

THE MANOR OF HALES OWEN, 1270-1300: A HISTORICAL SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

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In this paper we develop and apply a particular approach to the description of how the sociocultural setting of the manor of Hales Owen¹ in the last three decades of the 13th century may have moulded the linguistic patterns of the community. Specifically, the social composition of the manor, as deduced from the surviving *Court Rolls*², is examined in order to infer how legal, economic and racial pressures may have affected the villagers' speech habits as regards characteristic features of a language-contact situation: bilingualism, diglossia, language shift, etc.

In the centuries following the Norman Conquest, England was the scene of a complex linguistic process involving mutual interaction among English, French (Anglo-Norman) and Latin. It is well known that the fundamental grammatical structure of English was not seriously altered by this process, nearly all French influence having boiled down to the introduction of a refined lexical component. Bloomfield, for example, states that:

«the conflict between the two languages (English and French) seems not to have affected the phonetic or gramatical structure of English, except in the sense that a few phonemic features, such as the initials (v, z, d₃), and many features of the morphologic system of French were kept in the borrowed forms»³.

The deep structure of English went relatively unscathed because, in Chomsky and Halle's words:

¹ Hales Owen was, until 1974, in the former Worcestershire. It is now a borough in the metropolitan county of West Midlands. Its modern spelling is Halesowen.

² J. Amphlett, S. G. Hamilton and R. A. Wilson, eds., *Court Rolls of the Manor of Hales Owen, Parts I and II, 1270-1307* (London: Worcestershire, Historical Society, 1910), Rowland Alwyin Wilson edited Part III with additional courts of the years 1276-1301 (London: Worcestershire Historical Society, 1933).

³ Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967), p. 465.

«a grammar of a language represents the linguistic competence of a speaker. In acquiring a language, a child does not memorize the utterances he hears; rather, he somehow utilizes these utterances to construct for himself a grammar, that is, a collection of rules in accordance with which he can produce and understand an unlimited number of utterances, many of them new to him and not similar in any significant sense to those previously encountered»⁴.

Thus, the animetic nature of language acquisition tends to protect autochthonous languages from corruption by aggressive intruders.

Considerations such as those sketched above led Bloomfield⁵ to conclude that since the underlying structures of two languages brought into contact are not affected by this contiguity, socio-economic factors are foreign to the normal operation of language. Language structure can nevertheless not be said to be impervious to violent transformations of society, since massive immigrations or conquests have been known to have overwhelming effects on the subjugated language. As Martinet says:

«... de loin en loin, des bouleversements sociaux extraordinaires dérangent l'équilibre linguistique, donnant ainsi naissance à une onde de réajustements au sein desquels ce sont les facteurs purement internes qui régissent les changements qui se succèdent pendant des années, siècles... Il en irait ainsi l'influence qu'a exercée aux douzième et treizième siècles le français sur l'anglais, dont les effets se ressentent encore de nos jours par l'intermédiaire d'une longue chaîne ininterrompue de réajustements internes»⁶.

The Norman Conquest was not, of course, the first social cataclysm to have profound linguistic consequences for the British Isles. Previously, the Saxon invasions had resulted in the nearly total annihilation of the Celtic language.

The Norman invasion was nevertheless different in kind from these earlier events. The successive waves of Saxons, Angles and Jutes who settled in England following the withdrawal of Rome eventually amounted to a national migration. Well-defined socio-economic structures and linguistic codes were imported which displaced those of the Celtic world simply as the result of the latter's physical retreat to the west. The subsequent influx of Scandinavians was of a similar nature, but its more limited geographical extent and the close kinship between the Scandinavians and the English eventually permitted a substantial integration of the two races and their languages. The Norman invasion was of a quite different character. It was not a national migration, but an aristocratic adventure whose participants shared out the conquered country among themselves. No physical displacement of the losing race took place, but nor was there any question of the racial integration of victors and vanquished. Instead, a double-decker society was established whose upper stratum comprised the conquerors, and whose lower stratum embraced the totality of the autochthonous race.

⁴ Noam chomsky and Morris Halle, *The Sound Pattern of English* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 249.

⁵ Leonard Bloomfield, *op. cit.*

⁶ Andre Martinet, *Elements de linguistique générale* (Paris: A. Colin, 1960), p. 522.

The immediate consequence of the Norman Conquest for the English language was its displacement from official spheres and its relegation to use among the conquered masses. Two different languages cohabited in England, each belonging to its own social stratum. Gradually, however, the social contact between the two groups — or rather, the increasing number of individuals who had everyday dealing with both— brought about interaction between their languages; for as Weinreich says:

«When a group of some size brings two languages into contact, idiosyncrasies in linguistic behaviour tend to cancel each other, while socially determined speech habits and processes characteristic to each group as a whole become significant»⁷.

