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Titel: Development of Old English Long Vowels

Autor: Wells, Benj. W.

Ort: Halle a.S.

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Kontakt/Contact

Digizeitschriften e.V.
SUB Göttingen
Platz der Göttinger Sieben 1
37073 Göttingen

info@digizeitschriften.de

DEVELOPMENT OF OLD ENGLISH LONG VOWELS.

The purpose of this paper is to show what sounds and what letters now represent the O.E. long vowels and long diphthongs. The origin of the O.E. sounds will not be considered, and hence words may seem to be omitted because I regard their vowels as short; or among various spellings the less likely may seem to be chosen; still, though final accuracy cannot be expected, nothing has been done thoughtlessly.

The O.E. vowels with which we have to do are *ī, ȳ, īe, iē, ē, ēa, ēo, āē, ā, eā, ō, eō, ū.* The West-Saxon *īe,* the umlaut of *ēa, ēo,* has been preserved because the N.E. sounds is derived from it and not from the *ȳ,* which in some later manuscripts takes its place. The following signs, adopted from Brücke's Lautphysiologie, are used to distinguish the N.E. sounds; *i* (feet), *e* (hay), *a* (last), o^a (sore), *o* (home), *u* (tooth); *i* (stiff), e^a (wet), *ae* (hallow), *ȯ* (rod), *u̇* (good), o^e (were); *ai* (by), *au* (owl). The sound which Webster places between o^a and *ȯ,* and attributes to *gone* and other words (Princip. of Pron. § 21, note), appears here under *ȯ.*

The vowels are treated in the order given above. The word-lists are meant to be complete. The words which have the regular pronunciation are first given; then those modified by *w*; thirdly those modified by *r*; fourthly, words which have vocalized O.E. *g*; fifthly, words whose pronunciation is due to double consonance or a syllable following the vowel; lastly, the exceptions. Then the spelling is considered and the use of each forme defined. N.E. word-lists are given here when desirable but the O.E. forms are omitted. At the close of the article is a resumé of the general results to which the separate examination of each vowel has led.

ī.

O.E. ī occurs in N.E. in 69 words with the sounds *ai* (57), *i* (9), *u* (2), *u̇* (1); and with the letters *i* (61), *y* (4), *ew* (2), *o* (2).

I. 1. The sound *ai* is regular for O.E. ī in all monosyllables (except before *w*) and in anlaut of dissyllables; but it fails to occur in *stiff, rich, ditch, width* see 5 and 6. The examples are:

bī, bi	swīn, swine	brīdels, bridle
ālīhtan, alight	twīn, twine	cīdan, chide
īrland, Ireland	þin, thine	glīdan, glide
īren, iron	wīn, wine	īdel, idle
wīr, wire	cnīf, knife	rīdan, ride
fīl, file	drīfan, drive	sīde, side
hwīl, while	fīf, five	slīdan, slide
mīl, mile	līf, life	tīd, tide
wīl, wile	scrīfan, shrive	wīd, wide
hrīm, rime	wīf, wife	bītan, bite
līm, lime	blīð, blithe	hwīt, white
rīm, rhyme	līþe, lithe	smītan, smite
slīm, slime	wrīþan, writhe	wrītan, write
tīm, time	īs, ice	stīge, stye
hwīnan, whine	rīsan, rise	stīgel, stile
mīn, mine	wīs, wise	dīc, dyke
pīnan, pine	grīpan, gripe	līc, like
scīn, shine	rīpe, ripe	sīcan, sigh
scrīn, shrine	bīdan, bide	strīcan, strike.

2. Following *w* changes the N.E. sound to *u*. The examples are; *spēwan, spew*; *stīgwéard, steward.*

3. 4. Following *r, g* exercise no modifying influence.

5. Before double consonance, except mute + *l*, and in dissyllables, except where ī is in anlaut, we have the sound *i*. O.E. *c* where pronounced *-tsch* in N.E. is treated as double consonance. The sound also occurs in *stiff*, see 6. For *woman*, see 6. — The examples are:

līuen, liuen	wīsdom, wisdom	dīc, ditch
fīftig, fifty	stīgrāp, stirrup	rīc, rich
wīfmen, women	*wīdð, width	stīf, stiff.

6. The exceptions are *stiff* and *women*. For the former I know no explanation, the latter is due to the *w* and the assimilating power of the *a* in the second syllable.

The following apparent exceptions are to be otherwise accounted for; *slip* is from a weak **slippan* (M.L.G. *slippen*) not from O.E. *slīpan*. *Shit, slit, twit* are derived from the participle, which, because they seemed weak, developed corresponding weak presents, so that we have here only the regular O.E. *i* = *i*. *Sheer* is from O.N. *skǣr*, not O.E. *scīr*. *Sneak* does not occur in M.E. and can hardly be from O.E. *snīcan*.

II. The spelling is *i* except *by, dyke, rhyme, stye, women, woman,* and before *w, steward, spew*. That *i* is used for *ai* (53) and for *i* (8); *y* for *ai* (4); *o* for *i* (1) and *u̇* (1); *ew* for *u* (2).

ȳ.

The sound *ȳ* is treated exactly as *ī*. It occurs in 17 words with the sounds *ai* (13) and *i* (5) and with the letters *i* (17) and *y* (1).

I. 1. The sound ***ai*** is regular before single consonants and in auslaut. The examples are:

hwȳ, why	dȳfan, dive	hȳd, hide
fȳr, fire	lȳs, lice	hȳdan, hide
hȳran, hire	mȳs, mice	brȳd, bride
fȳlan, de-file	cȳ, kine	prȳta, pride.
hȳð, -hithe		

2. 3. 4. Following *r* exercises no influence; following *w, g* do not occur.

5. Before double consonance, even when simplified in N.E., and in weak praeterites we have *i*. The examples are.

fȳlð, filth	wȳscan, wish	hȳded, hid.
fȳst, fist	cȳðð, kith	

6. There are no exceptions.

II. The spelling is *y* in auslaut, else always *i*.

ē, īe, iē.

