

Introduction

1.1. Cornish and the Celtic Languages

Cornish is a Brythonic language that is most closely related to Breton in the first instance; both languages apparently developed from a south-western dialect of Brythonic.¹ It is then nearly as closely related to Welsh and the extinct Cumbrian language that apparently endured until the medieval period in parts of southern Scotland and northern England.² More distantly, these Brythonic languages are related to the Goidelic branch of Celtic languages, comprising Irish, Scots Gaelic and Manx, as well as to the extinct ancient Continental Celtic languages.³

Of the six Celtic languages that survived until the modern period, Cornish was the first of two to become extinct, around the end of the eighteenth century.⁴ It has been revived by enthusiasts, with limited but marked success, as a community language and even, in a very few families, as a first language of the home.⁵ In the absence of audio recordings such as those that exist for Manx, the debate over the sequence of sound changes in the phonological development of the language has profound repercussions for the authenticity of such a revival. With notable exceptions, academic attitudes towards this phase in the history of the language have been perhaps understandably wary, which has only undermined efforts in both academic and revivalist circles to improve understanding of the historical phonology of the language.

¹ LHEB, pp. 11-12.

² LHEB, pp. 9-10, 218-9.

³ The change /k^w/ > /p/ separating Brythonic from Goidelic was perhaps a relatively trivial distinction within Continental Celtic. See P. Russell, *An Introduction to the Celtic Languages*, § 1.5-6, pp. 14-16.

⁴ Manx became extinct as a native vernacular in 1974 but attempts at revival had already begun.

⁵ The matter of reviving an extinct language purely on the basis of surviving medieval and early modern records, upon the fragmentary Late Cornish material, or by incorporating elements of the two, is of great interest from a historical point of view, an apparently unprecedented debate.

From the academic point of view, the most regrettable aspect is that scholarly integrity in the field is potentially compromised by any interest in the revival, a phenomenon that deserves study in its own right. The modern revival is a particularly interesting sidelight on the historical study of Cornish because it seeks to appropriate the results of such academic study for its own ends. This was in fact a stated purpose of Dr. Kenneth George's thesis "A Phonological History of Cornish", which is nonetheless perhaps the best academic overview produced so far on the historical phonology of Cornish.⁶ The aim of the present work is purely to further the understanding of the history of the Cornish language until its extinction; the revived language is outside the scope of this thesis.

1.2. The Extant Sources for Cornish

Cornish came into existence as a language separate from its immediate ancestor, the south-western dialect of Brythonic, at some point between the middle of the sixth century and the tenth century.⁷ Between these dates there is no evidence for the differentiation of Cornish and Breton and there apparently existed a common South-West Brythonic language in Brittany, Cornwall, Devon and much of Somerset and Dorset during the earlier part of the period. The insular part of this territorial extent was reduced to Cornwall alone by the beginning of the eighth century and presumably British speech did not last long beyond it.⁸ The following, unattested period has been called Primitive Cornish.⁹

It is remarkable that there exist a number of glosses that cannot easily be assigned to Old Cornish, Old Breton or Old Welsh, and that in

⁶ PHC, § 0.6, iv.

⁷ LHEB, p. 25.

⁸ F.M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 63-73. However, it seems highly reasonable to suppose that this might have taken a generation at the very least. See the note on *ud rocashaas* at § 1.2.1 below.

⁹ LHEB, p. 5. Jackson therefore dated the end of SWBr. to the late 9th century.

some cases palaeographical, rather than orthographical, evidence is the only way to distinguish between them.¹⁰ This has led, in the past, to a certain amount of confusion about whether some of these glosses were in fact Cornish.¹¹ In particular, it is often impossible to differentiate on purely linguistic grounds between Old Cornish and Old Breton glosses.

The extant documents of Old Cornish date from the tenth to twelfth centuries, the more considerable remains of Middle Cornish from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries and the fragmentary but extensive records of Late Cornish from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the death of the language around 1800.¹² These conventional divisions are of course artificial: Old and Middle Cornish are conveniently separated by orthographical conventions (notably in the representation of voiced consonants) and a hiatus of around two hundred and fifty years from which no manuscripts are extant; likewise the pre-Reformation plays and Catholic homilies of the sixteenth century are taken to be Middle Cornish and subsequent material is considered to be Late Cornish.¹³ Although diagnostic sound changes can be proposed to separate these periods, for instance assibilation to differentiate between Old and Middle Cornish and pre-occlusion to mark the beginning of Late Cornish, these sound

¹⁰ LHEB, pp. 50-1, 54-6, 59, 64, 67-8. Although the identification of certain glosses cannot be put beyond debate, those that are not held to be Cornish are ignored in the present work. It may be added that none of them would affect the issues under discussion even if they were admissible evidence.

¹¹ Jackson refuted Bradshaw's assertion that several glosses in the Juvencus MS. are Cornish, LHEB, pp. 50-1. He accepted, however, that some of the Welsh glosses in part i of the Oxoniensis Posterior MS. "... may seem to have a Cornish veneer...", LHEB, pp. 54-6. There are three glosses in part ii of that manuscript that are apparently Cornish (see § 1.2.1. below). Jackson cited the Smaragdus glosses as Cornish (Paris MS. Lat. 13029), LHEB, p. 59, but in HPB, xxxvii, accepted that they are Breton, as shown by Fleuriot, *Dictionnaire des Gloses en Vieux Breton*, p. 6 (also "Les Gloses à Smaragde sont-elles Corniques ou Bretonnes?", *ÉC* 9 (1960/1), pp. 183-9). The glosses *guorcher*, *trape*n and *he bē[n]* in the Vatican Reginensis 49 MS. are also given as Old Breton, *ibid.*, p. 6 (despite H. Lewis' suggestion that *guorcher* may be Cornish, *Llawlyfr Cernyweg Canol*, p. 2), as well as those in Munich MS. 14846, *ibid.*, p. 7. Some of these are included in NCED, which should be used with caution in this regard.

¹² See also PHC, § 1.2, pp. 9-10. Note however that these divisions have occasionally been rejected: for example, Toorians perversely cites Voc. Corn. as Middle Cornish and considers TH and CW to be Late Cornish, *The Middle Cornish Charter Endorsement*, vi-vii. Berresford-Ellis avoids assigning TH to either period by the separate discussion of Tudor Cornwall, *The Cornish Language and its Literature*, pp. 52-69. While these usages are not strictly incorrect, the terms tend to lose their value as markers of linguistic history if arbitrary boundaries are set without regard to the character of the documents.

changes are notoriously difficult to date exactly and both appear sporadically in documents considerably earlier than the dates given here would suggest. The problems in dating are an important part of the study of assibilation and palatalisation and the study of pre-occlusion respectively, as is discussed further below.¹⁴

The problem of dating individual manuscripts, a paleographical matter that is beyond the scope of this thesis and is not addressed in detail here, is compounded by the transmission history of the various texts, whose extant copies are mostly later copies.¹⁵ It is important therefore to note that the date of a manuscript is usually rather later, sometimes considerably so than the date of original composition. The latter needs to be established by the comparative method, which may include linguistic, contextual and dramatic analyses.¹⁶ This problem is particularly important in Middle Cornish, where BM and CW show the most obvious signs of revision.¹⁷ In the case of the first ten pages of BM, and the entire text of CW, revisions have been made that in some cases (such as pre-occlusion) belong to Late Cornish phonology. (Minor emendations and alterations occur in all of the texts, but by and large, these are relatively insignificant.) It is unfortunate that many of the diagnostic sound changes seem to have occurred gradually, often sporadically, so it is not always easy to be certain whether certain forms are Middle or Late Cornish. The extent to which these revisions could have happened in the lost manuscripts that preceded the present copies is of course unknown.

