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Author(s): Marie A. Lewenz

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WEST GERMANIC 'I' IN OLD ENGLISH SAXON DIALECTS.

I¹.

IN EWS. the vowel *i* may be regarded as fairly constant, if we except the cases in which it develops into *io*, *eo*, and with *i* mutation into *ie*, these developments being caused (1) by fracture before certain consonants, (2) by *u* and *a/o* mutation before liquids and labials, and (3) after *w* without reference to the following consonants. However, as Sievers suggested (*Angelsächsische Grammatik*, § 105, A. 5 and § 107, A. 6) and Bülbring definitely asserted (*Altenglisches Elementarbuch*, § 235, A.), a cause of further variation is found in the influence of various Saxon patois in cases where *u* and *o/a* mutation occurred before consonants other than liquids and labials (*e.g.*, *nioðor*², *siodo*, *ðiosum*, etc.). But it is probable that we have the influence of such a patois also in the frequent cases in EWS. where *ie*₂ appears instead of *i*₁. The following is an attempt to discover whether the occurrence of these *ie*₂ forms is due to the influence of a patois in which the *ie*₁ forms were a normal development, and, this being so, whether the influence of this patois extended to LWS.

In EWS. we find *i*₁ subject to a double variation; it appears (1) as *io*, due to the patois mentioned by Bülbring, and (2) as *ie*₂. In LWS. we again find *i*₁ subject to a double variation; we have (1) *eo*, *io*, arising under the same conditions as the EWS. *io* forms, and therefore probably due to the same patois, and (2) *y*₃ forms. But, as will subsequently be shown, there are no *ie*₂ forms³. If the *ie*₂ forms in EWS. are due to the

¹ For convenience the following notation has been adopted: *i*₁, constant *i* in Early and Late West Saxon (EWS. and LWS.); *y*₁, EWS. *y* < West Germanic (WG.) *u* + *i*, *j*; *ie*₁, EWS. *ie* < *ea* + *i*, *j*, etc.; *ie*₂, EWS. *ie* which sometimes occurs instead of EWS. *i*, and is the subject of the present investigation; *y*₂, LWS. *y* < EWS. *ie*₁; *y*₃, LWS. *y* which sometimes occurs instead of *i*₁.

² In the examples quoted no distinction is made between *ð* and *þ* which are uniformly represented by *ð*.

³ There are a few exceptions: (1) in the *Codex Wintoniensis*, where we find *hiera*, but this LWS. monument preserves various archaic forms; (2) in the *Blickling Homilies*, where we find *hiene* three times; and (3) the *Dialogues of Gregory*, where we find *ie* in *wriexle*, *gesien*, *scyppendra*, *stiehtendum*, *hiere* (twice), but *ie* in the first and third of these stands for *y*₂.

influence of a patois, it naturally suggests itself that these y_3 forms in LWS. are due to the same cause. This is all the more probable as the LWS. y_2 forms are the normal development of the EWS. ie_1 forms, whether these arose from i mutation of eo , ea from e preceded by a palatal consonant, or instead of io , eo , owing to the so-called palatal mutation due to a following hs , ht (Sievers, *l.c.*, § 108, 1, Bülbring, *l.c.*, § 311). If then we should find LWS. y_3 forms occurring under the same conditions as EWS. ie_2 forms, it would be pretty safe to infer that the y_3 forms are a development of the ie_2 forms. R. A. Williams has suggested (*Die Vokale der Tonsilben im Codex Wintoniensis, Anglia*, N.F., XIII, § 4) that there was some connection between the y_3 forms and the io forms, and Sievers (*l.c.*, § 105, A. 4, A. 7) seems to imply the same; it will subsequently be shown that this is probably the case.

We must first consider under what circumstances ie_2 forms arose in EWS.

II.

1. The following words occur in EWS. both with i_1 and ie_2 forms. The examples are all taken from Cosijn's *Altwestsächsische Grammatik*, §§ 27—41.