The sounds *ē, īe, iē* cannot be distinguished in N.E. They occur in 83 words with the N.E. sounds *i* (52), *ai* (5), e^a (18), *i* (2), *e* (1), *ae* (1), *a* (1), o^e (2), *ú* (1); and with the letters *i* (4), *ie* (5), *e* (23), *ei* (1), *ee* (40), *ea* (7), *a* (1), *ay* (1), *u* (1).

I. 1. In auslaut, and before all single consonants, except absorbed *g* and contracted weak praeterites (see 4, 5), the N.E. sound is *i*. It occurs also in ***steeple, beetle, biestings*** and fails to occur in ***chill, ten*** (see 6). The examples are:

gē, ye	drīeman, dream	glēd, gleed
hē, he	gesēman, seem	hīedan, heed
mē, me	tīeman, teem	mēd, meed
þē, thee	cēne, keen	nēd, need
wē, we	cwēn, queen	spēd, speed
hēr, here	grēne, green	stēda, steed
hīeran, hear	scīene, sheen	bīetel, beetle
stīeran, steer	-tīene, teen	fēt, feet
wērig, weary	wēnan, ween	grētan, greet
fēlan, feel.	cīepan, keep	mētan, meet
hēl, heel	rīepan, reap.	scīete, sheet
stēl (īe), steel	stīepel, steeple	swēte, sweet
gelīefan, believe	wēpan, weep	bēce, beech
slīefe, sleeve	blēdan, bleed	brēc, breech
flīes, fleece	brēdan, breed	īecan, eke
bīesting, biestings	crēda, creed	rīecan, reek
tēþ, teeth	fēdan, feed	sēcan, seek.
dēman, deem		

2. Following *w* does not occur.

3. Following *r*, when final, is vocalized and coalesces with the preceeding sound into a sort of diphthong (*hear* = *hi-a*). In inlaut between vowels it exercises no influence; *r* consonant however produces irregularities in *hearken, heard, dearth* (see 5, 6).

4. Following *gh*, when absorbed gives the sound *ai*, except in *hay* (see 6). The examples are:

tīege, tie	īegland, island	līehtan, light.
tīegan, tie	hīehðo, height	

5. Before double consonance (except *r* + consonant, consonant + *l*, and *biestings, bramble, hung*, see 6) and in contracted weak praeterites we have e^a. The sound occurs also in *ten*, see 6. The examples are:

gefēled, felt	*dīepð, depth	lēt, let
þōfð, theft	cīepte, kept	mēted, met
brēðer, brethren	wēpan ≻ wept	blētsian, bless
tēn (ēo, īe), ten	fēded, fed	rēccan, reck
frīend, friend	blēded, bled	bēcnian, beckon
twīentig, twenty	brēded, bred	nēxt, next.

6. Twelve words do not follow the regular development. These are *beetle, bramble, biestings, chill, cripple, dearth, hay, heard, hearken, hung, steeple, ten.* The causes of these exceptions are various and in some cases not clear.

Hearken (*hīercnian*) has the sound *a* through the analogy of words with O.E. *éa*.

Heard (*hīerde*), *dearth* (*dīerð*) are treated as if the vowel were *ie*, shortened before two consonants, and so receive the sound o^e.

Steeple, beetle (see 1) *bramble* (*ae*), *brēmel, cripple* (*i*), *crīepel*, show various sounds before consonant + *l*. This vacilation is to be seen also in other vowels; compare *cradle* (cradol) and *saddle* (sadol). The rule however seems to be that cons. + *l* is treated as a single consonant

Biestings (see 1) preserves the old spelling but owes its sound to the analogy of *beast* (*i*).

Hung (*hēng*) owes its *u*- sound to a series of changes in M.E. by which *hēng* became *hēong, heōng, hōng* (Laz. B. 20959), *hong* whence the N.E. form.

Hay (see 4) with the sound *e*, O.E. *hīege, chill* (*i*), *cēle*, and *ten* (e^a), see 5, are unexplained.

II. The spelling of O.E. *ē, īe, iē* in N.E. depends largely on the pronunciation. The exceptional sounds have exceptional spellings; thus *u* is spelled *u*; *a, o^e* are spelled *ea*; *æ* is spelled *a*; *e* appears as *ay*; *i* is spelled *i*. Where the development is regular the sound *ai* appears as *i* in inlant, except *height* and *ie* in anslaut; the sound e^a is spelled *e*, except in *friend*; the sound *i* is spelled *e* in auslaut, except *thee*, and in inlaut *ee*, except *reap*.

ēa.

The sound *ēa* occurs in 60 words which have been preserved in N.E., with the sounds *i* (28), e^a (11), *ai* (3), *i* (3), *e* (2),

ae (2), *o*^{a} (2), *o* (2); and with the letters *i* (5), *e* (4), *ei* [*ey*] (2), *ee* (4), *ea* (32), *ew* (7), *a* (2), *aw* (2), *ou* [*ow*] (2).

I. 1. In monosyllables in auslaut and before all single consonants, except *t* and *d*, O.E. *ēa* becomes *i*. This sound occurs also in *neat, beat* and fails to occur in *deaf, death, rick,* see 6. The examples are:

flēa, flea	nēar, near	hlēapan, leap
bēan, bean	-sēarjan, sear	stēap, steep
bēam, beam	tēar, tear	cēap, cheap
drēam, dream	berēafjan, bereave	bēatan, bēat
glēam, gleam	lēaf, leaf	nēat, neat
sēam, seam	scēaf, sheaf	cēac, cheek
stēam, steam	ēast, east	lēac, leek
strēam, stream	ēastre, easter	rēac, reek
tēam, team	hēap, heap	bēacen, beacon.
ēare, ear		

2. Before *w* O.E. *ēa* becomes *u*, but when *r* preceeds the sound may become *o*^{a}, see 3 and 6; and after *sc* we find *o* once owing to confusion in the accent between *ēa* and *eā*, see 6. The sound occurs also in *flew*, a verb of class III that has followed the analogy of the reduplicating praeterites with *ēow* (*blew, knew* &c.). The examples are:

dēaw, dew	scrēawa, shrew	þēaw, thew
fēawe, few	strēawian, shrew	flēah, flew.
hēawan, hew		

3. Following *r* exercises no influence. Preceeding *r* may change *u* to *o*^{a} (see 2). The examples are:

hrēaw, raw	strēaw, straw.