¹³ For the question of whether CW, dated 1611, belongs to Middle or Late Cornish, see below, § 2.7.

¹⁴ See especially § 2.7 on the dating of pre-occlusion and § 5.4 on the dating of assibilation.

¹⁵ It makes sense to address specific questions as they arise in the thesis, but a summary is given in the following sections of the composition and manuscript dates according to current scholarship.

¹⁶ For the contextual and dramatic analysis, I have relied especially on B. Murdoch, *Cornish Literature*, P. Berresford Ellis, *The Cornish Language and its Literature*, on P. Neuss, *The Creacion of the World* (for CW) and on M. Combellack-Harris, *A Critical Edition of Beunans Meriasek* (for BM).

¹⁷ See list of abbreviations, Appendix I.

The sources for the attested periods of Cornish are summarised briefly in the following sections. Full references are given except where the text is referred to by a common abbreviation (see Appendix I).

1.2.1. Old Cornish¹⁸

1. Forty-eight names of both known and obscure Cornish saints, many of which have known parochial dedications in Cornwall, dated to the beginning or middle of the tenth century.¹⁹
2. Three glosses on a Latin text of the Book of Tobit, in part ii of the Oxoniensis Posterior MS. (Bodleian MS. 572). These are *cennen* “film, membrane”, *dowomisura[m]mi* “I (shall) measure”, *gemmou* “gems”. These were probably written in the 10th century.²⁰
3. Some glosses in the British Library Harleian MS. 2276 including *guohioc* probably meaning “hornets' nest” and *toroc* “cattle-tick”.²¹ These may date from the tenth or the eleventh century.
4. Three personal names in Domesday Book, 1086. These are *Bletcu*, *Merken* and *Bretel*, of which the etymology of the last is obscure.²²
5. The *Bodmin Manumissions*, comprising some marginal notes in Latin and in Anglo-Saxon in a Latin MS. of the Gospels belonging to the monastery of St. Petroc. These date from the tenth to the twelfth

¹⁸ The marginal annotation *ud rocashaas* “it hated the dark places” to a ninth-century manuscript of Boethius’ *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, P. Sims-Williams, CMCS 50 (Winter 2000), pp. 76-86, might be SWBr. at this date. There existed minor differences such as svarabhakti and de-nasalisation of /ṽ/ to distinguish PrimC. from PrimB., LHEB p.p. 20-1, § 33, pp. 337-8, § 210, p. 697. It seems teleological to call the gloss Cornish, as it may have been made by a speaker from, say, Devon or Somerset.

¹⁹ B. L. Olson & O.J. Padel, “A Tenth-Century List of Cornish Parochial Saints”, CMCS 12 (Winter 1986), pp. 33-71. The names occur in the Vatican codex Reginensis Latinus 191.

²⁰ H. Bradshaw, *Collected Papers*, p. 486; and W.M. Lindsay, *Early Welsh Script*, p. 26. The glosses are printed by W. Stokes, *Old Breton Glosses*, p. 21, and by J. Loth, *Vocabulaire Vieux Breton*, pp. 68-9, 113, 129. See also LHEB, p. 59; A. Falileyev, *An Etymological Glossary of Old Welsh*, p. xvii.

²¹ O. Schlutter, “Anglo-Saxonica”, *Anglia* 33 (1910), p. 137-42; see also LHEB, p. 67 and L. Fleuriot, *Dictionnaire des Gloses en Vieux Breton*, p. 7. The presence of AS. glosses and the suffix *-oc* suggest that these are Old Cornish.

²² M. Cane, *Personal Names of Men in Wales, Cornwall and Brittany 400-1400 AD*, p. 230.

centuries and record the names of manumittors and slaves, most of the Cornish names belonging to the latter group.²³

6. Various inscriptions dating from the 5th to 11th centuries.²⁴
7. *Vocabularium Cornicum* (Voc. Corn.), or Old Cornish Vocabulary, ca. 1100, a volume of Cornish glosses on an earlier Anglo-Saxon to Latin glossary by Ælfric of Cerne, ca. 1000. A few Old Welsh forms are given as equivalents and in places the Cornish spellings have been modified to resemble Welsh, notably in *-eu* for final *-ou*.²⁵
8. A few glosses in John of Cornwall's *Prophecy of Merlin*, 1153-4, in a manuscript of ca. 1200, apparently based upon or revised from a lost Brythonic (or perhaps Old Welsh) original.²⁶

1.2.2. Middle Cornish²⁷

1. The *Glasney Cartulary*, a one-line prophecy *In polsethow ywhylyr anethow* "In Polsethow there will be seen wonders/dwellings", in a document of ca. 1375 written in Latin.²⁸
2. The *Charter Fragment* (CF), ca. 1350-85 a short play or fragment thereof about a medieval marriage, sometimes called the Charter Endorsement because it occurs on the reverse of a charter of 1340.
3. *Pascon Agan Arluth* (PA) or the Passion Poem (sometimes formerly "Mount Calvary"), early to mid fourteenth century.²⁹

²³ W. Stokes, "The Manumissions in the Bodmin Gospels", RC 1 (1870-2), pp. 332-45; M. Cane, *op. cit.*, 239 ff. and *Personal Names of Women in Wales, Cornwall and Brittany 400-1400 AD*, 120 ff; LHEB, pp. 59-60. There may be a few Cornish names in AS. charters, but I have not investigated these.

²⁴ Also cited by M. Cane, PhD thesis, pp. 231-5 and MPhil thesis, pp. 118-20; see further in P. Sims-Williams, *Celtic Inscriptions of Britain*. These are not especially relevant to the present work.

²⁵ See reference in Appendix I.

²⁶ Vatican Codex Ottobianus Latinus 1474, fols. 1r-4r, ed. M.J. Curley, *Speculum* 57 (1982), pp. 217-49 [on dating, see pp. 217, 222-3]. See also: P. Flobert, *ÉC* 14 (1974-5), pp. 31-41; L. Fleuriot, *ÉC* 14 (1974-5), pp. 43-56; W. Stokes, "Cornica", RC 3 (1876-8), pp. 85-6; C. Greith, *Spicilegium Vaticanum* (1838), pp. 92-106. Curley gives the fullest discussion, replacing Greith and Stokes.

²⁷ Separate references are not given where an abbreviation is given in brackets, see Appendix I.

²⁸ H. Jenner, "Some Miscellaneous Scraps of Cornish", RRCPS 96 (1929), pp. 238-41.

