Now that half a century has elapsed since the appearance in print of Miss M.K. Pope's classic work on French philology, *From Latin to Modern French, with especial consideration of Anglo-Norman*,¹ it is perhaps time to take stock, to set this major work in perspective against more recent lines of enquiry into the historical development of the French language and to attempt to indicate some of the directions in which future gains in knowledge may be made. Since Miss Pope's book was the product both of the Department of French Studies at the University of Manchester and of the Manchester University Press, it may be appropriate that from one of her successors in that department some two generations later and in a journal of the same university there should come an essay assessing the present situation and suggesting possible avenues of investigation for the coming generation of scholars working in the field of French philology.

The impact of Miss Pope's work on the post-war orientation of the study of French is evident at every turn. Her book has figured for years in the list of required or recommended reading in more than one university department of French and appears in the bibliography of virtually every study of the history of the French language written during the last fifty years. In countless books and learned articles references to its numbered paragraphs are made as to the final, undisputed authority. It may be taken as a fact of linguistic history that *From Latin to Modern French* has deservedly become an enduring landmark in French philology.

This situation, however, is not without its drawbacks and possible dangers, for it brings with it for those who come after the writer of such an authoritative work the temptation of being content to refer passively to the acknowledged expert and so of failing to bring to their own studies that crucial spirit of enquiry that Miss Pope herself sustained on such a grand scale for so long. It is only by placing her and her book fully in the intellectual and

¹ Manchester University Press, 1934.
historical context of the first half of the twentieth century that a true appreciation of her achievement may be gained, along with insights into possible new advances. For the very authority of her book tends to make its readers forget that Miss Pope was, after all, a child of her time and that, were she writing a work on French philology today, it is unlikely that it would be exactly the one that generations of students and scholars at home and abroad have grown to associate with her name. From Latin to Modern French is one of the most influential productions of the later Neo-Grammarian period in French philology. Miss Pope had written her doctoral thesis in Paris at the beginning of the century under the guidance of great Neo-Grammarians such as Gaston Paris and Paul Meyer. In that thesis she was concerned primarily with the sounds and forms of one particular regional variety of medieval French at a given moment, as revealed in the verse of a cleric writing in England, the areas of his syntax and vocabulary being treated only in passing. Thirty years later, in her definitive work, we see this pattern writ large: From Latin to Modern French is subtitled “Phonology and Morphology” and deals with the whole spectrum of dialectal variation as reflected in the sounds and forms of a selection of literary texts in the northern half of medieval France, again to the virtual exclusion of syntax and vocabulary. This much is clear from the title and sub-title of the work, but other fundamental attitudes that determined the shape of the book are not so clearly expressed and so tend not to be fully appreciated by at least some of those who have recourse to its pages. In the first place, the word Modern in the title is to be understood as meaning much less than the usually accepted sense of the term might lead one to assume: just as a ‘Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages’ may have little necessary connection with the present day, and as ‘Modern History’ may be deemed to cover anything from about the end of the fifteenth century to the twentieth, similarly Miss Pope’s book makes no serious attempt to continue its analysis of the French language right up into her own day. The emphasis is put squarely on medieval French, with extensions into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Again, the Modern French referred to in the title is that of the educated Parisian, the standard form of the language, admittedly, but not that of the whole of France by any means.

2 Etude sur la Langue de Frère Angier (Paris, 1903).
These restrictions in no way detract from the fundamental qualities of the book, but need to be clearly understood if it is to be properly used as a work of reference. Of greater importance, however, fifty years after its appearance in print, is the recognition that, whilst a great deal of work has been produced all through the present century along the lines of enquiry followed by Miss Pope in *From Latin to Modern French*, even before she had set pen to paper in her earlier doctoral thesis a whole new and radically different field of study had already been progressively opened up by Gilliéron and his associates from the very beginning of the twentieth century with the publication of the *Atlas linguistique de la France* (Paris, 1903-10), based on years of research into the state of French dialects as the nineteenth century drew to its close. As we approach the end of our own century this type of work has advanced so far that the whole of France is now covered by a close-meshed network of linguistic atlases giving a picture of the evolution of French parallel and complementary to that presented by traditional philological studies such as those of Miss Pope. These linguistic atlases, together with the many essays on linguistic geography to which they have given rise, have added a new dimension to our understanding of the way in which French has developed by their concentration on the living speech of country dwellers in contemporary France rather than on the literary remains of past centuries. This has involved a close investigation not only of the phonology and morphology but also of the lexis and etymology of French, both standard and dialectal, making possible the compilation of W. von Wartburg’s vast *Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Bonn, 1922-), which has, in turn, stimulated detailed scrutiny of selected areas of etymology associated with the names of scholars such as Harri Meier. Whilst it is only too easy to lose sight of the fundamentals when confronted by the bewilderingly complex mass of data the modern etymologist adduces from dialectal material in support of his arguments, the basic advance made by the widespread movement that has grown out of the original *Atlas linguistique de la France* may be described in simple terms as the extension of the scope of enquiry beyond the written register of the somewhat narrow literary legacy of French in past ages to include any form of linguistic expression, oral as well as written, non-literary as well as literary, from any period. The result of this widening of perspective is not only that a whole new range of source-material has been brought into play,
but also that even in the traditional area of phonology it is now clear that the subject has not been exhausted. Meier puts it very cogently in the introduction to his book *Die Entfaltung von Lateinisch Verteile/Versare im Romanischen* when he writes that: “die Möglichkeiten der Lautgeschichte des Romanischen und seiner Einzelsprachen bisher bei weitem nicht ausgereizt und damit die etymologischen Spielregeln ungebührlich eingeschränkt worden sind” (p. vi). Later in the same work he points up this observation by his comments on “divergierende Entwicklungen der lateinisch-romanischen Lautgeschichte … und Wortbildung …, die bei der junggrammatisch-dogmatischen Handhabung der historischen Phonetik und bei der Unterentwicklung, in der die Erforschung der lateinisch-romanischen Wortbildung lange verharrt hat, ungebührlich im Schatten geblieben waren” (p. 96). Together with this deeper exploration of etymology has come another advance: in recent years the extraordinary penetration of the computer into the most unexpected areas of scientific investigation has resulted in the techniques pioneered around the turn of the century by the original linguistic geographers being applied to medieval non-literary French and not just to modern spoken dialects. The *Atlas des Formes et des Constructions des Chartes francaises du 13e siècle* analyses the languages of over three thousand charters and plots the findings of this extensive exercise on nearly three hundred maps. The result is to confirm and illustrate the conclusions reached by Meier from a quite different direction: the Neo-Grammarians had indeed not said the last word on the historical phonology and morphology of French.

This increasingly detailed linguistic penetration into areas outside the accustomed limits set for phonological and morphological study by the concentration of research on a restricted number of literary texts that have happened to survive from the medieval period has been paralleled by similar developments in the study of history. For some decades now scholars such as Braudel, Duby, le Goff and Le Roy Ladurie have been probing deeply into what has been termed “micro-history”. Their enquiries reach out beyond the circumscribed world of rulers, wars, the affairs of Church and

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3 *Analecta Romanica*, 47 (Frankfurt am Main, 1981).

State: the lives and doings of ordinary people, the growth of local institutions, customs and practices, the movements of local trade and industry, the fluctuations of population—these are just some of the fields of study involved. In these areas the concerns of the medieval historian and those of the medieval linguist meet: for the medieval historian a command of the languages—including vernaculars—of his texts is essential; for the medieval linguist a knowledge of the general way of medieval life and thought is indispensable if he is to understand fully the content of his linguistic material.