4. Before *g* in inlaut and *h* in auslaut we find *ai*. Exceptions are *flew* (see 2), *neighbor, though* (see 6). The examples are:

ēage, eye	hēah, high	nēah, nigh.

5. Before dental mutes and in weak contracted praeterites we have *e*^{a}. This sound occurs also in *death, deaf* (see 6); and fails to occur in *neat, beat, great* (see 6). The examples are:

brēad, bread	rēad, red	dēað, death
dēad, dead	scrēad, shred	dēaf, deaf
hēafod, head	þrēatian, threat	hlēapan < left.
lēad, lead	berēafod, bereft	

6. Exceptions. To 1: *deaf* (*e*^{a}) was formerly, and is still by some, pronounced with *i*. I know no cause for the recent change. *Death* (*e*^{a}) owes its sound to the analogy of *dead*. *Hreac, rick* (*i*) may be compared to *rich, ditch* in I. 5, but it differs in the consonant. Exceptions to 2 are noticed there. Exceptions to 4 are *flew* (see 2), *though* (6), O.E. *þēah* owes its sound to the O.N. *þō, þā* as in clear from the M.E. forms (Stratmann, 581). *Neighbor* (*e*), O.E. *nēahgebūr* owes its *e* for *ai* to the dissyllable. Exceptions to 5 are *neat, beat* (see 1) and *great* (*e*), O.E. *grēat,* for none of which do I know a phonetic explanation.

There remain the compounds *nickname* (*i*), *ēac name, garlic* (*i*), *gārlēac,* to which compare the regular *eke, leek*; and *chapman* (*a*), *cēap-*

man, chaffer, cēapfaru, to which compare the regular *cheap*. In these last two words we may suppose *ĕa* to have become *eā* and there to have been shortened because of the dissyllable.

II. The spelling is governed largely by the sound. The exceptional sound *i* has the spelling *i*; *ae* has *a*; *e* appears as *ei* and *ea* (*neighbor, great*), o^a has *aw,* and *o* is spelled *ou,* or in auslaut *ow*. When the development is regular *ew* represents the sound *u*; *i* is used for *ai* except in *eye*; for e^a and *i,* if but one consonant or *-st* follows, we have *ea* (so also *beacon*); e^a when followed by two cons. appears as *e*. Exceptions are *steep, cheek, leek, reek* with the sound *i,* and *red, shred* with the sound e^a.

ēo.

The sound *ēo* occurs in 77 words which are preserved in N.E. but of these 8 changed the accent of the diphthong from *ēo* to *eō* in late O.E. or M.E. and so are in N.E. indistinguishable from words with O.E. *ō*, when they will be spoken of; they are cēosan *choose,* cēoh *chough,* gēola *yule,* gēoguð *youth,* gēong *young,* lēosan *lose,* scēotan *shoot,* sēowian *sew*. There remain 69 words to be considered here. These have the sounds *i* (33), *u* (17), *ai* (4), e^a (5), *i* (3), *a* (2), o^a (4), o^e (1); and the letters *i* (*y*) (6), *ie* (5), *e* (5), *ee* (24), *ea* (6), *ew* (10), *a* (2), *o* (1), *ou* (4), *u* (2), *ue* (4).

I. 1. In auslaut and before single consonants we have *i*. The sound occurs also in *fiend* and *priest*, see 6; it fails to occur in *been, hip-rose, sick*[6]. The examples are:

bēo, bee	dēor, dear	lēof, lief
cnēo, knee	hlēor, leer	þēof, thief
fēo, fee	drēorig, dreary	sēoþan, seethe
frēo, free	cēol, keel	frēosan, freeze
glēo, glee	hwēol, wheel	prēost, priest
hlēo, lea	bēon, be	crēopan, creep
sēo, sea	flēon, flee	dēop, deep
trēo, tree	sēon, see	hrēod, reed
þrēo, three	betwēon, between	wēod, weed
bēor, beer	fēond, fiend	bēot, beet
dēor, deer	clēofan, cleave	flēot, fleet.

Further *nēod, flēose*, see *ē*, I. 1.

2. Before *w* O.E. *ēo* becomes *u*, except when *w* is elided before *r* when we have o^a. Compare *ĕa* I, 2. 3 and below 3. The examples are:

ēow, you	ēowe, ewe	cnēowan, knew
ēow, yew	nēowe new	crēowan, crew
blēow, blew	tēowes-(tiwes-)dæg, tuesday	grēowan, grew
hēow (hiw), hue	brēowan, brew	rēowan, rue
clēow (cliw), clue	cēowan, chew	rēowð, ruth
trēow, true		trēowð, truth.

3. Following *r* + consonant produces *a*; so *darling* dēorling, *farthing* fēorþing. Where the *r* got its place by metathesis the sound is o^e; thus *thirteen* þrēotīene. Where a *w* preceeds *r* the *u*, which should occur according to 2, is changed to o^a. Thus fēower *four*, fēowerða *fourth*, fēowertig *forty*, fēowertīene *fourteen*; but compare *farthing* (*a*).

4. Before *g* or *h*, where absorbed, we have *ai*. The examples are: flēogan *fly*, lēogan *lie*, lēoht *light*, þēoh *thigh*.

5. In shortened weak praeterites, even when the O.E. verb is strong, and before all double consonance, except those beginning with *n* or *r*, we have e^a. The sound fails to occur in *priest*.

hēold, held	scēod, shed	≺ lept, see ēa
dēofol, devil	swēop ≺ swept	wēop ≻ wēpan
brēost, breast	hlēop ≻ hlēapan	≺ wept, see ē.

6. The use of the *i*-sound for *i* in bēon, *been* is comparatively recent. The same sound occurs in *hip-rose* (O.E. hēope) and *sick* (sēoc). A similar shortening accompanied by tone-lowering before *r* occurs in *thirteen* (þrēotīene). A somewhat similar shortening may be seen under *ō*, *ū* before *c* and under *ēa* before *d*, *t*. *Fiend* and *priest* (i) have a long vowel before double consonance, in the latter case probably through French influence.