Cura Pastoralis: bilwite and derivatives, 30 times with i ; bielwitlice, 1; birnan, 3, biernan, 3, birð, bireð, 10, bierð, 6; biteran, 1, bietre, 1, biernes, 1; bringan, etc. Hatton MS. 17, gebrienge, Hatton MS. 1 (in the Cotton MS. only brengan); adiligien, etc. 4 with i , to dielgianne, 1; firenlust, 7, fierenlust, 4; geflites, etc., 5, geflietu, 1; gefriðode, 3, gefrieðode, 1; hider, 7, hieder, 1; hilpeð, 1, hielpeð, 1; hine and hiene occur innumerable times; i(l)lea, 9, ielce, 1; irnan, etc., 3, iernan, etc., 10; li(g)eð, 2, liegeð, 1; ungerisenlic(e), 7, ungerisun, 2, ungeriesenlice, 1; sint, 344, sient, siendun, 11; gesihð, forsihð, 23, gesiehð, forsiehð, 9; gesihst, 2, gesiehsð, Hatton MS. 1; asliten, tosliten, 3, toslieten, 1; tidernes, 3, tiedernes, tiederlic, 2; tieglan, 2; ðider, 12, ðieder, 1; geðigene, 3, geðiegene, 1; ðienga, 1, otherwise only with i ; wille and its derivatives, 19 times with i and 16 with ie ; winð, 5, wienð 2; awint, gewint, 5, wient, 2; wieste, 1, otherwise wisse, wiðe, wiste; compounds of wiðer, 19 times with i , once with ie ; gewrite, etc., 20, awriten, Hatton MS. 48, Cotton, 30, gewrietum, 1, awrietten, Hatton MS. 3. *Orosius*: birnende, 1, biernende, 2; hine, 15, hiene, 237; irnan, etc., 8, iernan, etc., 4. *Saxon Chronicle*: hine, 18, hiene, 12.

On analysing these forms we find that in the *Cura Pastoralis* the ie_2 forms occur in most cases before or after labials and sonorous dentals

(l, r, n). The ie_2 forms are most numerous in the unaccented word *hine*. There are seven words which do not show the influence of labials or sonorous dentals, namely, *hider*, *gesihð*, *forsihð*, *gesihst*, *tidernes*, etc., *tiglan*, *ðider* and *geðigene*. These, however, furnish us with only seventeen ie_2 forms; and perhaps those from *seon* hardly belong here (cf. *Bülbring, l.c.*, § 306 C.). *Orosius* only shows ie_2 forms in three words, all of which show the influence of the above-mentioned consonants, and of the 243 ie_2 forms, 237 occur in the unaccented *hine*. In the *Chronicle* the only ie_2 forms occur in *hine*.

2. Turning next to such forms as occur in EWS. with i_1 , io (eo), and ie_2 , we find the following: *Cura Pastoralis*: *clipianne*, *clipað*, etc., 17 with i , *cliepiað*, 1, *cleopian*, etc., 10 with eo , *cliopa*, etc., 7 with io ; *hira*, *hire*, *heora*, *hiora*, *hiera*, *hiere*, all occur frequently; *behionan*; *lifað*, etc., 4 with i , *lifofað*, 2 with io , *ondliefene*, 1 with ie ; *niðor* and its derivatives, 5 with i , 2 with io , 4 with ie ; *tilian*, *Hatton MS. 22* with i , *Cotton MS. 9* with i , *Hatton*, 4 with io , *Cotton*, 2 with io , *Hatton*, 2 with ie , *getilian*, *tilað*, etc., 26 with i , 8 with io , 7 with ie ; *witena* (*doctorum virorum*), 1 with i , 1 with io , 1 with ie ; *witan*, *Hatton MS. 8* with i , *Cotton*, 3 with i , 1 with eo , 3 with io , *Hatton MS. 5* with ie , *Cotton MS. 6* with ie ; derivatives of *witan*, 37 with i , 11 with io , 24 with ie , *twi-* in compounds, 5 with i , 2 with eo , 14 with ie . *Orosius*: *hira*, 7 with i , 276 with eo , 107 with io , 76 with ie ; *&liefene*, 1, *leofað*, 1, *endlefan*, 3; *niðer*, etc., 4 with i , 1 with eo ; *witan*, etc., 32 with i , 2 with eo , 1 with ie ; *twi-*, 1 with ie . *Chronicle*: *hira*, 1 with i , 23 with ie ; *behinon*, 1 with i , 1 with ie ; *tilgende*, 1 with i ; *gewiton*, 1 with i , *wiotan*, 3 with io .

