Book of Llan Dâw Reproduced from the Gwysaney Manuscript*. repr. Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales.

OIG = *Orgraff yr Iaith Gymraeg*, 1928, repr. 1942. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

R = Evans, J. Gwenogvryn (ed.), 1911. *The poetry in the Red Book of Hergest*. Llanbedrog: J. G. Evans.

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Vesp. = BL Cotton Vespasian MS A.xiv.

VSΒ = Wade-Evans, A. W. (ed.), 1944. *Vitae sanctorum Britanniae et genealogiae*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

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