4. The *Ordinalia*, late fourteenth century, a cycle of three mystery plays comprising *Origo Mundi* (OM), *Passio Christi* (PC) and *Resurrexio Domini* (RD).³⁰
5. *Bewnans Ke* (BK) or the Life of St. Ke, ca. 1500. The second extant section contains some Arthurian material but the appearance of St. Ke as failed mediator and other important sections are lost.
6. *Beunans Meriasek* (BM) or the Life of St. Meriasek, dated 1504, possibly written ca. 1475-1500. This includes parts of the Life of St. Sylvester and the Emperor Constantine.
7. The numerals 1-24, 30, 100 & 1000 and twenty-five everyday phrases recorded by Andrew Boorde, *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, 1542.³¹
8. One phrase *deese meese te lader* "Come forth thou thief" and one word *polros* "mill-pool" from a case in *Star Chamber*, 1547.³²
9. Two versions of a phrase from an English play, *The Image of Idlennesse*, ca. 1550, 1574 etc., *Marsoyse thees duan guisca ancorne rog hatre arta* "If to weare the horne thou fynde thy selfe agreeved, gyve hym back agayne...".³³
10. *Tregear's Homilies* (TH) or the Tregear MS., 1555-8, translations by a certain John Tregear and other scribes of the first twelve of thirteen Catholic homilies by Edmund Bonner, bishop of London, 1555, with

²⁹ For dating, see B. Murdoch, *Cornish Literature*, pp. 20-1 (esp. n. 3), where the view that PA and the *Ordinalia* were composed at around the same time is rebutted (see J.A. Bakere, *The Cornish Ordinalia*, p. 2). The oldest manuscript (BL Harleian 1782) probably dates from the mid fifteenth century.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 41. The manuscript (Bodley 791) probably dates from the late fifteenth century.

³¹ A. Boorde, *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, 1542 [published 1547], ed. F. J. Furnivall, 1870; R.M. Nance, *JRIC* 22/3 (1928), pp. 366-81; J. Loth, *Archiv für Celtische Lexikographie* I (1900), pp. 224-8.

³² PRO, *Star Chamber Proceedings*, Henry VIII, 8 (1547), pp. 171-5 [Call number 2/8/171-5]. See also J. Loth, "Une Phrase Inédite en Moyen Cornique et un Mot Rare", *RC* 32 (1911), pp. 443-4.

³³ *The Image of Idlennesse* [anon. attributed to "Olyuer Oldwanton"], ca. 1550, 1574 [various eds.], ed. H. Jenner, "Some Miscellaneous Scraps of Cornish", *RRCPS* 96 (1929), pp. 241-4; also E.G.R. Hooper, *OC* 7/1 (1967), p. 43.

an additional catena *Sacrament of the Aulter* (SA) on the subject of transubstantiation, probably by Thomas Stephyn, ca. 1570-1600.³⁴

11. One phrase *Dew whallan gwa metten in eglos de Lalant* "upon all hallow day... in the... church of Lalant" and one word *Cornowok* "Cornish" from a case in *Exeter Consistory Court*, 1572.³⁵

12. The *Creacon of the World* (CW), dated 1611, signed William Jordan, a partial Late Cornish revision of a Middle Cornish original incorporating parts of *Origo Mundi* above, perhaps ca. 1500-1550.³⁶

1.2.3. Late Cornish

The Late Cornish material occurs in a wide range of manuscripts, books, epigrams, letters, inscriptions and other sources, the bulk of which were preserved by antiquarian interest in the 17th and 18th centuries. In many cases (especially in much of the earlier material), the language is genuine vernacular Cornish; however, a large portion of the extant evidence was in fact written by antiquarians such as the Boson family, Thomas Tonkin, William Gwavas and others, whose Cornish was often unidiomatic and heavily anglicised.³⁷ However, their unique contribution to the extant records of Cornish should be remembered in the light of their continued access to the living language, some of which may be extrapolated from the diverse material that they preserved.

It is worth remembering that the antiquarians seized upon any scraps of Cornish that they could find, including considerable material

³⁴ BL Add. MS 46397, described by T.Z. Chaudhri, 2001. On SA, see D.H. Frost, "Sacrament an Alter: A Tudor Cornish Patristic Catena", *Cornish Studies* 11 (2003), series 2, pp. 291-307. Frost believes that an edition of *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* of 1583 was used (cited by him, J. Foxe, *Actes and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed. G. Townsend and S.R. Cattley, London, 1841). This has not yet been confirmed.

³⁵ DRO, *The Consistory Court Deposition Book, 1569-1572 & 1595* [Special Commissions of the Bishop of Exeter's Consistory Court], ed. J. Treffry Hoblyn, "In English & Not in Cornowok", OC 2/11 (1936), p. 11.

³⁶ See discussion at § 5.9.4 below.

³⁷ See P. Berresford Ellis, *The Cornish Language and its Literature*, pp. 70-124.

from Old and Middle Cornish, and sometimes attempted amateur modernisations. Pryce's citation of *bezo* and *bedho* for "birch" may be an example in which Breton has been used as a model for this.³⁸ Lhuyd was to some extent justly accused in a letter of Oliver Pendar to William Gwavas: *Thera moy Gembrack peath rig ea gweele* "It was more Welsh, what he did".³⁹ Despite his contrived idiom and Cambricised grammar, however, his *Archaeologia Britannica* (AB) and his unedited notebook are an invaluable source of vernacular Cornish vocabulary that appears by and large to have been recorded in the field from native speakers.⁴⁰

There remain further unedited scraps of Late Cornish, some of which may be found in the collections of the antiquarians from whom the material below is cited and some as incidental inclusions in other published material.⁴¹ This is a small but diverse corpus of material, some of which may consist only of copies or alternative versions of edited texts. Providing reliable editions of such manuscripts is a considerable task that is necessarily beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is to be hoped that a comprehensive catalogue of the entire known corpus of extant Cornish will eventually be produced.⁴²

1.2.3.1. Late Cornish: 17th Century⁴³

1. From Richard Carew's *Survey of Cornwall*, 1602, one phrase *meea navidna cowza sawsneck* "I'll speak no English", a two-line prophecy

³⁸ See further at § 5.2 below.

³⁹ R.M. Nance, "A Cornish Letter, 1711", OC 1/3 (1926), pp. 23-5; a different version is printed by Pryce, ACB, sig. Ff2v.

⁴⁰ The notebook, in Lhuyd's hand, possibly that of a certain Moses Williams, and others, is in the National Library of Wales, Llanstephan MS. 84. See further at § 1.2.3.3 below.

⁴¹ For example, Jon Mills suggests that the Scawen MS. [BL Add. MS. 33420] in Thomas Tonkin's hand may contain further material [Mills' list of suggested additions to A. Hawke's unpublished corpus]. I have been unable to check every suggestion, which would entail editing many manuscripts.

⁴² See A. Hawke, *The Cornish Dictionary Project: First Progress Report*, 1982.

⁴³ All but 1, 2, 4, 5, 16 & 17 are included in A. Hawke's unpublished computerised text, an invaluable reference guide. This material is derived, with occasional corrections, from the editions cited below.

Ewra teyre a war meane Merlyn / Ara Lesky Pawle Pensanz ha Newlyn "Those who land on Merlin's Rock will burn Paul, Penzance and Newlyn", a rhyme *Tru ru / Triueth eu / [owth] Ombdina [nyn] geueth try ru* "Truro / it's a shame / shrinking, it won't have three rows"; also various words, personal names, place-names and the numerals 1-20, 40, 100, 1000 & 10000.⁴⁴

2. One phrase *Peden bras vidne whee bis cregas* "Fathead, will ye be hanged?" from *The Northern Lasse* by Richard Brome, 1632.⁴⁵
3. A certificate of Banns by Parson Thomas Drake, ca. 1635.⁴⁶
4. Twenty-four words, four phrases and the numerals 1-20 and 100 in the Civil War diary of Richard Symonds, 1644.⁴⁷
5. Eight examples of singular and plural with personal pronouns, in a pedagogical volume by three Quaker gentlemen, ca. 1665-6.⁴⁸
6. A moral tale *John of Chyanhor* "John of the Ram's House" by Nicholas Boson, ca. 1667.⁴⁹
7. A piece by Nicholas Boson entitled *The Dutchesse of Cornwall's progresse...* in honour of her visit to Cornwall, ca. 1660-1700.⁵⁰
8. *Nebbaz Gerriau dro tho Carnoack* "A few words about Cornish" (a description of its decline) by Nicholas Boson, ca. 1660-1700.⁵¹
9. Genesis iii, the Ten Commandments, Matthew ii & iv by William Rowe (Wella Kerew), ca. 1650-90.⁵²

⁴⁴ Richard Carew, *Survey of Cornwall*, 1602 (2 vols.), ed. F. E. Halliday, 1953.

