

Etymology of "Rile"

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N.E.D. quotes *meal-mouthed* means *melliloquus*. The reader can judge for himself:

When the *meale mouth* hath woon the bottome of your stomake, than will the pick-thanke it tell (1546).

Saying that you had flatterers and *meal-mouthed* merchants in high estimation (1576).

Dr Bradley says that my interpretation is not correct, and that 'a man earns the epithet *meal-mouthed*, not by what he says, but by what he refrains from saying,' the latter statement being obviously true for current usage. As no modern *ipse dixit* is of any value on the first point, I propose to take the opinions of two Tudor Englishmen. Francis Holyoak, in his edition of Rider's *Lat. Dict.* (1612), has '*meale-mouthed*, perblandus,' apparently contrasted with '*foule-mouthed*, maledicus.' Thomas Thomas, in the 14th ed. of his *Lat. Dict.* (1644), has 'perblandus, very pleasant and courteous in words; *meale-mouthed*, passing faire spoken.' The first edition of Rider is 1589, of Thomas 1587. It would be interesting to know when these glosses first appear. Compare

Qui n'a argent en bourse, ait du moins du miel en bouche, He that hath not meanes to pay, at least must frame his mouth to pray (Cotg.).

Honig im mund, and gall im hertzen, A hony-tongue and a heart of gall (Ludwig, *Ger.-Eng. Dict.* 1716).

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NOTTINGHAM.

ETYMOLOGY OF 'RILE.'

Altered from *roil*, orig. to make (water) turbid, hence to perturb the temper. The *N.E.D.* quotes from Godefroy an obs. F. *ruiler*, to mix mortar. The form suggests F. *rouiller*, to rust (cf. *boil*, *soil*), which does not, so far as I know, occur in the required sense. But its O.F. derivative *rouil*, mud, fits exactly. It occurs, in the plural, in Beroul's *Tristan*: 'Cist gazez est plain de *rouiz*' (l. 3870).

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RECOVERY OF A LOST LEAF IN HARLEIAN MS. 2382.

The existence of an odd leaf in Sloane MS. 297 was noted as early as 1782 in Ayscough's Catalogue, where it is described as 'part of a leaf of old English poetry,' the rest of the volume being a collection of fifteenth century medical treatises. Some time within the last twenty years Mr McCracken pointed out that the 'old English poetry' was a portion of Lydgate's 'Life of Our Lady,' and a marginal entry to that