The Cambridge History of the English Language

剑桥英语史

第三卷

(1476—1776)

Edited by Roger Lass

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THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

VOLUME III *1476–1776*

EDITED BY

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

Although it is a topic of continuing debate, there can be little doubt that English is the most widely-spoken language in the world, with significant numbers of native speakers in almost every major region – only South America falling largely outside the net. In such a situation an understanding of the nature of English can be claimed unambiguously to be of worldwide importance.

Growing consciousness of such a role for English is one of the motivations behind this History. There are other motivations too. Specialist students have many major and detailed works of scholarship to which they can refer, for example Bruce Mitchell's *Old English Syntax*, or, from an earlier age, Karl Luick's *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*. Similarly, those who come new to the subject have both one-volume histories such as Barbara Strang's *History of English* and introductory textbooks to a single period, for example Bruce Mitchell and Fred Robinson's *A Guide to Old English*. But what is lacking is the intermediate work which can provide a solid discussion of the full range of the history of English both to the anglicist who does not specialise in the particular area to hand and to the general linguist who has no specialised knowledge of the history of English. This work attempts to remedy that lack. We hope that it will be of use to others too, whether they are interested in the history of English for its own sake, or for some specific purpose such as local history or the effects of colonisation.

Under the influence of the Swiss lingnist, Ferdinand de Saussure, there has been, during this century, a persistent tendency to view the study of language as having two discrete parts: (i) synchronic, where a language is studied from the point of view of one moment in time; (ii) diachronic, where a language is studied from a historical perspective. It might therefore be supposed that this present work is purely diachronic. But this is not so.

One crucial principle which guides The Cambridge History of the English Language is that synchrony and diachrony are intertwined, and that a satisfactory understanding of English (or any other language) cannot be achieved on the basis of one of these alone.

Consider, for example, the (synchronic) fact that English, when compared with other languages, has some rather infrequent or unusual characteristics. Thus, in the area of vocabulary, English has an exceptionally high number of words borrowed from other languages (French, the Scandinavian languages, American Indian languages, Italian, the languages of northern India and so on); in syntax a common construction is the use of *do* in forming questions (e.g. *Do you like cheese?*), a type of construction not often found in other languages; in morphology English has relatively few inflexions, at least compared with the majority of other European languages; in phonology the number of diphthongs as against the number of vowels in English English is notably high. In other words, synchronically, English can be seen to be in some respects rather unusual. But in order to understand such facts we need to look at the history of the language; it is often only there that an explanation can be found. And that is what this work attempts to do.

This raises another issue. A quasi-Darwinian approach to English might attempt to account for its widespread use by claiming that somehow English is more suited, better adapted, to use as an international language than others. But that is nonsense. English is no more fit than, say, Spanish or Chinese. The reasons for the spread of English are political, cultural and economic rather than linguistic. So too are the reasons for such linguistic elements within English as the high number of borrowed words. This History, therefore, is based as much upon political, cultural and economic factors as linguistic ones, and it will be noted that the major historical divisions between volumes are based upon the former type of events (the Norman Conquest, the spread of printing, the declaration of independence by the U.S.A.), rather than the latter type.

As a rough generalisation, one can say that up to about the seventeenth century the development of English tended to be centripetal, whereas since then the development has tended to be centrifugal. The settlement by the Anglo-Saxons resulted in a spread of dialect variation over the country, but by the tenth century a variety of forces were combining to promote the emergence of a standard form of the language. Such an evolution was disrupted by the Norman Conquest, but with the development of printing together with other more centralising tendencies, the emergence of a standard form became once more, from the fifteenth century

on, a major characteristic of the language. But processes of emigration and colonisation then gave rise to new regional varieties overseas, many of which have now achieved a high degree of linguistic independence, and some of which, especially American English, may even have a dominating influence on British English. The structure of this work is designed to reflect these different types of development. Whilst the first four volumes offer a reasonably straightforward chronological account, the later volumes are geographically based. This arrangement, we hope, allows scope for the proper treatment of diverse types of evolution and development. Even within the chronologically oriented volumes there are variations of structure, which are designed to reflect the changing relative importance of various linguistic features. Although all the chronological volumes have substantial chapters devoted to the central topics of semantics and vocabulary, syntax, and phonology and morphology, for other topics the space allotted in a particular volume is one which is appropriate to the importance of that topic during the relevant period, rather than some pre-defined calculation of relative importance. And within the geographically based volumes all these topics are potentially included with each geographical section, even if sometimes in a less formal way. Such a flexible and changing structure seems essential for any full treatment of the history of English.