In general terms, then, the last fifty years have seen a remarkable widening of the range of studies relating to the evolution of French, but this development has been slower in extending to one particular area of the language—Anglo-Norman or, perhaps better, Anglo-French, and it is with the present situation and possible advances that the present paper will concern itself in the main. The French of medieval England had been a prime concern of Miss Pope ever since her thesis on the language of the Oxford monk Angier back in 1903, and her continued preoccupation with it is shown by the inclusion of the words “with especial consideration of Anglo-Norman” in the full title of her major work. This strong interest continued after the publication of *From Latin to Modern French* and was illustrated by her participation in the establishment and early work of the Anglo-Norman Text Society, especially by her significant share in the editions of *La Seinte Resureccion* and *The Romance of Horn*. Anglo-Norman is given fuller treatment in her book than any other dialect of medieval French, being allotted a full chapter that includes an outline of its history and its position with regard to English. Since the appearance of this chapter in 1934 many editions of individual Anglo-Norman texts have been published and studies devoted to the literature composed in the French of England have greatly helped our understanding of its nature and importance, but little attempt has been made to re-assess the general picture of the development of the language presented by Miss Pope.

In keeping with the rest of the book, the directing principle behind the chapter on Anglo-Norman in *From Latin to Modern French* concentrates very largely on its phonology and mor-

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5 *ANTS*, IV (1943).
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Phology, studied in their relationship to *francien*, the central dialect of the Paris basin that was to become the standard French of modern times. Syntax and lexis receive only passing mention, although the geographical situation of French in England inevitably subjected it to strong influence in both these departments. These two restrictions—the central point of reference being *francien* and the virtual exclusion of syntax and vocabulary—go a long way towards explaining why *From Latin to Modern French*, so well-thumbed by philologists over the years, has made little impact on those who study the law and history of medieval England, despite their frequent difficulties encountered when grappling with material written in Anglo-Norman. Historians and lawyers attempting to understand the French texts left by the people who shaped the destiny of England, particularly in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, have scant concern with, say, the divergent treatment of Latin o tonic and free in continental and insular varieties of French, or with the decline and loss in England of the western French ending of the imperfect indicative in *-oue*, etc., but are continually faced with the difficulty of interpreting individual words in Anglo-Norman texts and of understanding how these words relate to each other to give a precise meaning to a sentence: they need help with lexis and syntax, not with phonology and morphology. In these departments of language little guidance is available at present, so that historians and lawyers are inevitably exposed to error.

Moreover, this lack of help available for the basic understanding of Anglo-Norman material may be shown to be a stumbling-block not only for the English historian or lawyer, who may well have little linguistic training, but even for the trained philologist, at home with the intricacies of the continental varieties of medieval French, but not versed in the peculiarities of the insular variety. For instance, when editing a number of medieval French texts dealing with dreams and their significance, W. Suchier came across a short alphabetical piece in Anglo-Norman that left him puzzled at more than one point. As he says, he found "einige ungewöhnliche Wortbildungen, die altfranzösisch sonst nicht zu belegen sind" (p. 162). Idiosyncratic formations such as


espaundeson 'shedding', a term that for Suchier "scheint weder altfr. noch mengl. belegt zu sein", relevans (continental relevance, but used in the non-continental sense of 'getting up again (from a sick-bed)', hence 'cure') and recovrure 'recovery' are not too difficult to explain, even though not listed in the dictionaries of either Godefroy or Tobler-Lommatzsch, but Suchier had to admit defeat when faced with the noun eschevement in this text. He comments that Tobler-Lommatzsch offer only eschivement in the sense of 'Vermeiden von ... ' and sees no way in which 'avoidance' could make sense in the context in which eschevement occurs. Unfortunately, this is precisely the kind of error that is born of a misplaced faith in the value of phonology and morphology as practical aids to the understanding of medieval French texts. Suchier's knowledge that Old French had a verb eschivre 'to avoid', with a derived noun eschivement 'avoidance', had sent him looking in the wrong direction altogether. Anglo-Norman has two infinitives eschever, the one representing continental eschivre with a typical insular change of conjugation, the other being the equivalent of continental achever with an equally typical insular change of prefix. In the present case we are dealing with the second of the two and Suchier's eschevement is the substantive 'achievement, result' derived from eschever 'to finish, achieve', etc. This meaning fits perfectly into the context. In the same text the phrase crouse de courage causes difficulty for the editor, even though one of his manuscripts provides a perfect gloss in Latin—iracundiam. We are dealing here with another very common Anglo-Norman feature, the loss of a vowel in a non-accented position. Fra for fera is very frequently found in insular texts, but the phenomenon is not confined to one or two verbs. If we read corouse or curouse it will be seen that the sense is 'anger (of the heart)', just as the Latin indicates. The final e of crouse is yet another Anglo-Norman feature, a failure to observe traditional masculine/feminine differentiation. Although these cases by no means exhaust Suchier's difficulties with this short text, they may perhaps suffice to make the point at issue.

It is, however, the English historian and lawyer whose work is chiefly affected by the lack of adequate help in understanding

the practical workings of Anglo-Norman. For the fact is that the majority of important works composed in insular French have been edited by scholars who were not primarily Anglo-Norman specialists, or even specialists in French philology, but who had come to handle Anglo-Norman as a secondary but very necessary skill in the furtherance of their own particular discipline. Setting aside a number of extensive official compilations such as the Rotuli Parliamentorum, the Statutes of the Realm and the Parliamentary Writs published in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, learned bodies such as the Selden Society and the Camden Society, together with the Rolls Series and numerous individual scholars, were publishing Anglo-Norman texts of broadly historical and legal content in considerable quantity from the later nineteenth century onwards, so that by the time Miss Pope came to write her book in 1934 she had at her disposal a more than adequate amount of published material on which to draw. Yet this would not be immediately obvious from a glance at her Bibliography, where only scant mention is made of works outside the domain of imaginative literature. The Bibliography thus leaves out of account what is, in fact, the greater part of Anglo-Norman writings available in print in 1934. This apparently arbitrary exclusion is, however, quite consonant with Miss Pope’s aims and methods; it is explained by the simple fact that for her purposes verse texts were far more useful than texts in prose, since evidence for determining sound-values could be obtained from the rhymes used in verse, whereas no such help could be expected from a prose text. The accurate estimation of the pronunciation of Anglo-Norman required that attention should be concentrated on verse, but the understanding of the sense of an Anglo-Norman text is furthered but little or not at all by a knowledge of how it may have been pronounced. Hence the lack of contact between the traditional philologist and the historian. The one is concerned mainly with the forms of the language, the other with its meaning.

In any attempt to understand how Anglo-Norman actually worked as a means of linguistic communication serving the government and all the literate sections of the English population from the Conquest until at least the late fourteenth century the texts ignored by Miss Pope and those not available to her in published form in 1934 will have to be taken very seriously into account. Many of the most important of these from the standpoint
of the lexis date from the second half of the thirteenth century or even later, an age stigmatized in *From Latin to Modern French* as "the period of degeneracy", the time when Anglo-Norman "gradually became a dead language ... markedly similar in its debasement to the "Low Latin" of the Merovingian period in Gaul" (op. cit., p. 424). This assessment is understandable from the historical phonologist's point of view, but bears little relationship to the actual role played by later Anglo-Norman as a vitally important language of record in English medieval society.