II. With the sound *i* the regular spelling is *ee* (23), yet without any apparent cause we find *ie* (4) and *ea* (5). *e* occurs once in auslaut. The spelling *ee* occurs also for the sound *i* in *been* where it represents the older pronunciation. Where the sound is *u* the more common spelling is *ew*, but *ue* also occurs and *u* in inlaut in words derived from words with *ue* in auslaut. The spelling *ou* is found only in *you*, else *ou* stands for the sound o^a.

The sound *a* is represented by *a*; o^a appears three times as *ou* and once as *o*. The sound e^a is represented by *e* except in *breast*. The sound *ai* appears as *y*, *ie* in auslaut, *i* in inlaut. The sounds *i*, o^e appear as *i* except in *been*. It appears then that the letter *i* stands for the sounds *i* (2), o^e (1), *ai* (2); the letters *ie* for *ai* (1), *i* (4); *y* is used for *ai* (1); *e* is used for e^a (4), *i* (1); *ea* occurs for *i* (5), for e^a (1); *ee* is used for *i* (23), for *i* (1); *ew* for *u* (10); *a* for *a* (2); *o* for o^a (1); *ou* for o^a (3), for *u* (1); *u* for *u* (2); *ue* for *u* (4).

āē.

The sound *āē* is represented in 95 words in N.E. with the sounds *i* (41), *u* (1), e^a (32), *e* (7), *æ* (5), *a* (3), *i* (2), o^e (2), o^a (1), *o* (1); and with the letters *i* (2), *ie* (1), *e* (23), *ei* [*ey*] (4), *ee* (12), *ea* (36), *ew* (1), *a* (11), *ai* [*ay*] (3), *au* (1), *o* (1).

I. 1. Before single consonants, except when these are derived from O.E. double consonance, and in auslaut we have *i*; but after *r* and *w* this is often reduced to e^a, which occurs also in *any*, *them* and in *eat* (praet) by the analogy of weak praeterites. Further exceptions are *riddle*, *silly*, *ladder*, *clammy*, see 6. For the development before *w*, *r*, *g*, see 2, 3, 4. This sound occurs also in *bier*, *fead*, *read*, *key*. The examples are:

sāē, sea	*brāēþan, breathe	wāēd, weed
bāēr, bier	scāēð (sceāð), sheath	blāētan, bleat
-fāēr, fear	wrāēð, wreath	hāēto, heat
rāēran, rear	hāēðen, heathen	hwāēte, wheat
āēl, eel	cāēse, cheese	strāēt, street
dāēl, deal	tāēsan, tease	cāēge, key
hāēlan, heal	slāēpan, sleep	blāēc, bleak
māēl, meal	swāēpan, sweep	blāēcan, bleach
clāēne, clean	dāēd, deed	āēlc, each
hlāēne, lean	lāēdan, lead	lāēce, leach
māēnan, mean	nāēdl, needle	rāēcan, reach
gemāēne, mean	rāēdan, read	tāēcan, teach
āēfen, even	sāēd, seed	sprāēc, speech.
lāēfan, leave	grāēdig, greedy	

2. Before *w* the sound is *u*. The only example is lāēwed, *lewd*. For preceeding *w* see 3, 5, 6.

3. Before *r* and often after *r* we have e^a. This sound fails to occur however in *bier, fear, rear,* see 1; *erst,* see 6. The examples are:

āēr, ere	wāēron, were also pron. o^e, (6)	þrāēd, thread
hāēr, hair		wrāēnna, wren
þāēr, there	brāēð, breath	wrāēstan, wrest
hwāēr, where	drāedan, dread	*brāēdð, breadth.

4. Before absorbed *g* (*h*) and in *lady, ate,* see 6, we have *e*. The sound fails to occur in *key* (1), *taught* (6). The examples are:

clāēg, clay	huāēgan, neigh	hlāēfdige, lady
grāēg, gray	wāēgan, weigh (and weight)	āēt, ate (see 5, 6).
hwāēg, whey		

5. In contracted weak praeterites including *eat* (see 1), and before double consonance and nasal + syllable, we have e^a. The sound occurs also often after *w* (and after *r*, see 3 and below), but not regularly; and further in *them*. It fails to occur in *clammy, clad, last, blast, fat, spat, ant,* see 6. The examples are:

hāēlðo, health	āēfre, ever	wāēpen, weapen
aēmette, emmet	gelāēfed, left	*brāēdð, see 3
āēmyrie, embers	behāēs, behest	gelāēded, led
þāēm, them	flāēsc, flesh	rāēdan, read (praet.)
āēnig, any	lāēssa, less	āēt, eat (see 4)
clāēnsian, cleanse	þē lāēs þē, lest.	lāētan, let
lāēnian, lend	wrāēstan, see 3	swāēt, sweat
wrāēnna, see 3	slāēpte, slept	wāēt, wet.

6. The exceptions though numerous are more apparent than real. There are 23 words which do not follow the regular development; they are the already mentioned *bier, fear, rear, key* (1), *lady, ate* (4); *them* (5), *wet, sweat, weapon* (2, 5), *were* (3, 2) and also: with the sound *i*, rāēdels *riddle,* sāēlig *silly*; with *æ*, clāēðed *clad,* fāēth *fat,* spāētte *spat,* hlāēder *ladder,* clāēmian < *clammy*; with *a*, āēmette *ant,* blāēst *blast,* lāēst *last*; with o^a, tāēhte *taught*; with o^e, āērest *erst,* (wāēron, *were*); with *o*, māēst *most.*

A shortening of *āē* to *ae*, caused either by double consonance or analogy, causes the irregularity in *clad, fat, spat, ladder*; *last, blast. Clammy* owes its sound to the word *clam*, with which it has etymologically nothing to do. *Most* owes its sound to the analogy of *more*. To avoid confusion with like sounding words the vowel was changed in *bier, fear, rear* (compare *bear, fare, rare*); so too *ate*, to distinguish it from the infinite *eat*. The Norse *þeim* (O.E. þāēm) is responsible for *them*. *Taught* (o^a) is not irregular for absorbed *h* before *t*, but it lacks analogous words with this vowel. *Were* owes its o^e to the *w*, occasionally one still hears the older e^a. The words *riddle* and *silly* (compare *needle* and also *ē* I. 6 and *ī* I. 6) are irregular, but not without analogy. *Ant* (cf. *emmet*) and *lady* are isolated contractions. *Erst* (o^e) (cf. *ere*) may owe its darker sound to the following fricative. *Key* is not explained. That *w* caused the shortening in *sweat, wet, weapon* seems clear, but on what phonetic principle it did so, I do not know.