One question that came up as this project began was the extent to which it might be possible or desirable to work within a single theoretical linguistic framework. It could well be argued that only a consensus within the linguistic community about preferred linguistic theories would enable a work such as this to be written. Certainly, it was immediately obvious when work for this History began, that it would be impossible to lay down a 'party line' on linguistic theory, and indeed, that such an approach would be undesirably restrictive. The solution reached was, I believe, more fruitful. Contributors have been chosen purely on the grounds of expertise and knowledge, and have been encouraged to write their contributions in the way they see most fitting, whilst at the same time taking full account of developments in linguistic theory. This has, of course, led to problems, notably with contrasting views of the same topic (and also because of the need to distinguish the ephemeral flight of theoretical fancy from genuine new insights into linguistic theory), but even in a work which is concerned to provide a unified approach (so that, for example, in most cases every contributor to a volume has read all the other contributions to that volume), such contrasts, and even contradictions, are stimulating and fruitful. Whilst this work aims to be authoritative, it is not prescriptive, and the

final goal must be to stimulate interest in a subject in which much work remains to be done, both theoretically and empirically.

The task of editing this History has been, and still remains, a long and complex one. One of the greatest difficulties has been to co-ordinate the contributions of the many different writers. Sometimes, even, this has caused delays in volumes other than that where the delay arose. We have attempted to minimise the effects of such delays by various methods, and in particular by trying to keep bibliographies as up-to-date as possible. This should allow the interested reader to pursue very recent important work, including that by the contributors themselves, whilst maintaining the integrity of each volume.

As General Editor I owe a great debt to many friends and colleagues who have devoted much time and thought to how best this work might be approached and completed. Firstly, I should thank my fellow-editors: John Algeo, Norman Blake, Bob Burchfield, Roger Lass and Suzanne Romaine. They have been concerned as much with the History as a whole as with their individual volumes. Secondly, there are those fellow linguists, some contributors, some not, who have so generously given their time and made many valuable suggestions: John Anderson, Cecily Clark, Frans van Coetsem, Fran Colman, David Denison, Ed Finegan, Olga Fischer, Jacek Fisiak, Malcolm Godden, Angus McIntosh, Lesley Milroy, Donka Minkova, Matti Rissanen, Michael Samuels, Bob Stockwell, Tom Toon, Elizabeth Traugott, Peter Trudgill, Nigel Vincent, Anthony Warner, Simone Wyss. One occasion stands out especially: the organisers of the Fourth International Conference on English Historical Linguistics, held at Amsterdam in 1985, kindly allowed us to hold a seminar on the project as it was just beginning. For their generosity, which allowed us to hear a great many views and exchange opinions with colleagues one rarely meets face-to-face, I must thank Roger Eaton, Olga Fischer, Willem Koopman and Frederike van der Leek.

The preface to the earlier volumes acknowledged the considerable debt which I owed to my editors at Cambridge University Press, firstly, Penny Carter, and subsequently Marion Smith. Since then the History has seen two further editors, firstly Judith Ayling and now Kate Brett. Both have stepped into this demanding role with considerable aplomb, and the project has been extremely fortunate in obtaining their help and advice. I am very grateful to both.

Richard M. Hogg

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All of us, authors and editor, are indebted to the many colleagues who read and commented on chapters; to each other, to other series editors, and various people outside our little world who read chapters, or parts of chapters, and commented generously. And not least, our thanks to three generations of Cambridge University Press editors, Penny Carter, Judith Ayling and Kate Brett. It has been a privilege and a pleasure for all of us to work with the Press.

Roger Lass

这是迄今为止最为恢弘、最为野心勃勃的英语史，其成就将为所有关注她的人士感到无比骄傲。

—— *Randolph Quirk, London Review of Books*

这是一支非常值得尊敬的杰出的作者队伍，这部精美的著作将成为一部必备的工具书。

—— *John Honey, Times Higher Education Supplement*

《剑桥英语史》是第一部详尽地叙述英语历史的多卷本巨著，无论是其恢弘的气度还是内容的权威性，都远远超过了以往任何一部英语史著作。她不仅仅是为专业人士撰写的，也是为所有对英语的历史有兴趣的一般读者献上的厚礼。其精彩的论述从语言的核心内容（语音学、形态学、语义学、句法学）一直延伸到人名和地名的专名学领域，除了渊博的学识之外，也显示了其独到的视角和多样的分析方法。