⁴⁵ H. Jenner, "Some Miscellaneous Scraps of Cornish", RRCPS 96 (1929), pp. 248-50; also E.G.R. Hooper, OC 7/1 (1967), p. 43.

⁴⁶ R.M. Nance, "Parson Drake's Cornish Certificate", OC 1/2 (1925), pp. 38-41. A different version is printed by Pryce, ACB, ff2v.

⁴⁷ *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army during the Great Civil War. Kept by Richard Symonds* [BL. Add. MS. 17062], 1644, ed. C. Long, 1856. A missing leaf preceding the vocabulary may have contained more Cornish words, p. 74, note a. See also A. Rowe, OC 4 (1943), pp. 87-88.

⁴⁸ *A Battledoor for Teachers and Professors to learn Singular and Plural... examples of the singular and plural about thou and you...*, G. Fox, J. Stubbs & B. Furley, 1660, ed. H. Jenner, *op. cit.*, RRCPS 96 (1929), pp. 251-5; E.G.R. Hooper, *An Lef Kernewek*, 130 (1976) [no page].

⁴⁹ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 14-23; also R.M. Nance, OC 3/5 (1939), pp. 219-20. The Welsh is taken from Lhuyd, AB pp. 251-3.

⁵⁰ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 8-14; also A.K.H. Jenkin, JRIC 21/4 (1925), pp. 401-13.

10. Two versions of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, possibly by William Gwavas or John Keigwin, ca. 1680-95.⁵³
11. *Kanna Kernuak*, a song expressing Jacobite views (about the Revolution of 1688) by John Tonkin, ca. 1693.⁵⁴
12. A song of moral advice to the tune "The Maid of Kent" by John Tonkin, 1690-1700.⁵⁵
13. *Delkiow Seve* "Strawberry Leaves", a somewhat risqué song by Edward Chirgwin, with some ordinal numbers and phrases, 1698.⁵⁶
14. Some phrases relating to country affairs, tin and fishing, probably by Edwin Chirgwin, perhaps ca. 1698.⁵⁷
15. *A Fisherman's Catch*, a poem on fishing by Noel Cater, 1698.⁵⁸
16. The last 18 lines of CW, re-written by John Keigwin, 1698.⁵⁹
17. A folk rhyme by William Allen, ca. 1670-1710.⁶⁰
18. Genesis i, translated by John Boson (and some composite versions also by John Keigwin), ca. 1690.⁶¹
19. The Lord's Prayer, Creed and Ten Commandments ("Ancient" and "Modern" Cornish versions), perhaps by John Keigwin, ca. 1690.⁶²

⁵¹ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 24-37; also R.M. Nance, JRIC 23/2 (1930), pp. 327-54; W.C. Borlase, JRIC 6/2 (1879), pp. 182-9.

⁵² R.M. Nance, "The Cornish of William Rowe", OC 2/11 (1936), pp. 32-6, 2/12 (1936), pp. 25-7, 3/1 (1937), pp. 41-44; E.G.R. Hooper, OC 8/11 (1978), pp. 559-61; also (inaccurate) J. Loth, RC 23 (1902), pp. 173-200, RC 24 (1903), pp. 1-10.

⁵³ W. Camden, *Britannia*, cols. 17-18; W. Scawen, *Antiquities Cornu-Britannick*, p. 28.

⁵⁴ R.M. Nance, "Kanna Kernuak", OC 1/2 (1930), pp. 41-2 & OC 2/1 (1931), pp. 24-7.

⁵⁵ R.M. Nance, "A Cornish Song, to the Tune of The Modest Maid of Kent", OC 1/11 (1930), pp. 26-30; also W.C. Borlase, JRIC 2/1 (1866), p. 12.

⁵⁶ R.M. Nance, "Edward Chirgwin's Cornish Song", OC 4 (1947), pp. 210-3 [also quotes a bowdlerised version of the above from Jenner's lost notebook]. Nance does not give the numbers and phrases, although they also occur in BL Add. MS. 28554, ed. A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text].

⁵⁷ Pryce, ACB, Ff1v-2r.

⁵⁸ R.M. Nance, "A Fisherman's Catch", OC 1/2 (1925), p. 31; also W.C. Borlase, JRIC 2/1 (1866), p. 14; J. H. Matthews, *History of St. Ives*, p. 410-2.

⁵⁹ E.G.R. Hooper, "More about Keigwin's Cornish", OC 9 (1982), pp. 284-5.

⁶⁰ R.M. Nance, "William Allen's Cornish Rhyme", OC 4/9 (1949), pp. 325-6.

⁶¹ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp 51-4. Keigwin's versions occur in Bodleian Gough Cornwall MS. 4, 57r-59r and BL. Add. MS. 28554, printed by D. Gilbert [ed.], *The Creation of the World*, pp. 93-5 & 189-92; also ed. A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text].

⁶² Pryce, ACB, sig. Ee2v-4r.

1.2.3.2. Late Cornish: 18th Century⁶³

1. Two poems of moral advice by James Jenkins, ca. 1700.⁶⁴
2. A hurling-ball inscription by Thomas Boson, ca. 1700.⁶⁵
3. An elegy on the death of William of Orange by Lhuyd, 1702.⁶⁶
4. A folk rhyme by James Harry, ca. 1705.⁶⁷
5. A translation of *Old Hundredth* by Thomas Boson, ca. 1705.⁶⁸
6. The preface to Lhuyd's Cornish grammar in AB, 1707.⁶⁹
7. The extensive Cornish vocabulary in five sections of Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica*, apparently compiled in the field, 1707. [AB]
8. Letter of King Charles I to the inhabitants of Cornwall, translated by John Keigwin, ca. 1707.⁷⁰
9. The Lord's Prayer, translated by John Boson, 1709.⁷¹
10. A lapidary inscription in the south aisle of Paul church in memory of Capt. S. Hutchens by John Boson, ca. 1709.⁷²
11. Advice to Arthur Hutchens by John Boson, 1709.⁷³
12. Various versions of the Lord's Prayer, Creed and Ten Commandments by several authors (including John & Thomas Boson, John Keigwin, Thomas Tonkin and others), ca. 1700-20.⁷⁴
13. The *Pilchard-curing rhyme* by John Boson, ca. 1700-25.⁷⁵

⁶³ All but 4, 30 & 43 are included in A. Hawke's computerised text, see note at § 1.2.3.1. above. No footnote is given below for AB, see Appendix I.

⁶⁴ R.M. Nance, "The Cornish Rhymes of James Jenkins of Alverton", OC 4 (1948), pp. 268-73.

⁶⁵ O.J. Padel, CWBF, p. 38; also R.M. Nance, OC 1/1 (1925), pp. 37-8.

⁶⁶ NLW Llanstephan MS. 84, pp. 164-8; copies in RIC Tonkin MS. 'B', pp. 195-7 and BL Add. MS. 28554. Printed by R. Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall*, v, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁷ R.M. Nance, "A Cornish Three-Men's Song", OC 1/10 (1929), p. 24.

⁶⁸ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 38-40; also R.M. Nance, OC 1/9 (1929), pp. 33-5.