The question of "degeneracy" and "debasement" will be examined later, but the analogy of Low Latin drawn by Miss Pope invites a moment's pause to look at the general relationship between Anglo-Norman and Latin, because Anglo-Norman and Low Latin are both viewed by traditional philologists as aberrant varieties of linguistic development stemming from the Latin of Rome. The many forms taken down the ages by the dialects that came to occupy the area of Romania are traditionally judged by their conformity to linguistic norms and attract subjective praise or blame according to the degree of that conformity, being termed "standard" or "normative" on the one hand, or "degenerate" and "debased" on the other hand. Their constant link with Latin, however, is always taken for granted. Little thought has been given so far to the purely factual question of exactly to what extent this filiation is a constant reality not only in terms of a recognizable evolution of sounds and forms, but also in terms of a continuous chain in syntax and lexis. In other words, whilst as far as phonology is concerned, an unbroken line of development can be traced from, say, the sounds that make up the Latin *fide* to those present in the modern French *foi*, or from *folia* to *feuille*, etc., it must be recognized that the existence of a similar unbroken chain in the development of the syntax and lexis of French from the earliest times to the present day simply cannot be tacitly assumed. Indeed, the syntactical patterns of Modern French—and especially of contemporary, popular French—are characterized not so much by their similarities with Latin as by their sharp divergence from Latin. In the morphosyntactical area of the declension system, in the ordering of words in the sentence, in the formation of the interrogative, the imperative or the degrees of comparison, in the creation and use of new tenses, in the shape and use of the subjunctive mood, in the form and use of the negative or that of a transformed prepositional system—in all
these areas Latin and French are separated rather than linked by their historical relationship. As far as syntax is concerned, there is in actual fact no straight line of development "from Latin to modern French".

In lexical matters the same point needs to be stressed at least as forcibly. The retention in modern French of much of the lexis of Latin is so obvious that, when reinforced by manuals of historical grammar concentrating on providing a wealth of examples in support of phonological 'rules', the reader of such manuals may be forgiven for establishing in his mind a solid equation between the lexes of the two languages right down the centuries: the amicus of Latin has become the ami used in both medieval and modern French, donare has given donner, magister lives on as maitre, etc., etc. Admittedly, in most manuals passing reference is made to learned borrowings, to the importation, of terms from other languages and from dialect, to the loss of certain lexical items from one age to another, but it is rare to find any close comparisons made between the lexes of Latin and French where they came into actual contact at a precise moment in a precise text. Although this point is one of general validity and would apply to any of the Romance languages and dialects at all periods, since the concern of the present article is largely with Anglo-Norman, it may be useful to examine in some detail a small part of the linguistic practice of one or two of the men who provided Anglo-Norman glosses to Latin texts at the end of the twelfth century and beginning of the thirteenth for the benefit of those unable to understand the Latin. The first example is taken from vernacular glosses to Alexander Nequam's De Nominibus Utensilium:

anacileon: cile (R)/ crates: clays (J)/ tecto: cuverture (R)/ culmo: de caume (R) chaume (J)/ calamo: resel (R) chalemel (J)/ arundine: rosel (J)/ palustri: de mareys (R)/ cindulis: latthes (R) laz (J)/ lateres sive tegule: tyules (R) tuilles (J)/ laquaria: lé culpes (R) lasce (J)/ projectum: fundement (J)/ stipitibus: de stocs (R) estokes (J)/ hostium: le us (R)/ seram: serure (RJ)/ pessulam: cliket (R) penele (J)/ vectes: veruls vel vertiveles (R) vertervel (J)/ gumfes: guns (RJ)/ repagula: barres (RJ)/

10 For a fuller survey of some of these points, see "Lexical Borrowing in a Medieval Context", Bulletin, lxiii (1980-81), 118-43.
value bifores: wicias a deus us (R) duble portes (J)/ porticum: portiz (J)/ cardinibus: carduilles (J)/ degens: povrement vivaunt (R) vivant (J)/ inopi senecte: sufferuse veylesse (R)/ corribus: corbayles (R) corbailes (J)/ alathis: paners (R) baskes (J)/ cumeris vimineis: ruches de oziers (R)/ sportis: petit corbiluns (R)/ cophinis: hanaps (R) hanapers (J)/ fucinam: fuscine (R) fuisn (J)/ hamatam: croké (R) croché (J)/ fiscina: fiscele (R)/ fiscel (J)/ multra: buket (R)/ suspectum: prisse (J)/ expressum: prent (R)/ coagulatione: pressure (R)/ presure (J)/ sero: meg (R) mege (J)/ eliquato: hors tret (R), hor culé (J)/ colustrum: creyme (R) primer mege (J)/ propinandum: a baivre (J) (para. 158).

In this paragraph the French 'equivalents' that are directly derived from the Latin number less than a dozen out of over forty. This means that in more than two-thirds of cases the glossator's linguistic conscience rejects the unbroken filiation from Latin. If we look at the vernacular glosses provided for John of Garland's Unum Omnium we find that the overall picture remains roughly the same:


Considerations of space preclude the citing of further evidence from such glosses, but the paragraphs quoted above are representative of the general pattern. In the past many of these glosses have been accessible only with difficulty, if at all, but the piecemeal publication of a number of them by Tony Hunt in recent years (to be followed shortly by a complete book devoted to them) means that it is now possible to study at first hand the actual use made of the lexis of Latin by professional glossators explaining Latin texts to their less educated compatriots long before the school of French translators associated with the name of Oresme began to adopt Latin calques en masse in the last third of the fourteenth century in an effort to arrive at a precisely accurate translation of Classical authors. The more one compares the individual equivalents used in glosses such as those above, the more evident it becomes that the presence in modern French of a term derived
from Latin is no guarantee of its exclusive or even frequent use in a particular sense at all periods of the French language.

A final illustration of this point from a somewhat different angle may be seen in the history of the Latin *tectum* 'roof' in French. This word is regularly found in manuals of historical French grammar as a stock example of the development of Latin *e* closed and stressed when followed by a *jod* (i.e. *tectum > teit > toit*). In fact, six references are made to it in *From Latin to Modern French*, yet it appears to have escaped the notice of philologists that *teit > toit* has so far not been found in insular French at all in the sense of 'roof'. No less than four different words are used in Anglo-Norman for 'roof', 'ceiling', but not—apparently—*teit/toit*:

hoc tectum;—ti: comble
les pilers estoient de or et le coumble a la semblance del firmament
la cumble de la mesum

tecto: cuverture
Je vus dirrai le fundement (sc. of temple) E les paraies ensement, E puis vus dirrai la coverture
reparailler le coverture del temple Salomon

doma: gallice fest, anglice rof
hoc tectum: feste

le temple de pees a Rome chei del sumet jusques al foundament

16 See note 11.
17 *Les Set Pechez Morteus*, op. cit., v. 763 (also v. 769).
18 Trivet, op. cit., p. 57.
19 Alexander Nequam's *De Nominibus Utensilib*, Wellcome Historical Medical Library, MS. 801A, para. 157. I am indebted to Dr. Hunt for sending me a copy of his work on these glosses which will form a chapter in his forthcoming book.
21 Trivet, op. cit., p. 114.
Up to the present time the only attestation of *teit* found in Anglo-Norman comes from the unpublished Dialogues of St. Gregory, written by Angier, which forms the basis of Miss Pope's doctoral thesis. It does not, however, figure in her glossary, nor does it mean 'roof', but 'hut':

(a holy man's body is buried)

Proef de s'iglise par defors Ou fut par aventure un teit
Qui a l'iglise s'aerdeit Pleins d'ouilles e de moutons
Quant eisvos uns lerres gloutons ... S'enfreinst lu teit e soi charga
D'un des moutons ...