English, as the lower speech, was initially the worst affected because the inferior status of its speakers soon led to their cultural impoverishment. This in turn favoured a process of de-standardisation in which the language disintegrated into a set of inarticulated, uncodified dialects, and also meant that the diminished pride-of-speech of the now uncultured English made them indifferent to interference by the language of the conquerors, which was in any case the language of unrestricted function. Eventually, however, the weakening of the upper classes' ties with the Continent, and the gradual recovery of social status by the English and their language, meant that at the end of this long period of fusion the unique language which finally emerged was basically English with a strong lexical flavouring of French. It is not our intention to attempt, in this paper, an account of the «chain of internal reajustement» by which Old English and French became reconciled. Instead, we shall view the England of these centuries (and, by inclusion, the Hales Owen of the time) as the scene of a typical language-contact situation, and we shall investigate the topics naturally highlighted by this approach, the prevalence of bilingualism and diglossia during this period. As Einar Haugen states:

«There are two clearly distinct dimensions involved in the various uses of a language or dialect. One of these is structural, that is, descriptive of the language itself; the other is functional, that is, descriptive of its social uses in communication.

Since the study of linguistic structure is regarded by linguists as their central task, it remains for the sociolinguists to devote themselves to the study of the functional problem»⁸.

In the present case, the «functional problem» consists in elucidating the nature of code-switching between English and Anglo-Norman in Hales Owen two hundred years after the Norman Conquest. The bilingualism of English society of

⁷ Uriel Weinreich, *Languages in Contact, Findings and Problems* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), p. 83.

⁸ Einar Haugen, «Semicommunication: The Language Gap in Scandinavia», *Explorations in Sociolinguistics*; quoted by Allan D. Grimshaw in «Sociolinguistics», *Advances in the Sociology of Language*, ed., Joshua A. Fishman (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), p. 103.

the period reflected specific sociocultural pressures favouring the use of a particular kind of language —the upper or the lower code— in particular contexts; and its explanation requires a methodological framework in which both language and society are viewed as ordered, mutually related structures. Though current sociolinguistic research is devoted to study the nature of variation, particularly in the spoken language of today, it has recently appeared more and more likely that the diachronic analysis of variable speech data is feasible and productive⁹, and this paper intends to make a timid inroad into this field.

In the absence of other starting points, we shall try to infer the nature of English/Anglo-Norman code-switching in late thirteenth century England from an examination of the prevailing social structure; or rather, since a description of the situation in England as a whole is evidently a task far beyond the possibilities of a single paper, we shall seek to show how social factors may have determined the use of one or other language in a locality for which we possess relatively abundant sociological data, the manor of Hales Owen. Specifically, a picture of the social structure of the manor obtained from an analysis of the *Court Rolls* for the years 1270-1300¹⁰ will suggest typical situational contexts in which the use of characteristic speech usages may be supposed. We repeat, however, that the sociolinguistic method has not been chosen for this study because of its necessarily being, by itself and in general, more enlightening than the structural viewpoint, but simply because it is the tool best suited to our present purposes, and perhaps the only tool available.

Careful analysis of the surviving *Court Rolls* of the Manor of Hales Owen that record 187 court sessions between 1270 and 1300 allows one to trace to some extent the individual histories of almost all the adult men and a large proportion of the women inhabiting Hales Owen during this period, for the range of matters dealt with is so wide that virtually everyone is mentioned several times, at least in the case of males. To begin with, the great majority of males were entered on at least four occasions; at the age of twelve, when they entered a tithing¹¹; when they were wed; on inheriting property and at death. However, the court sessions

⁹ Historical sociolinguistic loomed up during the 1980's. Cfr. Michel Richter «Towards a Methodology of Historical Sociolinguistics», *Folia Linguistica Historica*, 6 (1985) 1, 41-61, Suzanne Romaine, *Socio-historical Linguistics; Its Status and Methodology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). See also of this author, «Contributions from Sociolinguistics to Historical Linguistics», *La diachronie hier et demain*, ed. T. Fraser and Andrew Joly (Lille: Presses Universitaires, 1985). Stewart A. Harleman, «The Diachronic Study of Communicative Competence», *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on English Historical Linguistics*, ed. M. Davenport, E. Hansen and H. F. Nielsen (Odense: University of Odense Press, 1983).

¹⁰ See below.