II. Exceptional sounds have exceptional spellings; thus *i* is always spelled *i*; *æ* and *a* are spelled *a*; o^a is spelled *au*; *o* appears as *o*; o^e as *e*. When the sound is *i* we have regularly *ea* (26) but also *ee* (10), the latter only in words derived from Old Germanic *ā*. In anlaut we have *e* (1), but also *ea, ee* in auslaut *ey* (1) where a *g* is absorbed; *ie* in *bier* is wholly isolated. Where the sound is e^a the spelling is usually *e* (20), but where the words are derived from words pronounced *i* the older spelling, *ea*, is retained, thus *cleanse health, eat* (praet.) *read* (praet.). The spelling *ea* also occurs often after *r* and *w*; so *breadth, breath, dread, thread, sweat, weapon*. Isolated exceptions are *hair, any* (compare *many*, to which the *a* may be due). Where the sound is *e* the spelling is *ay* in auslaut, and *ei* when followed by silent *-gh*; *ey* occurs in *whey*, and is an occasional spelling for *grey* (usually *gray*). In auslaut and real inlaut the spelling is *a*. The sound *u* is spelled *ew*. We see then that the letter *i* stands for *i* (2); *ie* for *i* (1); *e* for *i* (1); e^a (20), o^e (2); *ei* [*ey*] for *e* (3), *i* (1); *ee* for *i* (12); *ea* for *i* (26), e^a (10); *ew* for *u* (1); *a* for e^a (1); *æ* (5), *a* (3), *e* (2); *ai* [*ay*] for e^a (1), for *e* (2); *au* for o^a (1); *o* for *o* (1).

ā.

The sound *ā* occurs in 105 words which have been preserved in N.E. These words have the sounds *e* (1), *ae* (1), *a* (3), o^e (3), o^a (21), *o* (62), *ȯ* (9), *u* (4), *u̇* (1); and the letters *a* (6), *au* [*aw*] (3), *oe* (6), *oa* (23), *o* (51), *oo* (1), *ou* [*ow*] (15).

I. 1. Before all consonants, except *r, ht*, and in auslaut in monosyllables we have *o*. But preceeding *r* may change this to o^a, see 3, and preceeding *w* to *u*, see 2. The sound fails to occur also in the following words: *hale, ask, cloth, la!, thaw, gone, shone, anon, hot, wot, one, none, nothing*, see 6. The examples are:

dā, doe	rā, roe	wā, woe
frā, fro	slā, sloe	dāl, dole
lā!, lo!	swā, so	hāl, whole
nā, no	tā, toe	māl, mole

fām, foam	þrāwan, throw	rād, road
hām, home	sāwel, soul	tāde, toad
lām, loam	drāf, drove	wād, woad
bān, bone	hlāf, loaf	āte, oats
gān, go	āð, oath	bāt, boat
grānian, groan	clāðian, clothe	gāt, goat
mānian, moan	lāðian, loathe	wrāt, wrote
ānlīc, only	rās, rose	āgan, owe
scān, shone (see 5)	þās, those	āgen, own
stān, stone	gāst, ghost	dāg, dough
blāwan, blow	grāpian, grope	fāg, foe
cnāwan, know	pāpa, pope	lāg, low
crāwan, crow	rāp, rope	āc, oak
māwan, mow	sāpe, soap	spāca, spoke
rāwan, row	bād, bode	strāc, stroke
snāwan, snow	gād, goad	tācen, token.
slāw (eā), slow	lād, load-stone	

2. Following *w* exercise no influence. Preceeding *w* may change *o* to *u*. The examples are:

hwā, hwo	hwām, hwom	hwās, whose.
twā, two		

3. Following *r* changes the sound to o^a, even when the *r* is of later origin than O.E. Preceeding *r* sometimes has the same influence. This sound also occurs before *hl*, see 4, and in several other words see 6. It fails to occur in *lark, wrath*, see 6. The examples are:

bār, boar	ār, oar	hās, hoarse
gāre, gore	ār, ore	hlāford, lord
hār, hoar	rārian, roar	āwðer, or
lār, lore	sār, sore	wrāð, wroth
māre, more	gāra (eā), yore	brād, broad.

4. Before *g* no change from the normal development occurs, but before *hl* we have o^a (see 3, 6). The examples are:

āhte, ought	ā-wiht, aught	nā-wiht, naught.

Compare *not* 6.

5. In dissyllables, except *only, nothing*, the sound *ó* is used. The sound occurs also in other words, see 6. The examples are:

hālig-daeg, holiday	wedlāc, wedlock	cnāwan ≺ knowledge.

6. The following words are exceptional in their treatment. With the sound *e*, hāl *hale* (cf. *whole*); with the sound *ae*, hālgian *hallow*; with the sound *a*, āscian *ask*, lāwerce *lark*, wrāð *wrath*; with the sound o^a, clāð *cloth*, lā! *la!*, þāwan *thaw*; with the sound o^e, ān *one* (nān *none*, nānþing *nothing*); with the sound *ó*, anān *anon*, gān *gone*, hāt *hot*, nāwiht *not*, scān *shone*, wāt *wot*; with the sound *ú*, -hād *hood*, as for instance in *wóman-hoòd*, this unaccented suffix appears also as *-head* (e^a) e. g. *maidenhead*. There are then in all 18 exceptions.