(Ms. Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français 24766, f. 88vb)

The lack of awareness of this admittedly minor, yet nonetheless significant, case of lexical discrepancy between Latin and Anglo-Norman is clearly demonstrated by the fact that when Paul Meyer found *tectum: feste* in the manuscript of the Glasgow Glossary he transcribed *festum* instead of *tectum*, an error corrected by A. Ewert in his 1957 edition of the text.

*From Latin to Modern French* provides the standard, generally accepted version of the flowering and decline of Anglo-Norman, although Miss Pope was only echoing in more extreme terms the view of Vising as expressed in his *Anglo-Norman Language and Literature* (London, 1923), p. 33. Miss Pope writes on p. 424, para. 1077 that: "up to the end of the first third or middle of the thirteenth century ... it is possible to regard Anglo-Norman as a dialect of French, i.e. as a living local form of speech ... . In the second period, the period of degeneracy, ... it gradually became a "dead" language, one that had ceased to be the mother-tongue of anybody and had always to be taught; a "faus francies d'Angletere", a sort of "Low French", characterised by a more and more indiscriminate use of words, sounds end forms, but half-known, markedly similar in its debasement to the "Low Latin" of the Merovingian period in Gaul!". After 1250 then, if not before, we must apparently expect to be faced by insular texts that increasingly verge on the incoherent, distorted—so we are assured—not only by faulty phonology and morphology, but, more importantly, by an "indiscriminate use of words" that grows worse as time goes by. This can only be interpreted as meaning that later Anglo-Norman texts fail in ever greater measure to express adequately the sense intended by their compilers, who had less and less command of the vital elements of the language they
were using—its sounds, forms and lexis: it was, so expert opinion
would have us believe, "but half known".

Even an elementary knowledge of English life and society in the
later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries ought to have sufficed to
make readers of this extraordinary statement raise an eyebrow,
but it would seem to have gone unchallenged for no less than five
decades, even though there has existed all through this period
ample evidence to make its acceptance an act of faith rather than
an intellectual conclusion arrived at through the normal processes
of reasoned enquiry. At precisely the time when it was allegedly
ceasing to be a viable means of linguistic communication on
account of supposed endemic deficiencies in both form and sense,
the indisputable facts of history show that this despised gibberish
was becoming a highly sophisticated instrument of English law,
that it was embarking on a long and successful career as the
language of administration, both royal and local, side by side with
Latin, was the linguistic medium chosen for a whole mass of
correspondence between all the literate sections of society and was
destined to be used over the whole of the next century and beyond
for a wide variety of literary productions ranging from political
satire through adventure yarns to religious allegory and mystical
outpourings, from language primers centuries in advance of
Berlitz to agricultural treatises, by way of formulas for telling
fortunes, medical works and old wives' remedies, not forgetting
recipes for beauty treatment. It is surely stretching credibility to
remarkable lengths to claim that the administrative, intellectual
and cultural life of a powerful, organized and vigorous country
was carried on to a very considerable extent through the medium
of a language incapable of being clearly written and clearly
understood.

The reason for the acceptance of this highly improbable view of
later Anglo-Norman set out so uncompromisingly in *From Latin
to Modern French* is, however, not hard to find. Miss Aspin put
her finger on it in the Introduction to her *Anglo-Norman Political
Songs* (ANTS, XI, 1953) when she wrote: "The philologist is
likely to thumb these texts with a sense of frustration" (p. xiv).
The frustration referred to stems from the difficulty in arriving
at a syllable-count for the verse of her songs that would be
acceptable by continental standards and also in pinning down
the phonological features of the texts, written between the middle
of the thirteenth and the middle of the fourteenth centuries. Miss
Aspin laments what she calls "the possibilities of variant pronun-
ciation, or of licence, or of sheer incompetence" (ibid.). She is referring here to the undoubted fact that the rhymes used in her texts are often imperfect when judged by the criteria obtaining in continental French of the period. From the middle of the thirteenth century the balance in Anglo-Norman writing was shifting from verse with its helpful rhymes for the phonologist to unhelpful prose, so that, if we understand ‘philology’ as meaning no more than phonology and morphology\(^\text{22}\), the language does indeed enter a sharp decline after about 1250. It is this view of philology that has dominated Anglo-Norman studies for so long and which is of so little assistance to historians and lawyers in helping them to understand their texts.

However, if it is accepted that, despite the frustrations of the phonologist, a language so widely used as was Anglo-Norman in the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is worthy of serious, impartial examination, a plentiful supply of evidence is available to show that this “faus francois d’Engleterre” was very far from being either a “dead” or a “degenerate” language until well after the age of Chaucer.

Reference has been made earlier to the fact that Anglo-Norman went its own way as regards the term for ‘roof’, and this is by no means an isolated instance. At some time in the future it may be possible to come to a reasonably accurate assessment of the extent to which Anglo-Norman as a whole was innovatory in the development of its lexis, but in the present state of research all that can usefully be done is to pick out a number of random examples in the hope that they may lead later to a more coherent and substantial exposition.

Early in the thirteenth century a version of Nequam’s *De Nominibus Utensilium* was written in Oxford and provided with glosses in Anglo-Norman\(^\text{23}\). One of these reads *vispilio*: brabazun (p. 259, f. 301r); another Oxford manuscript of the same text and also from the thirteenth century gives *vispiliones*: brabachuns (p. 248, 70). A related form *breban* has turned up in a recently published *Life of St. Melor*\(^\text{24}\) dating from the fourteenth century:

> Lors s’en parti (I. s’enparti) del dux le descleaus breban (v. 196).


\(^{23}\) See note 11.

These forms are paralleled by the British Latin *brabanus* ‘Brabanters’ and show the reputation gained by the mercenaries from Brabant as plunderers in English eyes. From the evidence at present available it would appear that these forms were confined to Britain, being unattested in the dictionaries of medieval French. This type of lexical coinage is not the hallmark of a “dead” or “degenerate” language. Again, one of the words in modern English whose etymology has not so far been fully explained is ‘bribe’. The *Oxford English Dictionary* picks up the form of the word in Chaucer and his contemporaries, but the first incontrovertible attestation of its modern sense in the dictionary is no earlier than 1535. The *Middle English Dictionary* is able to move this latter date to c. 1439-40, but this still leaves a gap of nearly a century between the appearance of the word in English and the first confirmation of its meaning as we know it today. The *OED* links English ‘bribe’ with the Old French *bribe* ‘morsel’, ‘piece of bread’, hence ‘alms’ and ‘begging (for bread, alms)’, but the chain of development is far from complete. No link is adduced with insular French, the implication being that the word came directly into English from continental French, acquiring its modern sense after becoming established in English. If Anglo-Norman in its later form had not been considered a “debased” and “degenerate” language, our picture of the semantic development of English ‘bribe’ could have been much fuller and clearer. According to the authoritative *Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (i. 527) *bribe* is first found in French in the fourteenth century, but it must surely be older than that, since it occurs in insular French as early as about the middle of the thirteenth century in Walter of Bibbesworth’s *Tretiz* on French:

Si juvne enfaunt estent (ed. esteint) le main
Au matin vers le pain,
Une bribe dunc li donez (vv. 195-97)

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25 It is unlikely that the Anglo-Norman forms were derived from the Latin, as the editor asserts (p. 52); the process usually took place the other way round. See J. P. Collas, *Year Books of Edward II; 12 Edward II*, Selden Society, Year Book Series, vol. 25 (London, 1964), pp. xiii, xvii, etc., also “Language and Government in Medieval England”, *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur*, xcii (1983), 258-70.