⁶⁹ Lhuyd, AB, pp 222-4.

⁷⁰ R.M. Nance, "John Keigwin's Cornish Translation of King Charles the First's Letter of Thanks to the Inhabitants of Cornwall", OC 1/4 (1926), pp. 35-40; also OC 1/5 (1927), pp. 26-7.

⁷¹ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 45-6.

⁷² O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 57-8; also R.M. Nance, OC 2/12 (1936), pp. 34-6.

⁷³ O.J. Padel, CWBF, p. 58; also R.M. Nance, OC 2/12 (1936), pp. 34-6.

⁷⁴ BL Add. MS. 28554, 109v-110v & 141r and Bodleian Carter 269, fol. 39ar-v, ed. A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text].

⁷⁵ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 43-5; also R.M. Nance, OC 3/4 (1938), pp. 169-74.

14. Thomas Tonkin's Cornish vocabulary, printed by William Pryce as his own, ca. 1700-25.⁷⁶ [ACB]
15. Six lines of moral advice written to Paul Parish by John Boson, ca. 1700-25.⁷⁷
16. Rhyme to Nicholas Pentreath by William Gwavas concerning tithes, ca. 1700-25.⁷⁸
17. Nine proverbs collected by Tonkin and Lhuyd, ca. 1700-30.⁷⁹
18. A short rhyme, possibly by William Gwavas, beginning *Na reugh ry na moy methacknath* "Give me no more medicine", ca. 1710.⁸⁰
19. The Lord's Prayer, Apostle's Creed and Ten Commandments, translated by Thomas Boson, 1710.⁸¹
20. Letter to John Boson from William Gwavas, 1710.⁸²
21. Reply to William Gwavas from John Boson, 1710.⁸³
22. Letter to someone going to America (with a copy of the Creed) from William Gwavas, 1710.⁸⁴
23. Two versions of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed and Ten Commandments, translated by John Boson, ca. 1710-20.⁸⁵
24. Various biblical translations of Proverbs and Psalms, together with some further, non-biblical quotations, perhaps by William Gwavas (according to H. Jenner), ca. 1710-30.⁸⁶

⁷⁶ Pryce, ACB, sigs. K1r-Bb4v. The fraud was exposed by Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, see H. Jenner, "The Cornish Manuscript in the Provincial Library at Bilbao in Spain", JRIC 21/4 (1925), p. 435. The original vocabulary is in the Bilbao MS., a copy of which is in the RIC.

⁷⁷ O.J. Padel, CWBF, p. 60; also R.M. Nance, OC 4/3 (1944), pp. 106-7; W.C. Borlase, JRIC 2/1 (1866), pp. 13-14.

⁷⁸ R.M. Nance "To Neighbour Nicholas Pentreath", OC 3/9 (1939), p. 264; also OC 2/11 (1936), p. 10; attribution to Gwavas rather than Boson corrected, OC 4/3 (1944), pp. 106-7.

⁷⁹ Pryce, ACB, sig. Ff1r. Tonkin attributed four of these to Lhuyd, as noted.

⁸⁰ R.M. Nance, "An Unprinted Cornish Scrap", OC 2/3 (1932), p. 43.

⁸¹ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 41-2.

⁸² R.M. Nance, "Two Hitherto Unnoticed Cornish Pieces", OC 1/10 (1929), pp. 22-4; corrected OC 2/12 (1936), pp. 34-6.

⁸³ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 46-7; also R.M. Nance, OC 1/9 (1929), pp. 24-7.

⁸⁴ R.M. Nance, "The Cornish Language in America", OC 1/1 (1925), p. 37.

⁸⁵ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp 55-7; also R.M. Nance, OC 5/9 (1958), pp. 374-7.

⁸⁶ BL Add. MS. 28554, 115r-116r, ed. A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text]. The authorship is uncertain, see H. Jenner, *A Handbook of the Cornish Language*, p. 42.

25. William Gwavas' Cornish vocabulary, ca. 1710-30 [Letters A-O].⁸⁷
26. Letter from William Gwavas to Oliver Pendar, 1711.⁸⁸
27. Reply from Oliver Pendar to William Gwavas, 1711.⁸⁹
28. Elegy for James Jenkins (attached to a letter to William Gwavas) by John Boson, 1712.⁹⁰
29. Epitaph for James Jenkins by John Boson (and a version re-written by William Gwavas), 1712.⁹¹
30. Words and phrases, anonymous, from the Bilbao MS., ca. 1713.⁹²
31. Three versions of the Lord's Prayer, 1715 or earlier.⁹³
32. Four lines on the death of John Keigwin by John Boson, 1716.⁹⁴
33. William Gwavas epitaph, written by himself, 1719.⁹⁵
34. Part of Matthew xix.17 and some jottings for its translation, by John Boson, 1720.⁹⁶
35. Epigram on a judgement in the Court of Exchequer concerning tithes, by William Gwavas, 1728.⁹⁷
36. Bowls poem by William Gwavas, ca. 1730.⁹⁸
37. Thirty anonymous sayings collected by Thomas Tonkin, ca. 1730.⁹⁹
38. Two anonymous sayings collected by William Gwavas, ca. 1730.¹⁰⁰

⁸⁷ BL Add. MS. 28554, 119v-25r, ed. A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text]. It was printed by William Borlase, *Antiquities, Historical and Monumental, of the County of Cornwall*.

⁸⁸ R.M. Nance, "A Cornish Letter", OC 1/3 (1926), pp. 23-5. Only part of Gwavas' original letter is given; the rest has been edited by A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text].

⁸⁹ R.M. Nance, *ibid.* The entire reply, on the subject of pilchards, is given.

⁹⁰ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 47-9; also R.M. Nance, OC 2/8 (1934), pp. 30-1.

⁹¹ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 48-9; also R.M. Nance, *ibid.*

⁹² H. Jenner, "The Cornish Manuscript in the Provincial Library at Bilbao in Spain", JRIC 21 (1925), pp. 433-5. These contain agricultural words and some phrases from the time of Queen Anne.

⁹³ J. Chamberlayne, *Oratio Dominica*, p. 50 [1715 ed.] & p. 52 [not 1715 ed.].

⁹⁴ O.J. Padel, CWBF, p. 59.

⁹⁵ Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall*, v, p. 35; Pryce, ACB, Ff4r.

⁹⁶ O.J. Padel, CWBF, pp. 50-1; also H. Jenner, JRIC, 21/4 (1925), p. 431.

⁹⁷ Pryce, ACB, Ff3v.; Polwhele, "The History of Cornwall", v, p. 36.

⁹⁸ R.M. Nance, "Bowling and the Cornish Language", OC 1/3 (1926), pp. 40-2.

⁹⁹ Pryce, ACB, sigs. Ee4r-v.

¹⁰⁰ BL Add. MS. 28554, 115r, ed. A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text].

39. A poem *Why Ladar Gweader* "Ye Lazy Weaver", some advice to drunkards, three lines of moral advice and four further lines of moral advice by William Gwavas, ca. 1730.¹⁰¹
40. A riddle, possibly by William Gwavas, ca. 1730.¹⁰²
41. Two bowls mottoes by William Gwavas, ca. 1730.¹⁰³
42. Thirty-three proverbs from the manuscripts of Scawen, Lhuyd, Gwavas and Ustick, ca. 1700-54.¹⁰⁴
43. Two letters to Thomas Tonkin from William Gwavas, 1734, 1736.¹⁰⁵
44. The Creed and the words used in administering the Holy Sacrament, collected by William Hals, 1737 or before.¹⁰⁶
45. William Borlase's Cornish vocabulary, 1748-69.¹⁰⁷
46. An imprecation ascribed to Dolly Pentreath, *Cronack an Hager Dhu*, of possibly rather doubtful syntax, presumably ca. 1770.¹⁰⁸
47. Letter to Daines Barrington by William Bodinar, 1776.¹⁰⁹
48. A rhyme by Mr. Tompson [sic], an engineer from Truro, on the death of Dolly Pentreath, from a letter of 1879.¹¹⁰

¹⁰¹ Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall*, v, p. 35; Pryce, ACB, sig. Ff4r.