¹¹ «...men were divided into groups of ten or a dozen persons called frankpledges or tithings. One member of each tithing was its head and was called ariously the headborough, dozener, chief pledge or tithing man... these chief pledges were the men who, on some manors, particularly in the East of England, formed the juries of the hallmotes. The frankpledge system was a police measure. The tithing as a whole was responsible for producing in court any one of its members accused of a misdeed, and it could be amerced for not doing so. By this means, the rulers of England made full use, as they did in othe instances, of the principle of collective responsibility».

were mainly concerned with all kinds of offences committed by the villagers against the Lord of the Manor, the community and each other (offences against the community might consist, for example, in committing some breach of the rules of husbandry), and with the periodic election of jurymen and minor community officers (The reeve, the hayward, etc.). The *Rolls* are thus a rich source of socio-economic information of all kinds, and the probability of their omitting mention of any male slight. This all-embracing character allows the population of the manor at any particular time to be «reconstructed» by examining the records for about 15 years on either side of the moment in question¹². The life expectancy of males in the middle ages¹³, for example, means that in most cases property would pass from father to son within a 30-year period, and this change of ownership was recorded in the *Rolls*. For the present study the period 1270-1300 was chosen because although the *Rolls* for a number of years included within this span are missing (1273, 1283-1292 and 1296), the data for any 30-year period which is both relevant to the situation at the end of the thirteenth century and posterior to the 1283-1292 gap in the records are complicated by the effects of the great famine of 1315-17¹⁴.

After the Norman Conquest, Hales Owen became a Crown possession subject to the rule of a caste of foreign officers and rich tenants (*liberi homines*, or «riders») who had appropriated the lands of autochthonous villagers, the latter thereby becoming landless or being reduced to the position of subtenants. About 72 families, to judge *Domesday Book*¹⁵, lived in the manor in 1086, since the Survey runs as follows:

[George C. Homans, *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1975), p. 324].

¹² The study of manorial *Court Rolls* of the thirteenth century furnishes the researcher with detailed information about socio-economic and demographic components for the manors of England at that time. Zivi Razi has recently focused upon the manor of Hales Owen in his book *Life, Marriage and Death in a Medieval Parish...* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1980). Following him we used similar techniques of isolating males and females and discovered the number of families who supposedly inhabited the manor to judge the *Rolls*. Thus, we noticed that a large number of people appear in the *Rolls* under different names. Villagers were registered sometimes according to their family relationship, e. g. Henry de Volatu; on other occasions we find them recorded by the name of their professions, e.g. Henry le Attorney or by the place where they lived, e. g. Henry of Hunnington. By linking family ties we discover that the «three» Henrys are the same person as the «three», for instance, married the same person, Juliana of Hunnington (cfr. *Court Rolls of Hales* (Amphlett's ed. Wed. 26 Nov 1281, pp. 170-171, See also pp. 129, 150, 182).

¹³ Medieval demography and life expectancy on the Continent and in England have been extensively studied by John C. Russell. See, for instance, «Late Ancient and Medieval Population», *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 48 (1958) Part III.

¹⁴ A less serious famine was also suffered during the years 1293-5, as is shown by the relatively high numbers of deaths, pleas of debt and extra-family land transactions recorded in the *Rolls* for these years, coinciding with a sharp rise in the price of grain (see D. L. Farmer, «Some grain price movements in the thirteenth-century England», *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd Ser., X (1957-8), p. 212).

¹⁵ John Morris (gen. ed.), *Domesday Book* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1982) 16 Worcestershire, p. 176a.

According to *Domesday Book*, the amount of land which was cultivated in Hala (Hales Owen) in 1086 would be 6,180 acres. At that time, the acreage of the land which was covered by the Survey is given as 10,136 acres. Then the 3,956 acres would correspond to woodland and uncultivated ground,

«In Clent Hundred Earl Roger holds one manor, Hala (Hales Owen), from the King, 10 hides. In lordship 4 ploughs.

36 villagers, 18 smallholders, 4 riders and a church with two priests; Between them they have 41 ½ ploughs, 8 male and two female slaves.

Roger Hunter holds 1 ½ hides of this land from the Earl; he has a plough. 6 villagers and 5 smallholders with 5 ploughs. Value 25s.

Value of this manor before 1066 £ 24, now £ 15».

Of the 300 odd people, (following Russell), who inhabited the manor in 1086, no more than about 25 can have been Norman settlers: the «riders», the priests and the major officers (steward and bailiff)¹⁶. This small dominant group undoubtedly dictated the social pattern of the manor, but can hardly have had an immediate influence on the linguistic capabilities of the native English. The linguistic situation for at least half a century after the Conquest must have been in the main what may be described as «co-lingualism»: the two social strata (Normans and English) must each have remained largely monoglot, with contacts for which verbal language was really essential being mediated, in formal situations at least, by one or two more-or-less bilingual interpreters.

Let us examine the degree to which various kinds of relationship between Normans and English may have contributed to changing the situation described above. The weekly meeting between the two communities at Sunday mass may be assumed to have done little to advance the cause of bilingualism. On the contrary, the formality of the occasion would no doubt make the Normans —notably the preacher— even more conscious of their social superiority and of their obligation to emphasise this status by the use of their own peculiar language. Rather more flexibility may have been practised at the Lord of the Manor's Court every third Wednesday¹⁷, for although the official language of pleading was French it may also have been necessary to allow villagers who spoke no French to testify in English. A more important role in the process of mutual comprehension will have been played by once-or twice-weekly commercial exchanges in the market place of Hales, and by daily encounters in the lanes and fields. However, the decisive factor in the acquisition of a degree of individual bilingualism even by certain first generation Normans and certain of their English contemporaries must have been the fact that the great majority of the Norman invaders were males. After the Conquest, England had been shared out among the Normans who had fought at Hastings, relatively few of whom will have sent back to France for women-

most of it probably the Lord's waste [cfr. *Worcestershire County Council Handbook*, quoted by John Amphlett et al., *Court Rolls of the Manor of Hales* (London: Worcestershire Historical Society, 1910) p. VII].