The Middle English glosses to the various manuscripts give 'lompe' and 'loumpe' for bribe, so the sense is not in any doubt. As far as the modern English meaning is concerned, Anglo-Norman again provides a missing link, because a number of examples of this have been in print for nearly half a century, although unnoticed. They are to be found in M.V. Clarke's *Fourteenth-Century Studies* (Oxford, 1937) and date from the period 1369-76:

> il rescuet une grant bribe et lessa la dite nief aler en Flandres (p. 204)
> le dit sire William prist une grant bribe du dit Morice Fitz Richard et lessa une nisi prius passer encuentre le roy (p. 205; see also pp. 216, 218).

This evidence shows that bribe did not come directly from continental French into Middle English, but was present in insular French from at least the second half of the thirteenth century and already well established in its modern sense a century later, since it is used in the examples given above without any explanatory gloss as an accepted, readily intelligible term. The semantic development took place, then, in Anglo-Norman and was taken up later by Middle English. Any influence from the continent would have come into Anglo-Norman from north-eastern France, where the sense '(giving of) alms' is well attested, and would have come by way of the close contacts maintained between England and that region. The *FEW* article mentioned above states that the verb made from bribe—*bri(m)ber*—meant *vagabonder* in north-eastern France and adds significantly for our purposes "se dit surtout d'un individu qui cherche à se faire payer à boire", so that the shift in meaning in *bribe* from '(giving of) alms' to 'bribe' is not great: an element of corruption has been added to the giving. Standard medieval French did not follow this path, having *propine* as its word for 'bribe', a term that has so far not been attested in insular French. Finally, the Latin *bribia*, found at the same time as the examples of *bribe* taken from Miss Clarke's book, cannot be regarded as the origin of the English 'bribe', given the much earlier Bibbesworth reference quoted above, and is to be interpreted—like *brabamus*—as another example of Medieval Latin following the vernacular.

Another example of the innovatory character of Anglo-Norman at a time when it was supposed to be in a state of degeneracy is offered by the glosses to the *De Nominibus Utensilium* referred to earlier. Centuries before French adopted *grotasque* from Italian as a term of art and architecture it had used the basic image of the
baboon to indicate the idea of a figure comically distorted or exaggerated. This may well have originated in continental French, although the standard dictionaries provide no tangible attestation of such a sense until very late, if at all. Godefroy's sole example (i. 544) comes from the sixteenth century, but it must be said that he has earlier quotations in which babouinerie means 'foolish trick', 'worthless writing', etc. Tobler-Lommatzsch list nothing at all in this area. In the glosses to the De Nominibus Utensilium, however, we read larvaticam imaginem: ymage babywene, baboen. These glosses come from MSS. D and L respectively and date from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. By about 1400 this adjectival use in England had developed into a substantival one, baboueny being referred to by Salzman as 'grotesques' found in glass at Westminster and Eltham (p. 176). As so very often, Salzman regrettably fails to give any context for baboueny, but his italicising of it in his Index shows that it is not English, whilst his somewhat later 'babwynes' is printed in Roman as an English term—'the vowsyng ful of babwnes'. This comes from the frenchified Lydgate and is dated c. 1415. Additional evidence from both sides of the Channel would be needed in order to reach any definitive judgement on the origin and development of these terms taken from the baboon, but, in the state of present knowledge it would appear that later Anglo-Norman was instrumental in the transmission of the forms to Middle English and may well have been involved in the extension of their meaning.

Remaining for a moment in the general area of bilingual and trilingual glosses, a commentary on the text of Adam de Petit Pont's De Utensilibus found in a manuscript in the British Library contains the following gloss: reticulas: beablet (para. 91). The adjoining gloss reticula: quaif and those from other manuscripts reticula: crespines, britilis, kellis suggest that we are dealing with a hair-net, but beablet seems to be unattested elsewhere. It is tempting to view it as perhaps an early form of bavolet, but whilst Enlart's Le Costume mentions this headgear from the fourteenth century, the word itself is apparently not

28 These glosses, like those to Nequam's De Nominibus Utensilium (note 19), will form part of Dr. Hunt's forthcoming book.
attested before the middle of the sixteenth, being formed from *bas* and *volet*, a form of *voilet* 'little veil' (*Petit Robert*), or, according to Enlart, "inspiré d’un terme de fauconnerie: “bavoler”, verbe qui désigne le vol rasant de la perdrix et de la caille" (p. 220). This case is quoted not in order to propose a particular explanation, but simply to show that our present documentation leaves much to be desired. Any improvement in this direction will have to come from greater concentration on the lexis of both continental and insular French.

We are on firmer ground with the English verb ‘to train’. Although the *OED* mentions Anglo-French—after Middle English—in its preliminary note on the etymology of the word, it gives no examples of its actual semantic development from French to English in the sense of “to instruct an animal or person to form certain set tasks in a particular way”. Its first attestation in English of this meaning is no earlier than the seventeenth century, yet *trainer*/*treiner* was being regularly used in exactly this way at least as early as the start of the fourteenth century. It is found with reference to the training of hawks in the letters of Edward I from 1304:

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vous nous avez mandez que vous commencerez a treiner notre gyrfauk le lundi prochein apres le jour des almes (p. 9).
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This same letter contains two other instances of this usage and it is found again in 1305 in letter number 13:

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vous mandoms que le dit faucon que n’est mie uncore affeitez facez treiner a heron ...
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This sense of *trainer* did not develop in continental medieval French and so, when in the nineteenth century the French, in their admiration for English sport—their own *desport* taken back to France in its aphetic Anglo-Norman form *le sport*—borrowed back their verb *trainer*, adding the prefix *en-* to make *entrainer*, they found themselves with two tenants under the same roof, so to speak. They already had *entrainer*¹ ‘to drag off’, and now *entrainer*² ‘to train’. Derivatives have since been made from both verbs and this has resulted in the curious situation whereby for an athlete the *entraineuse* (in the usual sense of ‘bar hostess’) may

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undo all the work of the *entraineur* (in the usual sense of ‘trainer, coach’).

In many areas of the Anglo-Norman lexis there are to be found examples of words linking French and English that have not so far been fully explained. The *OED* tells us that the humble English jelly-fish is recorded only from the nineteenth century in its modern sense, with no mention of any insular French link in the etymological chain, but in one of the best lists of fish-names in medieval French, written in 1393, we find *geleis*, along with *rasours* ‘razor-fish’\(^{31}\). This list, along with an earlier good one contained in three manuscripts of Bibbesworth’s *Tretiz* dating from the fourteenth century, is of Anglo-Norman origin. Both lists were compiled in the period of “degeneracy”. Again, when dealing with the verb ‘to stop’ the *OED* states that: “The Anglo-French *estopper* ... is to be regarded as adopted from the English verb rather than as a variant of O.F. *estouper*”. Yet Anglo-French has *estuper* in both literal and figurative senses no later than the end of the twelfth or very beginning of the thirteenth century, whilst the earliest attestation of ‘to stop’ in English is dated by the *OED* as c. 1375, nearly two centuries later:

De mur frai estuper l’entree De cele kave\(^{32}\)

Pur ceo voil mettre en memoire D’un bel enfant la duce vie, Pur estuper la grant folie U nus delitum e nut e jur\(^{33}\)

Once again, then, either the documentation of the *OED* is incomplete, lacking dated examples of the English ‘to stop’ which precede the Anglo-Norman ones quoted above, or else its view of the relationship of the English ‘to stop’, the Anglo-Norman *estuper* and the continental *estouper* must at the very least be questioned until such time as tangible evidence of some other kind is forthcoming.