我们在此特别想要说明的是：这部英语史决不仅仅是某一种语言的历史，更是一部语言学的百科全书。我们相信，任何一位语言学工作者，无论他是从事语言学的哪一个领域的研究，都将从中受到知识和方法的双重教益。

更有甚者。北欧的海盗与 *Alfred* 大帝签订了协议，他们得以在东部一片狭长的地带居住下来，许多以 *-by* 结尾的地名见证了这一段历史，这是丹麦语“定居地”之意；像 *they* 和 *are* 这样的基本词汇来源于斯堪的那维亚语，这对语言接触的研究应当是一个不小的挑战；还有奥古斯丁莅临英伦，拉丁语再次施加影响；伴随诺曼底公爵的登陆，法语词汇大量涌入；海外殖民的拓展，新的英语变体形成……在流淌的文字中间，是民族斗争和交融的声音；这部英语史同时也是一部民族史，语言的历史中蕴涵着民族的精神历史。什么时候，我们能够有一部汉语史，能让世界人民从中理解我们民族精神的历史呢？“他山之石，可以攻玉”，这正是我们引进这部皇皇巨著的最终目的。

—— 编 辑

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I INTRODUCTION

Roger Lass

1.1 The setting

This volume treats the history of English from the late fifteenth to the late eighteenth century; the dates are at least partly symbolic, framing the establishment of Caxton's first press in England and the American Declaration of Independence, the notional birth of the first (non-insular) extraterritorial English. The preceding volume covered a slightly longer time-span (four centuries as opposed to three), but in our period the changes in the cultural ambience in which English existed and which its speakers expressed were arguably more profound, perhaps greater even than those from the murky 'beginnings' of volume I to the Norman Conquest; even perhaps than those in the millennium from the fifth to the fifteenth century.

Taking conventional period names as a rough index of change, the three centuries covered here include 'the waning of the Middle Ages' (Huizinga 1927), the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the beginnings of the Romantic period. The transformation of the European world-picture in this time is enormous. Fifteenth-century Europe was still essentially medieval, living in a geocentric and finite cosmos, the fixed stars bounding the universe beyond the crystalline planetary spheres. No celestial objects invisible to the naked eye were known, nor, at the other extreme, any organisms or structures smaller than the naked eye could see. In the natural world, maggots generated spontaneously from rotten meat, the heart was the seat of the emotions, and the arteries carried air.

Less than two centuries on, much of this had become what C. S. Lewis (1964) aptly called 'the discarded image'. The new universe was infinite: Pascal in the seventeenth century felt himself lost 'entre les deux abîmes de l'infini et du néant', terrified of 'les espaces infinis'. It was also heliocentric;

earth (and man) had been displaced from the centre. The sensory horizons were broadened in both directions: Galileo had seen the moons of Jupiter, and Leeuwenhoek had seen spermatozoa. Concepts of nature were being altered in other ways: by the seventeenth century Francesco Redi had showed that maggots come from flies' eggs, and William Harvey had demonstrated the circulation of the blood.

Other cultural and political changes were as massive. The fifteenth century presents a monolithically Catholic Europe (if with stirrings of dissent among the Wycliffites and Hussites); vernacular bibles are a rarity, the liturgy is in Latin, and the Pope is head of a universal church. By 1600 Luther, Zwingli and Calvin are history, and Europe is (roughly) split between a Catholic South and a Protestant North. England is a Protestant nation with a vernacular bible and liturgy, with the sovereign as head of a national church.

In painting, our period encompasses Dürer, the van Eycks and Holbein at one end, Titian, Rubens and Rembrandt in the middle, and Watteau, Gainsborough and Reynolds at the other end. In music we range from the Burgundian polyphonists through Palestrina, Monteverdi, Purcell, the Bachs, Mozart and Haydn; at the end of our three centuries Beethoven is a child of six.

Becoming more parochial, English poets who flourished in these centuries include Skelton, Wyatt, Spenser, Donne, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Gray and Collins; prose-writers include Sir Thomas More, Sidney, Bacon, Browne, Burton, Bunyan, Swift, Addison and Johnson, dramatists Shakespeare, Kyd, Beaumont and Fletcher, Congreve and Sheridan. When Caxton's first printed books appeared in the late 1470s, Shakespeare's birth was nearly ninety years in the future; at the close of the period Blake was in his twenties, Wordsworth was six and Scott and Coleridge were respectively five and four.