¹⁶ John C. Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 11, has estimated the number of members in the average family at this time to be 4.5. The steward and/or the bailiff are not mentioned in the Survey of 1086, but it is well known that Norman lords appointed Norman officers of this nature to be in charge of the manorial business.

¹⁷ A different day of the week might also be chosen by the Cellerer if an important matter required the Court's urgent convention.

folk. Most of the humbler Norman settlers must have married English women. Even before the end of the eleventh century, then, the components of these mixed marriages are likely to have become familiar with at least the coarser rudiments of each other's native speech; and many of their offspring will have been truly bilingual, or rather, since their capacity in each language would be limited to the contexts in which it had been learnt («father's language» and «mother's language»), diglossic.

From *Domesday* until 1270 when the *Court Rolls* of the manor appear, (or survive at least) regularly, there is a break of nearly two hundred years which remains undocumented. In such a shadowy period of time it is difficult even to imagine the demographic trend followed in this manor, unless analogical consequences with other documented manors should be extracted. But to reconstruct the demography of Hales Owen after 1270 by means of the study of the manorial *Court Rolls* is not only possible, but also done partially already by Zivi Razi¹⁸. Following him, we will classify, firstly, in social strata the villagers recorded in the *Rolls*, and, secondly this being our particular contribution we will classify families according to their «hypothetical» Norman (or French) and English descent, so as to be able to assign them a «hypothetical» language usage.

By linking family ties we checked out 450 families who, judging by the *Court Rolls*, inhabited the manor in 1299. Other estimations for the period 1270-1300 are recorded below:

Individual males recorded	750
Males recorded as fathers	193
Males recorded as husbands	161
Males recorded as sons, brothers & fathers	266
Males whose locations or family relationship is unknown	81
Identified families	427

On comparing the *Domesday* demographic items with the genealogical data extracted from the *Rolls* for the period covered by this research, we appreciate a nine-fold population increase over the figure stated by the Survey of 1086, as well as a striking transformation of the villagers' social status. The alteration undergone seems to have been supported largely by the agricultural exploitation of a progressively greater proportion of land, for the 273 freeholdings tilled at the end of the thirteenth century (smallholders were free at this time) can hardly have been the result of simply splitting up the five recorded in *Domesday*. Agricultural expansion had nevertheless seen paralleled by a corresponding degree of commercial development, as is shown by the number of tradesmen (see below) appearing in the *Rolls*:

— The social structure as suggested by *Domesday* runs as follows:

No. of families	Freeholders	Smallholders	Villeins	Slaves
72	5	23	42	10

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*

— The social structure extracted from the *Roll* runs as follows:

No. of families	Richholders	Smallholders	Villeins
450	89	184	177

It is likely that not all the population of Hales Owen at this time had been generated internally. During the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the influx of French immigrants into England had continued, and the notion that Hales Owen had received its share of these contingents is supported by the large number of French surnames appearing in the *Rolls*. In the following we intend to check all those families «supposedly» of Norman —or French— descent, identifying their privileges and the role they played within the community, and particularly looking at how they, who made up the manorial bureaucracy, may have perpetuated the use of French. We may commence with:

Edith Blanch: She was one of the most influential freeholders of the manor of Hales Owen. Her great extension of land was held by five sub-tenants who were also rich: Agnes Le Seriant, Henry Tinctor, Thomas Faber, William Wyting and William, son of Philip of Wyllinghurst¹⁹. Nevertheless, the *Court Rolls* of the manor of Hales Owen do not furnish us with much other information about Edith Blanch, probably due to the fact that she was a woman and furthermore seems to be excluded from attending Abbot's Court. In any case, she bears a French name and we think that her wealthy position derived from the Norman invasion; consequently, she was a potential Anglo-Norman speaker.

Henry de Volatu: He was called the «dominus» of the rural settlement of Hunnington, south of the commercial centre of the township of Hales Owen. He, with other members of the family —Roger de Volatu and Richard de Volatu— took part in many manorial activities and the *Court Rolls* of the manor registered them many times. The Volatu's family was, no doubt, of Norman or French ascendancy and probably Juliana of Hunnington, his wife, had also been born in the bosom of a Norman family. Their high social status, together with their fluency in Anglo-Norman, probably explains why Henry de Volatu appeared so regularly as juror in the Great Courts (when royal judges sat at the Abbot's Court or in the View of Frankpledge) or as attorney on behalf of those peasants who could afford his services²⁰.