Exceptions to 1 are *anon, ask, hale, hood, hot, gone, cloth, la!, not, none, one, shone, thaw, wot*. Of these *one* is due to the influence of a *w* which has come to preceed the vowel in later times. *None* has

followed the analogy of *one*. In *anon* this *w* could not appear and here the vowel owes its shortening to the preceeding syllable. ***Ask*** is treated like a word with *ă* before double consonant. ***Hale*** owes its *e-* sound to the O.N. *heill*. *Cloth* seems to stand in the same relation to ***clothe*** that ***breath*** does to ***breathe***. The shortening before *t* in ***hot, not, wot*** may be compared with the similar shortening noticed in *ēa* I, 5 and in *ō* I, 5. *Gone, shone, la, thaw* are unexplained.

Exceptions to 3 are *lark* and ***wrath*** where the *r* has exercised an influence stronger than usual. The exceptions to 5 are ***hallow*** (due to ***hale***, see above), *nothing* (due to *one*, see above), *-hood* (due to its position, but compare *wēdlōck*). The form *-head* is from the O.N. *heiðr*, M.E. *hede*.

II. The spelling. All sounds higher than o^a are spelled *a*, otherwise *a* occurs only in *la*. The letters *au* (*aw*) are found exceptionally for o^a before *-ht* and in auslaut. The spelling *o* is always used for *ó*, o^e, *u*, but this letter is also used in auslaut for the sound *o* (together with *oe*) and in inlaut, together with *oa*, for *o* and o^a. The spelling *ow* always takes the place of final *āg, āw*, except fāg, *foe*. In inlaut the sound *o* appears as *ou* (*soul*, also *dough*), which is used once for the sound o^a, *ought*. The spelling *oe* occurs interchangeably with *o*, for the sound *o-* final. *oa* occurs for the sounds o^a, *o* interchangeably with *o*, but only in inlaut; *oo* is confined to the isolated *-hood*. We see then that *a* stands for *e* (1), *ae* (1), *a* (3), o^a (1); *au* [*aw*] for o^a (3); *oe* for *o* (6); *oa* for o^a (10), *o* (25), *ó* (9), o^e (3), *u* (4); *oo* for *ú* (1); *ou* [*ow*] for o^a (1), *o* (14).

eā.

This sound in so far as it is equivalent to *ā* has been noticed there (sleāw *slow*, geāra *yore*). By a change of accent from *eā* to *ēa* it has received a treatment corresponding to *ēa* I, 1 in sceāp *sheep*, sceāð *sheath* (see also scāēð), geāra *year*; and a treatment corresponding to *ēa* I, 5 in sceād *shed*, sceāphierde *shepherd*. Whether it is treated as *ā* or as *ēa*, its spelling is according to the analogy of those vowels. In one case only has it an independent development: geā *yea*.

ō, eō.

These sounds are indistinguishable in N.E. 82 O.E. words with this sound have been preserved in N.E. To these we must add the 8 words with d. e. *ēo* = *eō*, see *ēo*, making in all 90 words with the sounds e^a (1), *au* (2), o^a (6), o^e (16), *o* (8), *ó* (7), *u* (37), *ú* (13), and with the spellings *e* (1), *ew* (3), *o* (24), *oe* (2), *oo* (42), *ou* (15), *u* (2).

I. 1. In auslaut and in monosyllable, before all consonants except ***w, r,*** and ***c*** we have ***u***. The sound occurs also in ***moor, roost***. There are however several exceptions, especially among words with following dentals ***blood, flood, hood, good, stood, foot, rod,*** and also ***hove, glove, doth, done, gum,*** see 6. The examples are:

dō, do
scō (sceō), shoe
scōian (sceōian), shoe
tō, to
cōl, cool
gēola, yule
stōl, stool
tōl, tool
hōf, hoof (also ú)
behōfian, behove
hrōf, roof
grōf, groove
smōð, smooth
sōð, sooth
tōþ, tooth
cēosan, choose
gōs, goose
lēosan, lose
hrōst, roost
blōma, bloom
brōm, broom
dōm, doom
glōm, gloom
mōna, moon
nōn, noon
sōn, soon
drōg, drew (6)
gēoguþ. youth
slōg, slew (6)
wōgian, woo
brōd, brood
fōda, food
mōd, mood
rōd, rood (also ó)
bōt, boot
scēotan, shoot
mōr, moor.

2. Before *w* the sound is *o*. Preceeding *w* exercise a like influence in *awoke*. The sound occurs also in *hove*, see 6. The examples are:

blōwan, blow
flōwan, flow
grōwan, grow
hlōwan, low
rōwan, row
sēowian, sew
āwōc, awoke
hōf, hove.

3. Before *r* and *ht*, which here as in *ā* produce the same effect, we have o^a. The only exception is *moor* (6). The examples are:

flōr, floor
hōr, whore
swōr, swore
brōhte, brought
sōhte, sought
þōhte, thought.

Before *h* (not *ht* see 3) we have *au*, but if the *h* is pronounced *f* in N.E. the sound becomes o^e. On the contrary *g* does not cause any change, see 1. The instances of *au* are: bōh *bough*, plōh *plough*; the cases of o^e are: genōh *enough*, tōh *tough*, cēoh *chough*.

The sound o^e occurs also in other cases, see 5, 6.

5. In dissyllables, before double consonance, in shortened weak praeterites and before *c* we have shortening. But this shortening takes three forms: o^e, *ó*, *ú*.

The sound o^e is used before nasal + consonant and *th* + *r*. It occurs also where we should expect *u* in *blood, flood, glove, gum, doth, done*, and where we should expect *ó* in *must*. The examples are:

brōðor, brother
ōðer, other
mōdor, mother
mōnandaeg, monday
mōneð, month
gōma, gum
gedōn, done
dōð (dēð), doth
glōf, glove
blōd, blood
flōd, flood
mōste, must
gēong, young.

The sound *ó* is used in weak praeterites and double consonance beginning with *s, f, d*, and in dissyllables. It fails to occur in *roost, must, bosom*, and occurs for the regular *u* in *rod*. The examples are:

blōsma, blossom
fōstor, foster
gōsling, gosling
sōfte, soft
fōdor, fodder
scōde (scōd), shod
rōd, rod (see 1).