Here again we find the influence of labials and sonorous dentals, and it is again obvious that io , eo and ie_2 forms are most frequent in the unaccented *hira*.

3. Finally we have to consider under what conditions y_3 is found for i_1 in EWS. *Cura Pastoralis*: *byrð*, 1 (see p. 279); *abrycð*, 1; *clypian*, *clypien*, 2 (see p. 280); *cwyde*, 1; *fryccea*, 2; *hlynigen*, 1; *nyðemest*, 2 (see p. 280); *mycele*, 1, and *micel*; *aryson*, 1, *arison*, 1; *gesyhð*, (*videt*), 1 (see p. 279); *sylofr*, 1, *silofr*, 1, derivatives, 1 with eo , 7 with io ; *symle*, 7; *syn-* in compounds 3 with y , i often; *syððan*, 1, 1 with ie , i often; *sprycð*, 1; *aespryng*, *welspryng*, 3; *swyngcan*, 1, 8 with i ; *swyra* (*collum*), 3 with i , 1 with io , *se tydra*, 1; *to ðycganne*, 1; *ðysum*, etc., 14 with y , *ðys* often, i often, *ðeos*, *ðeosun*, *ðeosum*, about 8 times, *ðios*, *ðiosum*, *ðiosan*, about 15 times. *Orosius*: *byrnan*, *byrnende*, 2 (see

p. 279); drync, 1; sylfren, etc., 3, 4 with eo, 2 with io; symble, 2; aespryngð, 1; ðis, etc., i often, 5 with eo, 5 with io. *Chronicle*: Bryttisc, 1; ylcan, 1; mycla, 1; to tymbranne, 1.

The majority of cases in *Cura Pastoralis* once more shows the influence of labials and sonorous dentals. Those which do not are gesihð, siððan, tidra, ðicganne, ðis, etc. Excepting ðis, these give us in all only 4 y_3 forms and one ie_3 form. ðis which occurs frequently, with y, eo, and io, is an unaccented word. *Orosius* also shows the influence of the above-named consonants, and the unaccented word ðis, though it does not occur with y_3 , yet occurs with io, eo. In the *Chronicle* we find y_3 in every case in the vicinity of labials or sonorous consonants.

From the above analysis it appears that in EWS. ie_2 and y_3 forms are most frequent before or after labials and sonorous dentals, and the fact that a word is not accented seems to encourage the appearance of these forms. It is reasonable to assume that the phenomenon is due to the influence of some patois, in which, under the given conditions, i_1 regularly developed into a sound denoted by ie or y . As far as ie_2 forms are concerned, it is noticeable that there is not much agreement between the *Cura Pastoralis*, *Orosius* and the *Chronicle*. In the two latter ie_2 is only common in the two unaccented words hine and hira, and we may consequently conclude that in *Orosius* and the *Chronicle* the influence of the patois is for the most part restricted to unaccented words; whereas in the *Cura Pastoralis* the influence is to be seen not only in such cases, but also in the vicinity of labials and sonorous dentals. As far as the unaccented forms are concerned, it must be noted that these fall into two classes, words which are practically never accented, such as particles and prepositions, and words which occasionally have an accent, as pronouns and sometimes adverbs. Words such as hieder, ðieder, syððan, may have been unaccented, or the two first forms may have been influenced by nieðor. Other sporadic forms, such as geðiegene, etc., may be due to scribal errors¹. It has been already remarked that where the consonantal influence and the absence of accent coincide (e.g., hine, hira), the ie_2 forms are most frequent, and it may therefore be concluded that under these circumstances the influence of the patois was greatest. Geographically the influence does not seem to have been equally distributed, that of the consonants being more restricted and having little influence on the dialects of *Orosius* and the *Chronicle*.