William Palmer and Matilde Pourte: Palmer's family and Pourte's family must have been of Norman extraction also. William Palmer is usually registered as William Tewenhale, married to Agnes, Matilde Pourte's sister. The high status of William Palmer is unquestionable, mainly if we consider that he appears, for example, ten times out of eleven as a juror in the Great Courts, that is, he was a member of the manorial bureaucracy. On one occasion he demanded «to be

¹⁹ *Hales Owen Court Rolls II*, Reference No. of Roll 346211 (Rowland Alwyin Wilson ed., p. 96 and p. 107).

²⁰ *Hales Owen Court Rolls* (Amphlett *et al.*'s ed.) Wed., 26 Nov., 1281, pp. 170-171; cfr. also pp. 129, 150-1, 182.

tried by his peers» as he was a free man²¹. As far as Pourte's family is concerned, we can confirm that they were of solid position, at least this is the conclusion arrived at when seeing that Matilde presented a «cendula» before the Abbot's Court containing her free condition, since Edith, Agnes and Matilda's predecessor, held her holding as a freehold estate²². For us, and from a linguistic point of view, it is interesting to notice that both families bear a French surname as well as a high social status and consequently we must suppose that they spoke Anglo-Norman as their mother-tongue.

Thomas Archer: His free condition is quite without doubt as he appears in the *Court Rolls* between 1280 and 1300 under the names of Thomas Archer and Thomas Le Freeman. Archer's family was tremendously powerful in the manor of Hales Owen. An entry in 1275 shows that Agatha Archer pleaded against the Lord Abbot²³. In the same year, after the advent of King Edward I's Justices in Eyre to the Abbot's Court, a royal inquest sat at Shrewsbury to report on the struggle between the Abbot and his tenants. Thomas Archer defended the tenant's rights against the Abbot's usurpation before the royal judges. These are sufficient indications to prove the high position of this family within the manor. Again for us, the fact that such a family bears a French surname must be considered as a consequence of the Norman Conquest and therefore carriers of the mother tongue: French.

Other families of substantial position recorded in the Rolls for the period 1270-1300 apparently bearing French surnames are:

Thomas de la Voley —he seems to be a member of the *Volatu's*²⁴; *Thomas Zouche* —he acted as attorney at the Abbot's Court²⁵; *Philip Symond* —the Simonds were a rich and large family²⁶; *Richard Bruera* —he was a solid peasant and free²⁷; *John Oniot* —he was a free man²⁸; *Philip Belegaumbe* — nothing conclusive was found about his free or unfree condition²⁹; *Richard Jurdan* —a free and solid peasant³⁰, collector of Abbot's rents; *Richard Allen* —he usually appears named after the place «Tadenhurst». He was also a free man³¹; *Richard Fey* —the Feys were a large family of Ridgeacre with family ties with the Pal-

²¹ *Ibidem*, Mon., 3 Jun., 1275, p. 63 see also pp. 68, 72, 75, 85. A Palmer (L. Palmarius; O. Fr. palmier) was also a pilgrim who returned from the Holy Land, in token of which he carried a palm leaf. Anyway, William Palmer was one of the most important villagers of the manor and it is likely that he inherited his large holdings from a family of Norman origin.

²² *Ibidem*, Mon., 21 Jun., 1277. p. 88.

²³ *Ibidem*, Tues., 27 Aug., 1281, p. 70. cfr. also pp. 158, 165.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, He acted as attorney —Wed., 27 Mar., 1280. p. 129.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, Mon., 15 Jul., 1280. p. 150.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, Wed., 25 Jun., 1297. p. 365.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, Tues., 12 May, 1293. p. 228.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, Wed., 1 Jul., 1280, p. 203.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, Mon., 3 Jun., 1280. p. 144.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, Mon., 30 Jun., 1299. p. 382.

³¹ *Ibidem*, Wed., 28 Oct., 1293. p. 253.

mers, a rich family³²; *Agnes Le Seriant* —she was a substantial peasant, though a sub-tenant of Edith Blanch³³; *Richard de la Grene* —He was a free and solid peasant in the rural settlement of Ridgeacre. «Richard de la Grene venit (to the Abbot's court) cum sua potestate et abduxit»³⁴.

We do not intend to complete a thorough list of all families supposedly bearing a French surname, such as the Paumer, The Rochets, etc., but to assess that these families were the most substantial peasants and merchants of the manor.

There is another interesting variant to bear in mind in order to approach the extent to which Anglo-Norman was used in Hales Owen Manor for the period 1270-1300; the study of those surnames which stand for a profession. Indeed, it is very illustrative to view how common professions bear an Anglo-Norman name. Let us see some examples:

a) Professional names in charge of an office.