The sound *ú* is used before *c*, occasionally before dentals, see o^e and *u*, and in *bosom*. The only exception is *awoke* (2). The examples are:

bōc, book
brōc, brook
cōc, cook
hōc, hook
hrōc, rook
lōc, look

scōc (eō), shook	hōd, hood	fōt, foot
tōc (?), took	stōd, stood	bōsm, bosom.
gōd, good		

6. Beside the already mentioned irregularities: *moor* (1), *roost, hove* (2), *gum, done, doth, glove, blood, flood, must, rod* (5), there are two which are exceptional only in the spelling, *drew, slew*, where the *ew* is not from the O.E. *ōh* (*ōg*) but from the analogy of *blew, crew* &c. which in O.E. belonged to another class, the reduplicating verbs. Doubtful exceptions are geōman *yeoman*, Wōdanesdaeg *wednesday*.

The exceptions in detail. The treatment of *ō* before dentals is peculiar; we have examples of *u, ú, ó, o*^{e}. In one word two forms are in use; *rod* (*ó*), *rood* (*u*). The regular contracted form is *ú*, while *o*^{e} seems due to preceeding *l*.

The following words should have *u*: *hove, glove, doth, done, gum*. *Hove* is due to a change in the ablaut class which occurs also in German (*hob* for and with *hub*), compare *wove, stole*, and others. *Glove* shows the same influence of *l* that is seen in *blood, flood*; compare also the treatment of *ū* before *f* (*v*). *Doth, done, gum* are unexplained; so also *moor* with *u* for *o*^{a}. *Roost, must* should have *ó*, so too *bosom* (compare *blossom*). *Wednesday* has in early M.E. *o* but the *e* appears in Piers the Plowm. B. 13. 154, Kath. 2215, Rob. 112. The N.E. form must be from an O.E. secondary form with umlaut. *Yeoman* if it be from O.E. *geō-man* can only be so through some dialect. M.E. is *yeman* with changed accent (*eō* = *ēo*).

II. The spelling is somewhat irregular: *e* occurs once for *e*^{a}. *Ew* only where the words are mistaken for praeterites of V (*drew, slew*) or where the vowel is derived from *ēow*, as in *sew*. When the sound is *u* we have in auslaut *oe* and *o*, in inlaut *oo* except *behove, yule, youth* and the before-mentioned *drew* and *slew*. — Where the sound is *ú* the vowel is also *oo* except in *bosom* but where the sound is *ó* the spelling is *o* and so too usually where the sound is *o*^{e}, yet there are some exceptions: *gum, must, blood, flood*. The sound *o* is spelled *ow* when derived from O.E. *ōw* else *o* except in *yeoman* and *sew*. The sound *o*^{a} appears as *ou* before silent *h* + *t* and as *oo* and *o* before *r*. The sound *au* is always spelled *ou*.

We see then that *e* is used once for *e*^{a}: *ew* for *o* (1), for *u* (2); *o* for *u* (4), *ú* (1), *o* (2), *ó* (7), *o*^{e} (8), *o*^{a} (2); *oe* for *u* (2); *oo* for *u* (27), *o*^{a} (1), *o*^{e} (2), *ú* (12); *ow* [*ou*] for *u* (1), *o*^{e} (4), *o* (5), *o*^{a} (3), *au* (2); *u* for *u* (1), *o*^{e} (2).

ū.

The O.E. *ū* occurred in 48 words which have been retained in N.E., with the sounds *au* (29), *o*^{e} (14), *u* (4), *ú* (1); and the letters *ou* [*ow*] (32), *o* (4), *oo* (3), *u* (9).

I. 1. In monosyllables the sound *au* is regular but it occasionally gives place to *u* after *r* (3), and always is shortened to *ú* before *m, f, c*. Other exceptions are *but, could, shun, uncouth, us*, see 6. The examples are:

brū, brow	ūle, owl	clūd, cloud
cū, cow	brūn, brown	crūd, crowd
hū, how	dūn, down	hlūd, loud
nū, now	tūn, town	scrūd, shroud
þū, thou	mūð, mouth	clūt, clout
būr, bower	sūð, south	lūtan, lout
scūr, shower	hūs, house	prūt, proud
sūr, sour	lūs, louse	ūt, out
ūre, our	mūs, mouse	būgan, bow.
fūl, foul	þūsend, thousend	

2. Following *w* does not occur.

3. Following *r* may cause the vowel to retain the *u*- sound. Preceeding *r* may exert the same influence. In both cases however we may have *au*. The sound *u* occurs also in *uncouth*. The examples are: brūcan *brook* (also *u̇*, 6), gebūr *boor*, rūm *room*, uncūð *uncouth*.

4. Absorbed *g* and *h* cause no change.

5. In dissyllables and in monosyllables before *m*, *f* (*v*), *c*; and also in *but, shun, us* we have *o*^{e}. It may fail to occur after *r* and gives place to *au* in *thousand*. N.E. *gh* when pronounced *f* also produces this sound. The examples are:

scūm, scum	onbūfan, above	ūder, udder
þūma, thumb	scūfan, shove	būtan, but
scūnian (or scunian?),	rūh, rough	ūterlīce, utterly
shun	ūs, us	sūcan, suck
dūfe, dove	hūsband, husband	nēahgebūr, neighbor.

6. Exceptional are the already mentioned *thousand* (1), *uncouth* (3), *but, shun, us* (5). Isolated in pronunciation and in spelling is *could, cūðe* which has borrowed the *u̇* sound and the *l* from wolde *would*; the same sound is heard sometimes in *brook* (3). The irregularities in *thousand, uncouth* are not explained. *But* owes its weakened vowel to its subordinate position in the sentence, on account of which it does not receive a strong accent. *Shun* is according to all authority from O.E. *scūnian*, and if so it is irregular, but why not read *scunian*? *Us* was short in Orm (*uss* 719) and probably got its quantity from the O.N. *oss*; if so the sound is regular.

II. The spelling. Whenever the sound is *au* we have *ow* or *ou*. This spelling occurs also in *rough, could, uncouth*. Where the sound is *o*^{e} the regular spelling is *u* but before *f*, *r* we have *o* and before *gh* = *f*, *ou*. Where the sound is *u* we have *oo* before and after *r*, *ou* in *uncouth*. It thus appears that *ou* (*ow*) is used for *au* (29), for *u* (1), for *o*^{e} (1), for *u̇* (1); *oo* is used for *u* (3); *o* is used for *o*^{e} (4); *u* is used for *o*^{e} (9).