¹ According to Bülbring, *l.c.*, §306, A. 2, a certain amount of confusion between i and y seems to have existed among the EWS. scribes; we find i in words where we should expect ie or (later) y, e.g., wirsa, wirð, etc.

III.

The following phonetic explanation of the phenomena discussed above has been suggested by R. A. Williams: i_1 was originally close i^1 ; now EWS. ie_1 becomes LWS. y_2 , which probably indicates that ie was first monophthongised and then became y , that is, $ie_1 > i_2 > y_3^2$. This intermediate i_2 was not equivalent to i_1 otherwise it could not have developed into y_2 . Since i_1 was close, we can only assume that i_2 was open, and consequently it follows that in Alfred's time ie_1 stood for open i .

Further, in the patois in question the influence of labials and sonorous dentals changed the original close i_1 in certain cases. This can only point to the fact that in such cases, either i_1 was diphthongised, or i_1 became open. When, however, we consider that the same change took place owing to absence of accent, the former alternative does not seem probable. Lack of accent at all times favours the formation of simple vowels rather than of diphthongs, and is more likely to have made a close sound open than to have converted it into a diphthong. Hence it follows that in the patois original close i_1 became open i under the influence of labials and sonorous dentals and absence of accent. But since original ie_1 had become open i , although the diphthong sign was preserved, it is easily understood that the open i forms of the patois were usually written ie_2 .

The open i of which we have been speaking develops into y . It must therefore have been nearly related to y in sound, which probably explains the presence of these y_3 forms in EWS., since they occur mostly for ie_1 or for ie_2 (that is, for open i). They represent the tendency to write y for open i , which is consistently carried out when, at a later period, the approximation between the two becomes complete. The fact that ie_2 and later y_3 forms occur side by side with io , eo forms in many words, suggests that the ie_2 , y_3 and io , eo forms have the same historical basis. If that be so, then most of the Saxon patois probably changed at an early date close i to open i under the conditions indicated above. After that they seem to have diverged into two groups, the one developing open i into y , the other changing open i into io (eo) by a/o and u mutation. Both these groups would appear to have had about equal influence on the WS. common speech.

¹ See Pogatscher in *Quellen und Forschungen*, lxiv, pp. 62 ff.

² Sweet is also of opinion that in Alfred's time ie was reduced to a monophthong. See his *History of English Sounds*, §§421 and 474, and his *Anglosaxon Reader*, §59.

IV.

We must now turn our attention to LWS. The following is a list of the LWS. texts of which I have made use. I have in no case examined the MSS. themselves, but I have incorporated in my notes the results of the grammatical investigations of others. As will be seen, several of these texts belong to the transition stage between Anglo-Saxon and Middle English, but the LWS. literary language is well preserved and shows little trace of Middle English forms. It is noteworthy that in all the grammatical investigations to which I shall refer, the *i* forms with which we are concerned are treated as normal, whereas the *y* forms are given as exceptions.

1. *Blooms*. This is found in a single MS. of the twelfth century. According to W. H. Hulme, *Die Sprache der altenglischen Bearbeitung der Soliloquien Augustins* (Darmstadt, 1894), the dialect is WS., but there is an admixture of other dialectical forms. He remarks that there is much uncertainty as to the use of *i* and *y* for *i*₁, but an analysis of the forms brings out very clearly that *y*₃ appears most often in unaccented forms, and in all other cases we find it in the neighbourhood of labials or sonorous dentals. Moreover, the *y*₃ forms are more numerous than the *i*₁ forms in the unaccented words, especially in those in which the consonantal influence and the absence of accent coincide; *i*₁ seems quite constant where the patois could not assert its influence.