Brother Geoffrey the Celerer (M. L. Cellarius, O. Fr. Celerier, A. N. celerer). Cellarer in charge of the Abbots's Court³⁵; *John Knight Bayly* (M. L. bucellus, O. Fr. baillif, bailli, A. N. bayly) bailiff, a general supervisor of the Abbot's interests³⁶; *Robert the Summoner* (O. Fr. somon-, pr. stem of somo (u) undre) the person who summoned suitors... to the Court³⁷; *John Bedel* (M. L. Bedellus, O. Fr. bedeli) beadle. He was in charge of hallmotes and probably levied distresses and collected fines³⁸; Thomas Porter (M. L. portato, O. Fr. porteur). The porter was probably the equivalent name of summoner³⁹; *William Alfred Forester* (O. Fr. forestier, A. L. forestarius). He was an officer in charge of looking after the woodlands of the manor. Cfr. the Woodward⁴⁰; *Thomas Constable* (M. L. comes stabuli, O. Fr. constable) an officer in charge of keeping peace and enforcing order⁴¹; c. fr. also the *Afferor* (M. L. afforare = fix the price; from L. ad + forum = market; O. Fr. afeurer, A. N. aferer, afferor). An officer in charge of fixing amounts, that is a «taxator»; and the *Aletaster* (M. L. tastare, probably a blend of tangere and gustare = touch and taste; the first part of the word is of Anglo-Saxon origin.

b) Anglo-Norman names used for occupations of the lower classes. Obviously all of them had an English equivalent term. Let us see some of them:

Nicholas Faber (L. fabrica; O. Fr. fabrique; A. N. subs. faber) the worker in metal (the smith). He appears in 1282⁴² but we also found a John Faber in

³² *Ibidem*, Mon., 18 Oct., 1294. p. 305.

³³ *Ibidem*, (Rowland's ed.) II, p. 96.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, (Amphlett's ed.) Wed., 14 Oct., 1293. p. 243.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, Tues., 28 Oct., 1281. p. 165.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, Mon., 8 Oct., 1279. p. 112.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, Mon., —July., 1270. p. 17.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, Mon., 2 Mar., 1293. p. 220.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, Tues., 20 Oct., 1277. p. 93.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, Wed., 12 Feb., 1294. p. 270.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² *Ibidem*, Mon., 18 Mar., 1282. p. 185.

1280⁴³. Cfr. Nicholas Ironmonger, Roger Goldsmith; *Richard Tinctor* (L. v. tingere, pa. pple. tinctus; O. Fr. teingere, teindre). Next to Richard⁴⁴ we found Thomas Tinctor⁴⁵ and Henry Tinctor⁴⁶. We also found William *Le Peynter*⁴⁷ (O. Fr. peintour; L. pictor); *Margeria Tixtoris* (L. textor, O. Fr. tesseur). She was a weaver and appears for different occasions in the last two years of the thirteenth century⁴⁸; *Richard the Mason* (O. Fr. masson; O. N. Fr. machun, A. N. machun). His name was recorded twice in 1293⁴⁹. The French surname *Cementarier* is also found; *William the Carpenter* (O. Fr. carpentier, charpantie). He was also an important tradesman⁵⁰; *John the Cobbler* (of unknown origin) appears in 1271⁵¹; *Thomas Chaloner* (O. Fr. chalon). He is supposed to be the maker of a *chalon*, that is, a closely-woven woollen material, chiefly used for lining⁵²; it is difficult to determine the exact activities of William *Curtiler*, Henry *Rutoner*, John *le Parchere*, also found in the *Court Rolls*.

By 1270, then, the structure of the Anglo-Norman speaking population of Hales Owen had changed. It was no longer an exclusive dominant group comprising aristocratic overlords, church officers and ex-soldier peasants, but too small to be maintained by in-group marriages. Its survival as a class was now guaranteed by its numbers, while the recent French origin of many of its members must have reinforced its sense of separate collective identity and its rejection of English culture. Furthermore, one of the very first consequences of Henry III's policy of importing favourites from France was that in 1218 the lordship of the manor had passed to the Premonstratensian monastic order, a house of French origin; and in 1270 the Abbey of Hales Owen was still under the protection of, and its Abbot was elected by, Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester and a fierce enemy of all that was English⁵³. That the monks' attitude towards the native En-

⁴³ *Ibidem*, Mon., 5 Mar., 1280. p. 128.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, Mon., 7 Feb., 1295. p. 322.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, unknown date, 1281. p. 164.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, Mon., 10 May., 1294. p. 283.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, Wed., 22 Apr., 1282. p. 188.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, Mon., 30 Jun., 1298. p. 382.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, Mon., 30 Nov., 1293. p. 260.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, Jan., 1301. p. 426.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, Tues., 3 Nov., 1271. p. 34.

⁵² *Ibidem*, Tues., 27 Aug., 1280. p. 43.