Another pair of words whose links are not altogether clear is the French *pincer* and the familiar English ‘to pinch’. The basic sense of ‘to pinch, nip’ is shared by both languages, but only English has retained the extended meaning of the word in the familiar register as the equivalent of ‘to steal’. The earliest attestation of this sense

\(^{31}\) *La Maniere de Langage*, ed. J. Gessler (Brussels, 1934), p. 68.


\(^{33}\) Chardry’s Josaphaz, ..., ed. J. Koch, Altfranzösische Bibliothek, I, 1879, vv. 8-11.
given by the *OED* is dated 1673, but Anglo-Norman—like continental Old French—has it no less than four centuries before that:

Gardez ke ne meprennez mie de pincer les Deus secrez\(^{34}\)

(See to it that you do not transgress by ‘pinching’ God’s secrets)

By the middle of the thirteenth century *pincer* must have been current in England in this familiar sense, for it turns up in an absolute construction in the *Lumere as lais*\(^{35}\) in 1267:

(At the Last Judgement:)

Ja legistre n’i purra valer Ne pleidurs od lur moter,
Ke la chose si aperte serra Ke pleidur pincer n’i purra

(... for the matter will be so clear that no lawyer will be able to ‘get away with’ anything)

From the thirteenth century onwards, if not earlier, Anglo-Norman was not only adding new senses to existing continental French words, but was capable on occasion of coining new terms or of altering the syntactical use of verb or adverb. Even in the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries these changes were made not in any haphazard, inconsequential way resulting from a failure to understand the linguistic medium being used, but in a manner completely consonant with the normally accepted rules governing the development of continental French. One or two brief examples may help to illustrate this point without claiming to do more than provide a glimpse of results that might accrue from a fuller enquiry. Early in the second half of the thirteenth century Robert of Gretham, whilst writing an unmistakeably insular form of French in his *Miroir*\(^{36}\), coined *penissement* (‘penitance’) in perfectly orthodox French fashion from the well-attested verb *penir* (‘to expiate’, ‘do penance for’):

Ore estot amer sagement Par ferm quor de penissement (f. 91va92)

This coinage is, of course, in line with an abundance of French nouns such as *accomplissement*, *commencement* etc. made from


accomplir, commencer, etc. Similarly, Trivet's creation of pontification ('crowning as pope') in the fourteenth century is a normal development from the basic noun pontif:

l'an del pontificacion Seint Gregoire (p. 226)

Many nouns indicating an action or the creation of something—e.g. convocation, edification have this very common ending. Again, in the Rotuli Parliamentorum is found an adjective privable ('able to be deprived, dispossessed') made in good French fashion from the verb priver ('to deprive'):

curats qe tiegnent lours concubines ... par ount ils sont privables & privez en ley de Seint Esglise (ii. 314)

The noun empire is well attested on both sides of the Channel in the sense of 'rule' as well as that of 'territory ruled', together with empereur 'ruler', but only in England—at least as far as can be judged from present evidence—was the linguistically logical step taken by Trivet to form a verb emperer 'to rule':

nouncovenable chose lour sembla qe une femme devoit emperer (p. 248)
les Lombartz qe vindrent de Constantinople emperer (ibid.)
Mesme l'an qe cist Henri commences emperer (p. 349)

The same writer, whose work was a product of the period of Anglo-Norman 'degeneracy', extends the syntactical use of entroniser, making a continental transitive verb into a useful reflexive:

[Maximian] s'entroniza a la cité de Trevres et la mist le see del empire (p. 169)

In conformity with the basic meaning of the Latin proximus he uses its French derivative proschein in the temporal sense of 'next', 'nearest' to refer back in time as well as forward:

Richard le Bon, de qi est avant dit en la proscheine estoire (p. 285)

This usage is frequently found in his Chronicle and cannot be dismissed as a casual error or the result of ignorance. A somewhat similar extension of meaning is found in the Rotuli Parliamentorum, where puisné ('younger') is used in the sense of 'recent':

si nulles estatutz soient faitz de puisné temps ... (ii. 295)

37 Cf. the English extension of meaning to 'puny'.
It would not be difficult to multiply piecemeal examples of Anglo-Norman breaking new ground lexically long after it is supposed to have ceased to be anything more than a 'faux francois d'Engletere', but room must be made for at least a passing reference to a much-neglected writer of the early fourteenth century whose command of French and judicious use of lexical innovation demonstrates all too clearly the folly of attempting to treat later Anglo-Norman as if it were all of a piece, with all its users up and down the country—some steeped in French from birth, others having to make do with what knowledge they had been able to pick up by their own efforts—capable of being measured by the same yardstick. Nicholas Bozon, a Franciscan friar based in the Midlands, produced an extensive and varied range of works in Anglo-Norman, many of which are listed in the Bibliography of Miss Pope's book *From Latin to Modern French*. In line with the limitations mentioned earlier, however, whilst reference is made in the book to his failure to use standard verb-forms (e.g. he writes *donir, gardir*, etc.; see p. 479), no mention is made of his command of French syntax and vocabulary, these areas being outside the scope of the work. Yet some of Bozon's writing presents difficulties for the modern reader, not from any phonological or morphological point of view, and certainly not because he is making an unsuccessful attempt to use a 'half-known' language. The problems arise because Bozon knew insular French far better than any twentieth-century linguist, handling its syntax and both its general and technical lexis with accomplished ease. In what is perhaps his most difficult work, *Le Char d'Orgueil*38, he uses technical vocabulary in a framework of strangely complex thought typical of the Middle Ages, but quite foreign to the modern world. He depicts the sin of Pride and its attendant vices as a noble lady travelling in a cart and accompanied by her retinue, with each person and each part of the cart being interpreted as some particular attribute of Pride, as in the following example:

La premere reo de son char de coruz est charpenté,  
L'autre si est vengaunce ki quert enemité,  
La terce si est baudour de sovenire mesfesaunce,  
La quarte si est honte de verrai reconisance (vv. 5-8)

38 In *Deux Poèmes de N. Bozon*, ed. J. Vising (Göteborg, 1919).
Not all the juxtapositions are as simple as these attributes of the wheels of the cart, and it is not always easy for the modern reader to follow the line of the argument, because we have long since lost the medieval faculty of being able to think in allegorical terms. Yet there can be no doubt about Bozon’s familiarity with different aspects of French vocabulary. In addition to his knowledge of all the terms for the parts of a cart he uses technical words from the women’s art of embroidery—\textit{enchochure, overe de Alemagne, ovre pinge or peynne, enleynee, gernettee, redener, eymer}^{39}. It is not, however, only in his use of such specialist items of vocabulary that Bozon displays his command of French: a number of his non-technical terms reveal a scholar so well versed in the language he is using that he is fully abreast of its latest continental developments and even, on occasion, feels free to innovate, coining words in complete harmony with the structure of medieval French. Nor must it be forgotten that Bozon was writing for an audience, therefore we must assume that the vocabulary he used was intelligible to his public. Not only was French far from being ‘half-known’ to him, it must have been well-known to the educated people he was addressing.