2. *Codex Wintoniensis*. The Charters date from 668 to 1046, but the Codex was probably compiled between 1130 and 1150. R. A. Williams, *Die Vokale der Tonsilben im Codex Wintoniensis* (Anglia, N.F., XIII), suggests tentatively the influence of *w*, *r* and labials, especially of *r*, and also refers to the *io*, *eo* forms due to a non-WS. *u*, *a/o* mutation of *i*₁ as in some way conditioning the development of *i*₁ into *y*₃ (see above, p. 279). An examination of the forms he quotes leads to the conclusion that where *y* forms are not due to the influence of labials and sonorous dentals, there is a lack of accent except in one case: we find *y* once in *tychelleache*. With regard to this form, however, it may be noted that *tiglan* appears twice in the *Cura Pastoralis* with *ie*₂.

3. The LWS. *Gospels* based on four MSS. dating from 1000 to 1050. G. Trilsbach, *Die Lautlehre der spätwestsächsischen Evangelien* (Bonn, 1905), observes that *y* forms are not confined to the neighbourhood of labials. An investigation of the forms shows that *y*₃ also occurs in the neighbourhood of *l*, *r*, and *n*, that it is frequent in unaccented words and

that the form *hym*, for instance, where we have lack of accent and the neighbourhood of *m*, appears 290 times with *y* and once with *i*. In a few cases we find *y* under other conditions, *e.g.*, *dyhte*, *dyhton*, *dysce*, *dyxsas*, *stycað*, *syt* and its derivatives, *tygelwyrhtena* (see above), *yt* ('eats').

4. *The Blickling Homilies*. The MS. belongs to the end of the tenth century. According to A. K. Hardy, *Die Sprache der Blickling-Homilien* (Leipzig, 1899), the original dialect was a northern one, hence we find in addition to the usual WS. forms, a number of Anglian ones, but there are also traces of Kentish influence. Hardy notes that *y* is most frequent in the neighbourhood of labials, but it is clear that it also occurs near sonorous dentals and in unaccented words.

5. *Aethelred's Laws*. The investigation of A. Karaus, *Die Sprache der Gesetze des Königs Aethelfred* (Berlin, 1901), is based on a number of extant MSS.; the originals go back to about the year 1000, but the copies date from between 1060 and 1125. The dialect is Saxon in the main. Karaus shows that the *y* forms occur in the neighbourhood of labials and of liquids and nasals (*r* and *m*), and are pretty frequent in unaccented words. The only exceptions are *forsytte* and *tyhttan* and its derivatives.

6. *Knut's Laws*. L. Wroblewski, *Über die altenglischen Gesetze des Königs Knut* (Berlin, 1901), says that the text of these is based on four MSS. ranging from 1060 to 1125, and on several prints. He characterises the dialect as WS., but there are traces of Anglian, Kentish and southern dialects. He further points out that the *y* forms occur under the influence of labials and liquids; twice we find *y₃* before *n* and we also have forms of *tyhtlan* which both he and Karaus hold to have been influenced by *tyhtan*. In unaccented words *y* is also frequent.

7. *Aelfric's Latin Grammar*. Here we have fifteen MSS. which mostly belong to the eleventh century; the earliest dates from about the year 1000, while one MS. appears to belong to the twelfth century. H. Brüll, *Die altenglische Latein-Grammatik des Aelfric* (Berlin, 1900), gives many instances of *y* in cases where there is lack of accent. He also shows that *y* is frequent in the neighbourhood of labials and *r*, but it is clear from an inspection of his list that it also frequently occurs under the influence of *n* and *l*. There are only two words in which *y* appears under other conditions, namely *ytt* and *yttst*.