If now we group together the results of the preceeding analysis we find that the extreme vowels *ī ū* have by a sort of guna been brought nearer to *a* the one becoming *ai* the other *au*. The other long vowels, on the contrary, show exactly the opposite tendency, for *ē, īe, iē, ēa, ēo, āē* have

become *i*, while *ā* has become *o*, and *ō*, *u*. Wherever, then, the vowels could move toward the extremes of the vowel scale, they did so; where this was not possible, they formed diphthongs. Such is the development when undisturbedly consonants influence.

As we have seen the only consonants which exercise a general modifying power are *w*, *r*, *g* (*h*) but the mutes *c*, *d*, *t* and the labials *f*, *m* have a modifying influence on special vowels with which their articulation is related. A following syllable also tends to weaken the preceeding vowel. Let us consider these disturbing causes in detail.

1. The influence of *w*. Following *w* changes *ī*, *ēa*, *ēo*, *āē* to *u* and *ō* from what had else been *u* to *o*. That is, it raises dark, and lowers bright, vowels. The examples for the different vowels are found under 2. Preceeding *w* is less regular in its influence. It changes *ā* to *u* in some cases and *ī* in a dissyllable (*woman*) to *u̇*. It has the same effect as following *w* on ō, in *woke*, but it exercises no regular, consistent, influence.

Modifications of sounds caused by *w* are produced by *r* in the following cases; O.E. *ēa*, *ēo* are changed from *u* to o^a in *raw*, *straw*, *four*, *forty*, *fourteen*, *fourth*. Preceeding *w* modifies the product of *r* in *were*, o^e for e^a, see *āē*.

2. The influence of *r*. Following *r* changes O.E. *āē* to e^a, *ā* and *ō* to o^a, that is it brings these sounds nearer to *a*. Preceeding *r* occasionally exercises the same influence as following *r*. Before *r* + consonant the development is less regular. Instances are (*ī*) *iron*, *ireland*; (*īe*) *hearken*, *heard*, *dearth*; (*ēo*) *darling*, *farthing*; (*āē*) *erst*; and further (*ēo*) *thirteen* where the *r* got its place by metathesis.

3. Influence of *g* (*h*). This affects the sound only when it coalesces with the preceeding vowel to form a diphthong which in N.E. appears as *ai* for *ē* (*īe*), *ēa*, *ēo*; as *e* for *āē*; as *au* for *ō*. Exceptions are *neighbor* (*ēa*), *hay* (*īe*). The general tendency is the same as with *r*, to bring the sound nearer the central vowel *a*.

Where an O.E. *h* is in N.E. pronounced *f* the vowel sound is o^e, see *ō*, *ū*.

Silent *h* before *t* in N.E. is accompanied with the sound o^a, see *āē*, *ā*, *ō*.

4. Influence of other consonants. These affect only individual vowels with the articulation of which they seem to have special connection; thus the labials *m*, *f* (*v*) change O.E. *ū* from *au* to *o*^{e} (compare the influence of *h* = *f* in 3). The dental *d* changes *ēa* from *i* to *e*^{a}, and in isolated cases *ō* from *u* to *u̇*; *t* sometimes has the same influence. This may be in some cases at least connected with the regular shortening in weak praeterites. The palatal *c* also shortens *ō* from *u* to *u̇* and in isolated case *u* from *au* to *o*^{e} and *ēo* from *i* to *i̇*.

5. Double consonance changes *ī* from *ai* to *i̇* and *ē, īe, ēa, ēo, āē* from *i* to *e*^{a} except before *r*, see 2, and in the following words (*ē*) *hung*; (*ēa*) *east*; (*ēo*) *fiend, priest*; (*āē*) *clad, spat, most, ant, last, blast.*

The influence of double consonance on *ā, ō, ū* is less marked and more variable; *ā* is not at all effected; *ō* produces four different sounds *u* (*roost*), *u̇* (*bosom*), *ȯ* (*soft, shod*), *o*^{e} (*month, must, young*). *ū* affords no examples.

6. Influence of a following syllable. So far as dissyllable are affected by *w, r, g* they have already been noticed. A case of absorption occurs also in *lady* (*āē*) with the sound *e*. Where following consonants do not directly influence the pronunciation we have for *i, ȳ, i̇* for *ai*; but the other bright vowels *e, ēe, ēa, ēo, āē* often retain the regular *i*. Examples of this are (*ē*) *beetle biestings sleeple weary*; (*ēa*) *easter beacon*; (*ēo*) *dreary*. Where *i* is not kept the sound is usually weakened to *e*^{a}, so in (*ē*) *beckon brethren twenty*; (*eā* = *ēa*) *shepherd*; (*æ*) *any, embers, emmet*. An *i̇* is seen in (*ēa*) *nickname*; (*ǣ*) *riddle, silly*; and *æ* occurs for (*ē*) *bramble*; for (*ēa*) *chapman, chaffer*; for (*āē*) *clammy, ladder*. Among these various sounds I can discover no rule which throws any light on the principle of development in dissyllables having these bright vowels.

The dark vowels *ā, ō, ū* are more regular. The sound *ā* has *ȯ* except in the already explained (*ā* I, 6) *hallow, nothing, only*. The sound *ō* produces *ȯ* except before *th* and nasals where we have *o*^{e}. The sound *ū* gives always *o*^{e} in N.E., except *thousand*. Finally two words may be added here that owe the shortening of their vowels to their position in the unaccented final syllable. These are (*ēa*) *garlic*; (*ū*) *neighbor*.

If we compare the history of the O.E. long vowels with that of the corresponding short sounds [1], we shall see that, while all the influences that affected the long worked also upon the short vowels, the former escaped several modifications that befell the latter, and, as was natural, preserved more fully their original quantity and character.

PROVIDENCE R. J. BENJ. W. WELLS.

[1] See 'The *a*-vowel in English'; Transactions of the American Philological Association, 1881.