⁵³ «A. D. 1232. The seventeenth year of King Henry's reign he held his Court at Christmas at Worcester, where by the advice of Peter Bishop of Winchester... he dismissed all the native officers of his court from their offices and appointed *foreigners* (my italics) ... these men used their utmost endeavours to oppress the natural English subjects ... A. D. 1233. All this time Peter Bishop of Winchester and his colleagues had so perverted the King's heart with hatred and contempt for his English subjects, that he endeavoured by all the means in his power to exterminate them, and invited such legions of people from Poitou that they entirely filled England, and wherever the King went he was surrounded by crowds of these foreigners; and nothing was done in England except what the Bishop of Winchester and this host of foreigners determined on».

[Roger of Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, ed., H. G. Howett (London: Rolls Series, 1886-7). pp. 265-8]. Peter des Roches, awarding the Manor of Hales Owen to the Premonstratensian Canons must therefore be seen as reflecting their political and religious identification with his own views.

English was very much the same as their patron's is witnessed by the fact that in 1246 there began a long series of wrangles between the villagers and the Canons concerning the market place, rights of pasture on the common, and bond-service owed by unfree peasants to the Lord Abbot.

The ruling Norman class in Hales Owen at the end of the thirteenth century was thus made up of the monks, whose direct contact with the villagers would be minimal but whose power was virtually absolute, together with a group of rich and influential immigrant freeholders and tradesmen. Below them in the social scale were a large number of free English peasants who rented their land from the Abbot, but had no obligation to render bond-service. A parallel status was held by the sizeable number of English tradesmen. Finally, the lower walks of life were occupied by the various classes of unfree villagers bound to do service to the Lord of the Manor: villeins, who in this way paid rent for the land they tilled (possibly in addition to other species of rent); cotters, who were landless but had right of occupancy over their dwelling; undersettles, who worked for a rich peasant and lived in one of his outhouses, but with no rights over their abode; and servants, who were in much the same position but worked in the Abbey or in the homes of the rich rather than in the fields.

As the representative of the Order, the Abbot was Lord of the Manor, but its administration was largely in the hands of the cellarer, whose main duty was to preside over the Manor Court, and of his assistant, the bailiff. Both these officers were appointed directly by the Abbot and were probably of French or Norman descent. However, the day-to-day management of the manor and the Abbey's land also required a number of other officers, who were elected by the villagers—often yearly—subject to the Lord Abbot's approval. The chief of these was the reeve, who organised the exploitation of the Lord's demesne and the bond-service paid by the unfree villagers. Others included the hayward, who watched over the Lord's corn, and also over all other crops at harvest time; the woodward, who had similar duties in the Lord's woodland; the beadle, who executed the decisions of the bailiff and the cellarer, delivering summonses and collecting fines and rents owed to the abbey; and the aletaster, who was a kind of weights and measures inspector. These lesser officers were responsible, each in his particular field, for ensuring the smooth working of the complex system of rights, duties and customs governing the life of the manor.

Given the society sketched above, what can be deduced about its linguistic behaviour?. In the first place it is clear that the upper classes of the community spoke Anglo-Norman amongst themselves, and that most have been virtually monolingual. «Old Normans», descendants of the original conquerors, may indeed have been bilingual, since the capacity for communication in both Anglo-Norman and English, albeit about different kinds of topic, may well have been acquired as a matter of course in such families. However, this group, if it still existed at all, seems to have constituted a very small minority by 1270. The reproductive self-sufficiency of the Anglo-Norman speaking community at this time, i. e. the absence of any need for intermarriage with the English, must have meant that in the majority of these families, both the opportunity of and interest in learning

English at an early age had been drastically reduced. The upper classes can in fact have had no wish to learn English, since the use of Anglo-Norman was a mark of social and cultural superiority, and was in any case the prescribed practice for almost all official purposes. The *Court Rolls* of the manor, for example, were like most other legal documents, still written in Latin, but their style and vocabulary show that these records were virtually latinized transcriptions of proceedings that were conducted in Anglo-Norman⁵⁴. The vigour of Anglo-Norman in this respect is shown in the following fragment:

«Item presentant quod ad tenementum Ricardi Bedelli erant due domus tempore Henrici Tinctoris, una in qua solebant manere, alia fuit una grangia, que modo sunt prostrate ad nocumentum predicti tenementi»⁵⁵.

Apart from the word-order that is strictly French, we also notice a latinized French vocabulary in «tenementum» that does not exist in classical Latin and therefore was a latinized form of the O. Fr. *tenement* (A. N. *tenement* = the estate of a tenant). The same occurs with «grangia» from O. Fr. *grange* (A. N. *grange* = usually a house belonging to the Lord Abbot) and with «nocumentum» from O. Fr. *nocument* (A. N. *nocument* = damage, harm).