¹⁰² Polwhele, *ibid.*; Pryce, *ibid.*

¹⁰³ BL Add. MS. 28554, 158r. Edited by A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text].

¹⁰⁴ W.C. Borlase, JRIC 2/5 (1866), pp. 8-12.

¹⁰⁵ H. Jenner, "The Cornish Manuscript in the Provincial Library at Bilbao in Spain", JRIC 21/4 (1925), pp. 428 & 430. Jenner gives only the Cornish portions of these letters.

¹⁰⁶ W. Hals, *Compleat History of Cornwall*, pp. 74-5 [the Creed]; BL Add. MS. 29762, 76r [the words used in administering the Sacrament], ed. A. Hawke [unpublished computerised text].

¹⁰⁷ W. Borlase, *Antiquities, Historical and Monumental, of the County of Cornwall*. The date on the MS. is 5th January 1748, but words may have been added up to 1769 according to Hawke [index to his unpublished computerised text].

¹⁰⁸ W. Bottrell, *Traditions and Hearthside Stories of West Cornwall*, Penzance, 1870. Despite Voc. Corn. 617 *croinoc* W. *croenog* B. *kroc'hennek* "with skin", Nance reconstructed this implausibly as **cronekyn hager du* "little black toad", NCED, p. 31. If the article is present, the syntax is strange.

¹⁰⁹ P.A.S. Pool & O.J. Padel, "William Bodinar's Letter, 1776", JRIC 7/3 (1975/6) [n.s.], pp. 231-6; also R.M. Nance, OC 3/7 (1940), pp. 306-8.

¹¹⁰ Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall*, v, p. 43.

1.2.3.3. Late Cornish: Unused and Uncertain Sources

1. A Cornish translation of the Latin texts of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, in *Llyfr y Resolusion* by John Davies of Mallwyd, 1632.¹¹¹
2. The beginning of a rhyming dictionary based on the Passion, an unedited manuscript of Lhuyd in the Bodleian Library, 1695.¹¹² This does not allegedly contain any independent material.
3. Lhuyd's field notebook containing extensive vocabulary, much of which may well have been incorporated into AB, ca. 1700.¹¹³
4. *Cornish Words and their Etymological Significacions*, a copy made by G. Borlase of papers by William Gwavas, 1733.¹¹⁴
5. The worthless "Cornish" vocabulary of Hals, 1737 or before.¹¹⁵
6. *Memories of a Cornish Tongue*, 1748, unpublished MS. in the Royal Institution of Cornwall containing Borlase's copies of manuscripts by Lhuyd, Gwavas, Tonkin, Ustick, Scawen and John Boson.¹¹⁶
7. *An Essay towards an Alphabetical Etimological Cornish Vocabulary with ye signification therof in English of the names of persons places Towns fields Tinworks & rivers &c* by William Gwavas, 1748.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ J. Davies, *Llyfr y Resolusion*, 1632, 1684 etc. I have not used this source because there are many different editions that A. Hawke is in the process of comparing, to be added to his computerised corpus.

¹¹² See H. Jenner, "Descriptions of Cornish Manuscripts - I. The Borlase Manuscript", *JRIC* 19/2 (1913), p. 163, presumably a reference to an unedited manuscript of Lhuyd, Bodleian Broxb. MS. 95.86, "A Design of a British Dictionary, Historical and Geographical", 1695. I have not been able to check this manuscript to ascertain whether it is that described by Jenner.

¹¹³ NLW Llanstephan MS. 84. I have not used this source because A. Hawke is in the process of editing the vocabulary, to be added to his computerised corpus. See the further note at § 1.2.3. above.

¹¹⁴ These apparently unedited papers [CCRO] were noted by Jon Mills in his list of suggested additions to A. Hawke's unpublished computerised corpus. They were not printed where Mills claims, however.

¹¹⁵ BL Add. MS. 28554, 59ra-78vc. Except a few words probably lifted from MIC. texts, the vocabulary contains invented, macaronic forms with spurious meanings. A. Hawke comments in the index to his unpublished computerised text "... this vocabulary is completely worthless."

¹¹⁶ These apparently unedited copies of various manuscripts [RIC] were noted by Jon Mills in his list of suggested additions to A. Hawke's unpublished computerised corpus. I have not checked this material.

¹¹⁷ Noted by H. Jenner, "Descriptions of Cornish Manuscripts - I. The Borlase Manuscript", *JRIC* 19/2 (1913), pp. 166-7. I have not checked Dd.Enys 2000 MS. [CCRO].

1.2.4. Material of Mixed Period¹¹⁸

1. Mottoes of sixteen Cornish families, some probably adapted from Middle Cornish texts and some apparently Late Cornish.¹¹⁹
2. Place-names (Old, Middle and Late Cornish), from various sources.¹²⁰
3. The Bodewryd vocabulary, glosses on two Middle Cornish manuscripts (BM & BK) and some Late Cornish words, ca. 1700.¹²¹
4. A corrupted version of a rhyme recorded orally by John Davey of Boswednack, of uncertain date and provenance but probably composed orally in the terminal phase of the language.¹²²
5. An orally recorded sentence of Cornish reconstructed by R.M. Nance, probably from the terminal phase of the language, perhaps ca. 1730.¹²³
6. Various corrupted, orally recorded versions of the numerals, a very few of which are still recognisably Late Cornish, of uncertain date.¹²⁴

1.3. The Consonantal System of Cornish

The consonant system of Cornish is here represented in three broad phases of the history of the language: since the sound system of a language continually evolves and because it is difficult to date changes exactly, this must be considered a very general synopsis. The sounds of the language are represented below as phonemes (contained within

¹¹⁸ This ignores the superficial LC. alterations to the MIC. text of CW, see § 2.7.

¹¹⁹ R.M. Nance, "Cornish Family Mottoes", OC 1/1 (1925), pp. 18-20; OC 1/3 (1926), p. 29; OC 1/7 (1928), pp. 27-8. One more, that of Noye of St. Berrian [possibly St Burryan] reads *Teg yw hedhwch* and is clearly Welsh, although Nance did not think so. The graph <dh> may be from Lhuyd's influence.

¹²⁰ See especially O.J. Padel, CPNE; also *A Popular Dictionary of Cornish Place-names*. In view of Dr. Padel's ongoing research into the place-names of Cornwall, limited use has been made of this evidence.

¹²¹ NLW Bodewryd MS. 5E, ed. A. Hawke, "A rediscovered Cornish-English vocabulary", *Cornish Studies* 9 (2001), series 2, pp. 83-104.

¹²² R.M. Nance, "John Davey, of Boswednack, and his Cornish Rhyme", JRIC 21/2 (1923), pp. 146-53. Much of the Cornish is too corrupt to be reliable, but Nance made a plausible attempt at reconstruction.

¹²³ R.M. Nance, "A New-Found Traditional Sentence of Cornish", JRIC 22/2 (1927), pp. 281-87.