An extended treatment of this theme would demand a compass much greater than the scope of the present article permits, but at least a representative sample of Bozon’s sound linguistic feel for French must be set down, however concisely, in order to dispel any idea that we are dealing with some dabbler pouring out verses only half intelligible because he was writing in a dead language he did not really understand. Remaining then within the framework provided by the \textit{Char d’Orgueil}, but not forgetting that this is only one of his numerous works, we find that he uses a two-syllable form \textit{chinchesce} (v. 18, also \textit{Contes},^{40} p. 179) for purposes of metre in preference to the usual three-syllable \textit{chinchet} ‘meanness’. This is neither a mistake born of ignorance nor a random coinage: it is in line with \textit{e.g. dureté/duresce}, both of which are well attested. \textit{Endaunter} (v. 112) ‘to tame’ and \textit{englemure} (v. 44) ‘filth’ similarly help him to alter the number of syllables in the line

^{39} These mean “decorative material sewn into plain material”, “embroidery with vertical stitches”, “embroidery decorated with feathers”, “striped”, “stippled” or “dotted”; the last two terms have so far defied reliable interpretation.

^{40} \textit{Les Contes moralisés de Nicole Bozon}, ed. L. Toulmin Smith and P. Meyer (SATF, 1889).
by the addition of the prefix en- to the familiar da(u)nter and glemure. Old French of both continental and insular varieties was accustomed to use prefixed forms alongside simple ones often without any sharp differentiation of meaning. The noun enoytement (v. 63) and the corresponding verb enoyter (Contes, p. 113), meaning ‘increase’ and ‘to increase’ respectively are peculiar to Anglo-Norman, although not confined to Bozon41. Escrafonye (v. 18)/escrafonie (v. 503) ‘filth’, although not attested elsewhere, is not simply a random invention. Godefroy’s dictionary has a noun escrefe/escraffe and a corresponding verb escref(f)er (iii. 437); Bozon’s invention consists in the addition of the ending -onie to an already existing noun. His use of freavele (v. 5) ‘boldness’, ‘dash’ shows him to have been in touch with the developing vocabulary of continental French. Godefroy’s frefel (iv. 134) comes from the late thirteenth century and his frevaille, travaille, frevelle (iv. 146) are late fourteenth-century forms, so that Bozon’s freavele in the early fourteenth century is very much up with the times. His formation of gilerie (v. 22) is on a par with his escrafonie: he has added a common French ending -erie to the well-attested gile ‘trickery’, ‘deceit’. With hobeler (v. 198) we are in the area where French and English mingle in the early fourteenth century. Neither Godefroy, Tobler-Lommatzsch nor the Anglo-Norman Dictionary covers Bozon’s meaning adequately in the following sentence:

Les piez de cel chival qe sovent vont cloqaunt
Sunt les bons garqons qe vienent hobelaunt

Cloçaunt is an insular from of the standard medieval French clochant ‘limping’, so that the sense is that the lame feet of one of the horses pulling the cart of Dame Orgueil represent the lady’s young male hangers-on who come ‘hobbling along’. Bozon’s verse goes on to say that these young retainers do good works only under compulsion, being rarely seen at church but forever at table. The sense of hobelaunt, then, is ‘hobbling’, ‘dragging the feet’ as in modern English, the young men’s reluctance visible from their halting gait. When Bozon uses the reflexive verb se joliver (v. 148) in the sense of ‘to enjoy oneself’, ‘to have a good time’, he is extending the syntactical range of a verb being currently used in active and neuter senses (Godefroy, iv. 653-54). Finally, listrece

41 See Anglo-Norman Dictionary, sub anoiter.
(v. 313), although listed in neither Godefroy nor Tobler-Lommatzsch, is a perfectly orthodox formation of a feminine noun from a masculine one—listre ‘reader’. A thorough investigation of the whole lexis used by Bozon in his extensive literary output would doubtless bring to light much more material germane to this paper, but even the few examples given above show clearly that to view such a writer merely in terms of his lapses from grace in failing always to use the ‘correct’ form of the past historic tense (e.g. despiserent, aparerent, etc.) and so on is to present a thoroughly warped picture of later Anglo-Norman.

Nor is it only the lexis of insular French that refutes the charge of its being a debased, degenerate, half-known language after about the middle of the thirteenth century. Anglo-Norman writers in general not only handle the syntax of Old French in a manner which in no way impeded the comprehension of their work by French speakers on the Continent—as is proved by the voluminous correspondence that went back and forth across the Channel right up into the early fifteenth century—they even made a number of useful developments that add to rather than detract from its efficiency. For instance, by the use of adverbs as adjectives the French of England could distinguish neatly between the idea of ‘formerly and still alive’ and ‘formerly, now dead’, as in the following examples:

un A., nostre adunque adversaire, qui ovec S. son filx eisnez nous venoient adouer.

In this letter of Richard II, sent in 1394, A. is clearly still alive, although he has ceased to be Richard’s enemy. In another letter, this time sent to Richard about a year later by the Bishop of Durham, we read:

Maistre R. ... ad estee chanceller de jadys reverent pere en Dieu et de bone memoire, l’Evesque de S.

The bishop referred to here is definitely dead. If we are to judge

42 E.g., for his use of syncopé centuries before it was attested in the dictionaries of French, see “Stratford atte Bowe and Paris”, Modern Language Review, lxxx (1985), 39-54.

43 From Latin to Modern French, para. 1315, p. 479.


45 Ibid., no. 48.33, p. 96.
by the evidence provided by the dictionaries of Godefroy and Tobler-Lommatzsch, it would seem that continental Old French did not have this possibility of making the adverbs (a)donc/(a)dunques, etc. and jadis serve as adjectives to express such shades of meaning. Similarly, Anglo-Norman would appear to have developed the adjectival sense of the adverb/preposition outre more fully than the standard dictionaries of medieval French suggest was the case on the Continent, where outre was limited to the sense of 'very' when used as an adjective.

Godefroy (v. 669 and x, 250) and Tobler-Lommatzsch (vi. 1429) quote nothing to parallel the following senses in Anglo-Norman:

a perpetuel anientissement de dit suppliant et de sa dite femme et outltre [i.e. 'utter'] différence de leur noms et honour
g Li ultre sire [i.e. 'the supreme Lord] en ert graviz e irrez

Indeed, the adjectival outre in Anglo-Norman can even be governed by an adverb to create the sense of 'further', 'additional':

ici qe ... de plus outtre accioun, suite ou demande ... soioms forclos

Doubtless further cases such as the above will continue to come to light as research into the lexis of Anglo-Norman progresses, but perhaps the most obvious area where French in England developed its own methods of expression is the negative. In the first place all available evidence suggests that it is in England alone that the negative prefix de(s)- took on the sense of an action not accomplished as well as that of a completed action reversed—its meaning in continental French. Since this feature has been treated at some length elsewhere, it may suffice to give here no more than one example of each sense in order to make the two functions of the prefix perfectly clear:

Le scorpiooun vos siet mostrer Si vos devez desendetter et quant la terre gist desemee ...