The use of «presento, as, are» (L. *praesento* ...) is also revealing as it was used with its O. Fr. meaning «dénoncer» or make a presentment at Court. Cfr. also the aforementioned commentary about Bedelli and Tinctoris as far as naming professions is concerned. It is also illustrative to see how the clerk registered people, using a Frenchified Latin when naming villagers' professions (or nicknames) and their places of origin preceding them respectively by *le, la* and *de, de la*⁵⁶. Let us look at this fragment:

«Romesley (a community) presentant quod Heuricus Tandi, Willelmus le Carpenter faciunt defaltam. Item dicunt quod Willelmus Pictator, Robertus de Monte, Petrus filius Roberti le Somenor, Ricardus Aleyn, Robertus le Bonde, Thomas de Monte, Clemens Tandy, Adam de la Grene ... similifer faciunt defaltam.

⁵⁴ This article is written assuming on the whole that proceedings in the Abbot's Court of Hales Owen were conducted in Anglo-Norman. This statement is substantiated broadly in the *Statute of Pleading (Statuted of Realm II)* of 1362 in which the Parliament urged suitors and judges alike of local courts to run their proceedings in English due to the «great mischiefs» caused to the villagers for conducting proceedings in French. This document was issued nearly a hundred years after this research covers, that is, in a period in which English had already recovered formal purposes. It is also very illustrative of the appearance of many handbooks of court procedure for stewards in the thirteenth century written in French and titled *La Court de Baron*, but no equivalent text in English has ever been found.

⁵⁵ *Hales Owen Court Rolls* (Rowland Alwyin Wilson's ed.), p. 154.

⁵⁶ These are other examples: *Le Ercher (Hales Owen Court Rolls Amphlett's ed.)* Wed., 3 Oct., 1274. p. 60; *Le Valante (Ibid, Tues., 26 Nov., 1275. p. 72)*; *Le Blunte (Ibid, Tues., 17 Dec., 1275. p. 74)*; *Le Ventur (Ibid, Wed., 24 Feb., 1277. p. 78)*; *Le Tornur (Ibid. Fri., 10 May., 1280. p. 140)*; *Le Noble (Ibid. Wed., 1 Jul., 1282. p. 199)*; *Le Fraunceys (Ibid, Fri., 22 Apr., 1295. p. 331)*; *Le Peyneresse (Ibid, Mon., 13 May., 1297. p. 362)*; *Le Braceresse (Ibid, Mon., 13 May, 1297. p. 362)*; *Le Venele (Ibid, Wed., 21 Jan., 1282. p. 178)*. See also *De Bosco (Ibid, Wed., 30 Apr., 1270. p. 10)*; *De Monte (Ibid, Mon., 14 Mar., 1278. p. 103)*; *De Fraximo (Ibid, Wed., 12 Aug., 1271. p. 30)*; *De Fonte (Ibid, Tues., 1 Feb., 1278. p. 97)*; *De Zildentre (Ibid, Tues., 11 May, 1277, p. 85)*; *De La Garpe (Ibid, Wed., 1 Jul., 1282, p. 200)*; *De Aula (Ibid, Mon., 30 Nov., 1293. p. 260)* and many others.

would necessarily have been acquired via their mother tongue. There would be no signs of social bilingualism (diglossic or otherwise) during this initial stage. However, such a situation could not last for long within a society united by a single socio-economic structure, a single political power and a single religion. For these reasons this initial stage must have concluded with the first generation of Norman immigrants at the end of the eleventh century or early in the next.

A second stage, lasting throughout the twelfth century, must have arisen because, in spite of the enduring gulf in social status between Normans and English, the separation of social functions was beginning to be eroded. Freeholders and tradesmen of Norman descent living in the isolation of the manor some even tilling their own land —had to be in daily contact with English folk who knew no other language than the vernacular. It is not possible to imagine two peasants — one richer than the other, but still a peasant— meeting in the fields and talking about the weather or farm implements, each in a different language. It is probable, therefore, that Norman descendants whose mother tongue was French were able to produce «meaningful utterances» in vernacular to make themselves understood, although this knowledge of English would still be mediated by their native language. In a parallel process, numbers of native English speakers would have made efforts to acquire the language of the conquerors so as to facilitate their social ascent by assimilation into the latter, the difference being that the Anglo-Normans were conscious of the prestige of their mother tongue and therefore retained it for formal occasions such as church and hallmote. This difference notwithstanding, it is clear that this period must have seen a considerable increase in the number of individual bilinguals of either origin, together with increasing interference between the two languages.

In the third stage of the fusion process, in which we set Hales Owen for the period covered by this research, we suppose that both English and Anglo-Norman were commonly spoken and understood by a large mass of people of both Norman and English extraction. We shall argue, however, that this situation was a case of diglossia rather than perfect social bilingualism in which both languages were used indistinctly for every function. Indeed, perfect social bilingualism, if it ever exists, is an extremely unstable phenomenon.

Finally, the definitive stage of the linguistic process ends up when French is stigmatized as a foreign language.

 **INDICE**