8. *Aelfred's Laws* (Textus Roffensis). R. Münch, *Die Hs. H (Textus Roffensis) der Gesetzsammlung König Aelfreds des Grossen*

(Halle, 1902), says that the earliest original law dates from 604, but the copies range in date from 1130 to 1150. The dialect is on the whole uniform. He points out that *y* occurs in the neighbourhood of labials and in unaccented words; but an examination of the forms given shows that sonorous dentals have a similar effect. The only exception is *stal-tyhtlan* (see above p. 284).

9. *Abingdon Cartulary*. There is some doubt with regard to the date of the two MSS. F. Langer, *Zur Sprache des Abingdon-Chartulars* (Berlin, 1904), places them at the end of the twelfth and the middle of the thirteenth centuries. The dialect shows traces of Anglian and Kentish influences. Langer does not seem to have realised that the forms were due to special influences, but on investigating his list we find that *y*₃ occurs in unaccented forms, and in the neighbourhood of sonorous dentals. The only two exceptions are *Gyddandene* and *hyd* (?).

10. *The Dialogues of Gregory*. According to H. Hecht, *Die Sprache der altenglischen Dialoge Gregors des Grossen* (Berlin, 1900), the text is based on three MSS. of the middle of the eleventh century. The dialect of two of these is LWS. with a few Anglian forms; that of the third shows a good deal of Kentish influence. He draws attention to the fact that *y* appears very often for *i*, and states that this change is due to the influence of consonants and the lack of accent. He makes no suggestion as to what consonants exert this influence, but an examination of the forms he gives, shows that *y*₃ appears in the neighbourhood of labials and liquid dentals. The only exceptions are *gestyhtad*, *tyhtað*, *tyðian*, and *geðyge*.

11. *Aelfric's Heptateuch*. J. Wilkes, *Lautehre zu Aelfrics Heptateuch und Buch Hiob* (Bonn, 1905), remarks that the text is chiefly based on one MS. which is supposed to have been written shortly after 1066. He does not suggest that *y* forms are due to any especial influence, but analysis shows that they occur in the neighbourhood of labials and sonorous dentals and in unaccented words. There are a few exceptions, namely, *hystoria*, *tyccen*, *tygelan*, *ytst*, *ytt* and *ysopan*.

12. *The Benedictine Rule*. W. Hermanns, *Lautehre und dialektische Untersuchung der altenglischen Interlinearversion der Benediktinerregel* (Bonn, 1906), says the MS. of this dates from the first half of the eleventh century. He also fails to point out that the appearance of *y* is due to any particular cause, but on examining his forms, we find that in every case *y*₃ occurs in the neighbourhood of labials or sonorous dentals, or in unaccented words.

Although the *i* forms are the normal ones, *y*₃ occurs fairly often, and in all these LWS. monuments *y*₃ forms are found most frequently in the vicinity of labials and sonorous dentals and in unaccented words. There are certainly some exceptions, but they are few when compared with the cases in which the above-mentioned conditions hold¹. I think we may thus fairly maintain that in LWS. *y*₃ appears normally only under the influence of labials and sonorous dentals on the one hand, and of the absence of accent on the other.

We have seen that in EWS. *ie*₂ (and *y*₃) forms tend to arise under certain conditions, and it seems justifiable to ascribe this phenomenon to the influence of some patois. A further investigation has shown that in LWS. *y*₃ forms occur under the same conditions as the EWS. *ie*₂ forms; this makes it appear highly probable that the LWS. *y*₃ forms are a development of the EWS. *ie*₂ forms. The patois in which this development took place exerted a comparatively small influence on classical EWS.; its influence on the language of the LWS. monuments was much more considerable, though naturally the effect was not in all cases equal.

MARIE A. LEWENZ.

¹ It is possible that they are due to some special cause; they all seem to show the influence of *d*, *t*, *s*, or *ſ*.