46 Ibid., xxvi. 20, p. 27.
51 Year Books of Edward II, Selden Society, Year Book Series, xvi, 115.
In the first quotation desendetter means 'to get out of debt', i.e. the debt has been incurred, the person is endetté and the addition of the second prefix des- serves to reverse that situation—'the scorpion [sc. in the Zodiac] can show you if you are going to get out of debt'. In the second example the land has not been sown and the function of de(s)- is to mark an unaccomplished action or an unfulfilled state—'when the land lies unsown'. Whilst both senses are found regularly in Anglo-Norman, it is the second one that is used with increasing frequency from around the second half of the thirteenth century onwards, precisely at the time when the language was supposed to be travelling ever faster down the slippery slope to debasement and degeneracy.

In addition to developing this new sense for the prefix de(s)-, French in England seems to have made far more use of n(i)ent and n(o)un to express negative ideas than did continental French. The role of these two words as negative prefixes was illustrated by R. Taylor in his contribution to the Quebec conference of 1976. Taylor, however, had to rely for his evidence on the dictionaries of medieval French and the observations of J.P. Collas, who had first drawn attention to the matter in the linguistic introduction to his edition of volumes 24 and 25 of the Selden Society Year Book Series. The material now gathered in the preparation of the Anglo-Norman Dictionary makes it possible to add many further examples of this usage and shows that virtually any adjective or noun in Anglo-Norman could be made negative by the use of these prefixes. Whilst this new material is probably far from complete, roughly a hundred cases of n(i)ent + adjective or noun and well over a hundred of n(o)un + adjective or noun provide ample proof of the widespread nature of this syntactical device as found mainly, though not exclusively, in texts of an administrative or religious kind. Taylor's observation that the majority of such cases recorded in continental French come from the Picard/Walloon area is not without significance, since the connections between England and this north-eastern part of France were particularly close, so that insular French in this instance may well have been taking up and developing a dialectal feature from that area.

52 Actes du XIIe Congrès international de Linguistique et Philologie romanes, tome I, pp. 647-58.
The foregoing sketchy survey of a few of the more obvious points of interest to emerge from even a superficial study of some of the neglected writing in later Anglo-Norman has been undertaken not with any thought of dislodging Miss Pope's book *From Latin to Modern French* from its position of authority with regard to phonology and morphology, but in the hope that a new generation of scholars might embrace a wider vision of insular French, a vision that would take in not merely the verse literature of the early period but also the more diverse works in prose as well as verse that form such an important part of the English heritage.

Any wider appraisal of the overall position of Anglo-Norman in English cultural history could hardly avoid addressing itself to the difficult question of its penetration into the different areas and social strata of the kingdom. Although the matter is not raised in precise terms by scholars who have dealt with the history of the language, their observations are based on the postulate that there existed in medieval England the same kind of linguistic uniformity as is found in continental communities during the same period. In other words, if researches into the phonology and morphology of Anglo-Norman are to be prosecuted with success, so that generally valid rules or laws may be formulated for its pronunciation or the structure of its verbal conjugations, pronominal system and the like, then it must be assumed that all those who used the language were at one in their linguistic habits, just as the inhabitants of a medieval village or town in France would share a common linguistic practice. Yet this postulate holds good for England—if at all—only for the early period after the Conquest, before insular French became in large measure an acquired, as opposed to a native language, used by countless people whose true vernacular was English. Medieval France was segmented linguistically by geography, each region developing dialectal features common to all the indigenous speakers in a particular area. Medieval England, on the other hand, was united geographically as far as French was concerned, Anglo-Norman having no marked dialectal features that pick out one county from another: it was, however, divided by education. France was split up horizontally, so to speak, England vertically, its divisions ranging from complete bilingualism to a bare smattering of French. This is why later Anglo-Norman is so discouraging for the traditional philologist: his tools are not really suited to the task in hand, so he
tends to condemn the language under examination rather than question his methods of enquiry.

Ever since Vising made the first serious attempt to provide a rounded account of Anglo-Norman in 1923\(^{53}\), many scholars have accepted uncritically his view of the spread of French in England throughout the whole country and throughout all levels of the population\(^{54}\). To accept this thesis is to contend that English peasants were accustomed to use French not just in Kent and Sussex but presumably—since no exclusions or restrictions are mentioned in these works—in the far West Country and in Northumberland or Cumberland. Without drawing on any knowledge of Anglo-Norman at all and judging solely by the simple observation of the tenacity of dialect forms of English in many areas of northern and western England that have slowed down the penetration of anything resembling southern standard English right into the twentieth century, this contention is hardly plausible. Listening to northern farmers chatting amongst themselves even today and casting the mind back some eight centuries is bound to make the observer wonder just how much French ever got over Dunmail Raise in medieval times, let alone up the Wrynose and Honnister Passes, or how often French was heard in Upper Wensleydale or Swaledale, not to mention the upper reaches of Tyne or Tees. That centres of culture such as the abbeys of Cartmel, Fountains, Rievaulx or Jervaulx were not strangers to French, any more than York or Chester, is not in dispute, but such pockets of French influence would have been surrounded by wide tracts of very English countryside, sparsely populated, difficult of access and crossed by often inadequate and dangerous roads or tracks. The linguistic situation north of the Trent must have been vastly different from that obtaining in, say, Dover or Southampton, leaving out of account the capital itself and its environs with their unquestionably strong French influence. It is not without significance that the fourteenth-century chronicler Trivet, a highly erudite Oxford scholar, imagines that Durham

\(^{53}\) *Anglo-Norman Language and Literature* (London, 1923).

and even Knaresborough are situated somewhere up near the Scottish border:

quant aprocherent vers Escoce a Duresme (p. 356)
a Knaresbourgh entre Engleterre et Escoz (p. 211)

The adoption and retention of the view that French was not only universally understood in a passive way but also actively used throughout the length and breadth of medieval England and from the top to the bottom of the social scale is to be explained by a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature and role of Anglo-Norman, a misunderstanding that Miss Pope's book has helped to perpetuate. Like many scholars before and since her time Miss Pope was concerned primarily with insular French viewed as one of the more peripheral and eccentric dialects of mainland France. The criterion by which it is judged is the central dialect—francien. Until the early years of the thirteenth century this intellectual position may be defensible. However, as Anglo-Norman becomes increasingly a written as opposed to a spoken language and is used more and more for works of a generally administrative, didactic or legal nature, its role in society changes and, consequently, its point of reference ought to change. No longer is it appropriate to consider it as a sort of wayward child failing ever more frequently as time goes by to conform to the patterns of the parental francien: later Anglo-Norman needs to be regarded—along with Latin—as one of the two chief linguistic vehicles for the transmission of the culture of medieval England. As such, it is in a different category from all the dialects of northern France that were destined to be absorbed into standard French. Anglo-Norman was largely absorbed into English, as our lexis of modern English shows at every turn, and it is by situating it in the context of English history and English language that its true importance will be seen.

The study of Anglo-Norman of the early period can add to our knowledge of medieval French: that of Anglo-Norman of the later period could make an important contribution to our understanding of the development of English. For this to come about, however, the concern of scholars will have to switch from a preoccupation with pronunciation and form to concentration on meaning. Fifty years after the publication of Miss Pope's *From Latin to Modern French* we ought to be working towards a differently orientated work along the lines of, perhaps, *From Anglo-Norman to Modern English*. 