¹²⁴ R.M. Nance, "Twentieth Century Traditions of the Cornish Numerals", JRIC 21/3 (1924), pp. 300-320; W.D. Watson, "More Traditional Cornish Numerals", JRIC 22/1 (1926), pp. 113-7.

forward slashes) rather than phones (indicated by square brackets) for the sake of convenience. Firstly, the exact phonetic realisations of these phonemes is unrecorded and must be deduced from the phonemic distinctions that may be extrapolated from the orthographic evidence of the extant records of Cornish.¹²⁵ By and large, however, the phonemes may be considered to bear their obvious phonetic values conforming in general to the IPA except where otherwise indicated. Secondly, it is relatively unimportant in this synopsis whether phonemes or mere phones are meant – naturally, the distinction is kept in the main work. The exception to this notation is /mm/ and /nn/ in the Middle and Late periods, in which various reflexes of the phonemes are attested: these are marked as allophones within square brackets. Dashes between phonemes represent possible variations between sounds, or that there is considerable scope for uncertainty about their value. Of these, only /dʒ/–/ʒ/ is relevant to this work, which is discussed further in Chapter 5.

The phonological arrays have, for the most part, been derived and adapted from Part II of Prof. Kenneth Jackson’s *Language and History in Early Britain*, and it has been helpful throughout to compare many aspects of Cornish phonology with similar developments in Breton, so reference to his *Historical Phonology of Breton* has also been invaluable.¹²⁶ It has been necessary to modify his analysis considerably with regard to subsequent scholarship more broadly in the Brythonic and Celtic languages.¹²⁷ Reference to recent Cornish scholarship has been made in particular to the work of Dr. Kenneth George and Dr. Nicholas

¹²⁵ George inconsistently remarks that “Obviously, exact realizations are irrecoverable”, PHC, § 0.6, but goes on to devise a detailed and somewhat idiosyncratic numerical coding system to represent the sounds of Cornish, § 3.2.1-4, stating that the conventional IPA system is insufficiently precise. In the absence of sound recordings, such unrealistic exactitude does not appear to add much to his analysis.

¹²⁶ Jackson does not give any concise summary, see the various phonemes, LHEB §§ 50-150, pp. 394-572; the situation in Breton is described in HPB §§ 418-1176, pp. 307-824.

Williams.¹²⁸ The work done by Robert Morton Nance, though he was not an academic Celticist, has been invaluable in this regard.¹²⁹ However, the following synthesis of that material is entirely my own.

The choice of gemination rather than fortis in the medial and final segments /mm/, /nn/, /rr/ and /ll/ follows Harvey rather than Jackson, Greene and George, since syllables after the New Quantity System in Brythonic were long where a single consonant followed in Brittonic (or no consonant in certain monosyllables) and short where a double consonant followed.¹³⁰ Where V and C mean any vowel and any consonant, doubling them to represent length, this gave syllables VVC, VV or VCC. The idea that tenseness, rather than length, was involved seems to be unlikely from an articulatory and a historical point of view.

The name *Hret Winiau* suggests that the reflexes of initial /rr/ and /ll/ were unvoiced [r̥] and [l̥] but this was likely to have been determined by position, so the initial changes /rr/ > /r/ and /ll/ > /l/ are not made evident in the table below.¹³¹ This may have occurred in the early Middle Cornish period, although it is not especially relevant to the questions addressed here. The phoneme /w̥/ represents the voiceless variety of /w/. This distinction was not purely determined by position and would have participated in the "mixed" mutation, i.e. lenition and provection. The phonemes /j̥/ and /z̥/ are respectively the unvoiced and voiced "shibilant" or palatal fricatives corresponding to the sibilants /s/

¹²⁷ Jackson's double fortis consonants are not required in the light of the discussions of D. Greene, "Gemination and the Spirant Mutation", *Celtica* 7 (1966), pp. 116-19 and A. Harvey, "Aspects of Lenition and Spirantisation", CMCS 8 (Winter 1984), pp. 87-100.

¹²⁸ George's arrays are tabulated usefully in PSRC, fig. 2040, p. 208. Detailed references to the phonemes under discussion in his PHC are given in the relevant chapters; his *Kernewek Kemmyn: Cornish for the Twenty-first Century* is aimed at a non-academic audience, but nonetheless contains extremely detailed commentary, esp. § 10-13, pp. 54-82. Williams' analysis may be found in *Cornish Today*, esp. § 8.1-10.5, pp. 58-78, and "Pre-occlusion in Cornish", *Studia Celtica* 32 (1998), pp. 129-54

¹²⁹ For a detailed summary, see the introduction to NCED, "Pronunciation" [no page nos.].

¹³⁰ A. Harvey, "Aspects of Lenition and Spirantisation", CMCS 8 (Winter 1984), p. 93.

¹³¹ LHEB, § 93, p. 478.

and /z/.¹³² Similarly, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are fully palatalised, affricated versions of /t/ and /d/.¹³³

The loss of /m/ by lenition in Brythonic leaves double /mm/ as an unnecessary distinction, following Harvey.¹³⁴ However, the use of /mm/ here reflects the necessarily diachronic approach of this work, since it deals with the entire history of Cornish. Moreover, it is uncertain exactly when /m/ was restored in loan words from English. The transcription chosen here is relatively loose for these reasons, especially since the distinctions /nn/–/n/, /ll–l/ and /rr–r/ continued the meaningful structure of VCC syllables where nasals and liquids were concerned. To avoid confusion, the temporary loss of /m/ may be taken to be a minor asymmetry from the diachronic point of view. This avoids the need to use the awkward notation /m/ [mm], which is not especially clear.

The Old Cornish /ṽ/ was a partially nasal version of /v/ developed from fully nasal /μ/, lenited from /m/. It fell together as /v/ with the bilabial spirant /β/, the lenition product of /b/.¹³⁵ The voiced spirant /ɣ/ lenited from /g/ and its unvoiced counterpart /x/ spirantised from /k/ should be differentiated in the Old Cornish period. As is conventional, the symbols /ð/ and /θ/ mean the spirantised varieties of /d/ and /t/. All other phonemes may be taken to bear their obvious phonetic values: it is not possible, for example, to determine whether or not unvoiced /p/, /t/ and /k/ were aspirated (as in English) or unaspirated (as in French).

It is apparent that consonants in final position were de-voiced in the same way in Cornish as in Breton, as described by Jackson.¹³⁶ This

¹³² The reflex of assibilation is given henceforth as /z/ < /d/ (and unvoiced /s/ < /t/ after a relevant consonant), not /ç/ and /σ/. The reasons, which are theoretically warranted, are given at § 5.1 below.

¹³³ The reflex of palatalisation is generally given as /dʒ/ and /tʃ/, not /ʒ/ and /ʃ/, for the reasons given at § 5.5 below, unless the latter can be shown. This is a necessary choice in a diachronic study.

¹³⁴ The phonetic value [mm] and the preceding short vowel reflected /mm/ in CC. It should be added that Harvey was not principally concerned with the nasals and liquids, however. See further at § 2.2.

¹³⁵ LHEB, § 94-100.

¹³⁶ LHEB § 134, p. 552, n.; HPB § 444, pp. 324-5.

suggests the rules that must have operated in Cornish, which have been discussed by Padel and by George.¹³⁷ As a result, the voiced and unvoiced series of consonants are phonemically paired, so that final /b/ is realised as [p], for example. The words MIC. *tas* /ta:z/ “father”, MIC. *kyg* /ki:g/ would have been realised as [ta:s] and [ki:k] in pausa or when followed by a consonant or as [ta:z] and [ki:g] before a vowel.¹³⁸ This effect is identical to that in B. /ta:d/ [ta:t] or [ta:d] and [ki:k] or [ki:g].¹³⁹ As noted by Jackson, this is a far more regular feature in CB. than in W., where it varies according to dialect and is not generally represented in the standard written language. Final de-voicing, whether by provection or in pausa, probably continued to operate until the death of the language.¹⁴⁰ This matter is particularly relevant to the matter of *s/th* variation in chapter 4 and palatalisation in chapter 5, although reference is made throughout the thesis to de-voicing in pausa, as well as to provection, where relevant.

The question of voicing of initial and medial unvoiced consonants is difficult in Middle Cornish, since it appears to have been sporadic and because its development is difficult to trace in the orthography. It was almost never written and must be deduced from the phonological evidence in rhymes. In Breton, Jackson considered that unvoiced initial consonants were often voiced after certain words ending in a vowel or words that had caused historical lenition or spirantisation, even if they had not participated in older, true lenition. This was by analogy with grammatical lenition. Later, the effect spread to internal position and to

¹³⁷ O.J. Padel, *Studia Celtica* 14/15 (1979-80), pp. 234-5; PHC, pp. 275-6, 310-17, 353.

¹³⁸ *tas* OM 1, *kyg* TH 61.26.

¹³⁹ Jackson notes in HPB, *ibid.*, that provection may be partial in B. if a voiced consonant follows, affecting only one of the consonants, but complete if a voiced consonant follows. This was probably true for C. as well, since in every other respect the rules seem to have been the same.

¹⁴⁰ It has been alleged by N. Williams, *Cornish Today* § 8.819, pp. 61-68 that some final consonants were re-voiced in later MIC., but his evidence rests on orthographical habits only. Since either voiced or de-voiced consonants could mean the same in final position, and were often written in free variation, the argument is not secure. The evidence of rhymes in BK below appears to contradict this, § 4.2.3, but a dedicated, comprehensive study is required (including place-name evidence as well) that does not rest only on the spelling habits of individual scribes.

initial consonants in pausa.¹⁴¹ George pointed out that Jackson was incorrect to state that New Lenition did not occur in Cornish.¹⁴² The place-name *Penzance* in West Cornwall illustrates the point.¹⁴³

George reserved the term New Lenition for initial voicing, which requires the equivalent changes in internal position to be referred to as medial voicing. Since internal voicing in Cornish appears to have been inconsistent, if not sporadic, this distinction is useful for the sake of clarity: moreover, it emphasises the grammatical function of the sound change in initial position. However, since the methodology of this study concentrates on the phonology of individual words according to their phonetic environments, and is not concerned for the most part with mutations, it seems most useful to employ Jackson's usage. In turn, his use of the term emphasises that, in all probability, the origins of initial and medial voicing of previously unvoiced consonants were the same, as had also been historically the case with true lenition.

For the purposes of comparison, it may be worth recalling the voicing of the initial voiceless fricatives /f/, /s/, /θ/ to /v/, /z/, /ð/ in southern dialects of Old English.¹⁴⁴ These dialects had *vader* for *fader* "father", for example.¹⁴⁵ While this could have been an influence in the spread of the similar New Lenition in Cornish, it must be remembered that (1) New Lenition occurs in Breton, so it would seem to be an inherited tendency of CB.; (2) no grammatical lenitions occurred in English. However, it is clear that internal and final voicing could also occur in English (hence *rise* with /z/). Any correlation between these two phenomena is difficult to ascertain and must remain speculative.

¹⁴¹ HPB § 497-8, p. 360. He dates these changes to the 15th to 18th centuries, § 518, p. 374.

¹⁴² PHC § 19.4.1, pp. 443-5; HPB § 506, p. 365, n. 2 and § 520, p. 375.

¹⁴³ It has both New Lenition and final de-voicing: /penzans/ < *pen* /pen/ "head" + *sans* /sanz/ "holy".

¹⁴⁴ E. Sievers & K. Brunner, *Altenglische Grammatik*, 2nd ed., p. 165.

¹⁴⁵ E.M. Wright, *An Elementary English Grammar*, § 236, p. 107.

1.3.1. Old Cornish

/p/	/b/	/f/	/β/ > /v/
/t/	/d/	/θ/	/ð/
/k/	/g/	/x/	/ɣ/ > /-/
/mm/	/μ/ > /ṽ/ > /v/		
/nn/	/n/		
/ll/	/r/		
/rr/	/l/		
/h/			
/s/			
/w/	/w/		
/j/			

1.3.2. Middle Cornish

/p/	/b/	/f/	/v/
/t/	/d/	/θ/	/ð/
/k/	/g/	/x/	
/mm/ [mm, ^b m]	/m/		
/nn/ [nn, ^d n]	/n/		
/ll/	/r/		
/rr/	/l/		
/h/			
/s/	/z/	/ʃ/	/ʒ-/dʒ/
/w-/w/	/w/		
/tʃ/	/dʒ-/ʒ/		
/j/			
/ç/			

1.3.3. Late Cornish

/p/	/b/	/f/	/v/
/t/	/d/	/θ/ > /-/	/ð/
/k/	/g/	/x/ > /h/ (> /-/)	
/mm/ [mm, ^b m, bb]	/m/		
/nn/ [nn, ^d n, dd]	/n/		
/rr/	/r/		
/ll/	/l/		
/h/			
/s/	/z/	/ʃ/	
/w/–/w/	/w/		
/tʃ/	/dʒ/		
/j/			

1.4 Parameters and Objectives

The specific aim of this thesis is to provide an analysis of the sound changes contained within each of the four studies during the crucial periods of their development in Cornish, as well as more generally to improve understanding of the most difficult areas of the consonantal system of the language. However, the focus of each study is different according to the nature and dating of the phenomena involved.

In the case of pre-occlusion, the relevant sound changes began at the end of the Middle Cornish period, although the phonemic framework in which they were able to occur was inherited from Brittonic. The fact that the majority of extant instances occur in Late Cornish is not

especially significant in itself, but those examples in which further developments are attested are of greatest interest.

The confusion of initial *b* and *m* is attested in Middle and Late Cornish, as well as in place-names. The purpose of the study is to analyse the various factors that contributed to such confusions, as well as their extent and nature in the extant remains of the language.

The various confusions of internal and final *s* and *th* are mostly, but not exclusively, confined to Middle Cornish. Although they represent only a minor and sporadic sound change, the implications of such confusions in terms of medial and final voicing is of considerable importance to understanding the sound system of the language, notably in respect of the operation of "New Lenition" and final de-voicing. These are relevant factors in the study of palatalisation, for example. The study will focus in particular on the decline of these confusions in the latter part of the Middle Cornish period, since new material has come to light in the recently discovered saint's life *Bewnans Ke*, the Life of St. Ke.

In the case of the final study, assibilation was already complete before the earliest Middle Cornish, being a sound change of the end of the Old Cornish period. However, the main purpose of the study is to analyse the sequence of sound changes that subsequently affected the same group of phonemes and the relationship between these changes and earlier assibilation. To this end, it is necessary to focus primarily upon the Middle Cornish period in which palatalisation apparently developed. The aim has therefore been to provide a comprehensive study of the entire corpus of Middle Cornish words in which the relevant sound changes occur. As these changes had largely developed before the beginning of Late Cornish, such an approach is excessive for that period. I hope to work on the further development of palatal sounds in Late Cornish in the future when the entire corpus has been edited in more accessible form.