In the final century, we truly enter the modern age, symbolically signalled in a way by the founding of the Royal Society in 1660, and the publication of Newton's *Principia* (1686). This is the age of the great rationalist philosophers like Descartes and Leibniz, and the empiricists like Bacon and Locke, whose work prompted the beginnings of the modern experimental science that paved the way for the Industrial Revolution. After the *Principia* the physical universe was (as indeed it has largely remained at the macrophysical level) a vast mathematical machine. Comets, once harbingers of disaster, became an elegant proof of the orderliness of the cosmos through Sir Edmund Halley's prediction in 1704 of cometary periodicity. Phlogiston ceded to oxygen, Jenner introduced vaccination for smallpox.

Politically, England in the 1470s was a late medieval Catholic monarchy, with a weak parliament and monarchs with theoretically absolute power (if in fact under strong political and financial constraints). By the eighteenth century the nation had been through a religious reformation, a regicide, a commonwealth, the flight of the hereditary monarch, and the accession of a foreign king who signed away much of his power. By the mid-seventeenth century the main structures of modern parliamentary democracy (if not in its later populist form) were established in principle; the monarchy, while not 'constitutional' in the modern sense, was still unlike anything known in earlier Europe except perhaps in Iceland.

In the fifteenth century England was an island nation, if with two independent kingdoms, Wales and Scotland, sharing its territory; or, counting imperfectly conquered Ireland, a two-island nation; English, far from being a world language, probably had fewer than seven million speakers, and was virtually unknown outside of its island confines. By the 1770s there was an empire, with Anglophone enclaves as far west as the Americas and as far east as India. A little over a decade later, English was spoken as far south as Australia and the Cape of Good Hope. The scene is set, by the 1770s, for the expansion of the 'New Englishes': extraterritorial mother-tongue varieties (American, Australasian, South African), second-language varieties and English-based pidgins and creoles.

England was never again seriously invaded, let alone colonised, after 1066. Indeed, a significant and linguistically important part of its later history involves the English invading and colonising other places: Ireland, the Americas, Asia, Oceania, Africa. Even if the primary effect, as suggested above, was the creation of a host of new Englishes, the influence went the other way as well: there was extensive lexical feedback into mainland English, in the shape of borrowings from the native languages of the colonised regions, and from other European languages with which English came into renewed contact. To give a tiny sample, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Dravidian languages gave us *calico*, *copra*, *curry*, Hindi *bandana*, *cheetah*, *jungle*, Arabic *magazine*, *hashish*, *henna*, Malay *rattan*, *amok*, *orang-outan*, Bantu languages *zebra*, and *baobab* (probably via Portuguese); these all reflect the 'exotic' experiences of foreign parts. On the other hand, renewed contact with Europe in this period of expansion brought in *rowan*, *troll*, *keg* from North Germanic, *yacht*, *landscape*, *easel* from Dutch, *frigate*, *cartoon*, *opera* from Italian, and so on.

But there was another kind of demographic movement that also had linguistic effects: an internal 'invasion' of London and the Southeast, especially from the North and East Anglia, which from late Middle English

times onward left in the emerging standard and related varieties a number of items which are clearly not native to these areas. One particularly important example is the diffusion into London of the present 3 sing. verb ending in *-s* (replacing earlier *-th*), which is a northern form of Old English date (see Lass this volume).

1.2 Social and linguistic change

One might expect such enormous social, political and cultural change to correlate with great linguistic change. And it does – though whether the two are related is another matter. I deliberately avoided detailed attention to language (except for lexis) in the last section, because the often heard claim that massive cultural change *per se* 'causes' linguistic change is, except at this level, dubious. It is a trivial fact that new objects and concepts require new names; and only slightly less trivial – with respect to major structural change – that contact with other languages leads to borrowing, the greater the contact the greater the borrowing. But *structural* change precipitated by contact occurs only where there is large-scale, persistent bilingualism, and the opportunity for massive code-switching or even 'creolisation'. This was probably never the case at any point in the history of English (though some have argued that it was: Bailey & Maroldt 1977, Poussa 1982). In any case, the last episode that could even remotely be construed this way is the immediate post-Conquest period. From the thirteenth century on England was for all practical purposes a monolingual nation: though there were of course significant contacts with other languages, which left impresses on the lexicon and provided some materials for new kinds of stylistic distinction in English writing: perhaps the most important of these contacts is the continuing one with Latin (Görlach this volume, Nevalainen this volume, Adamson this volume).

Now to say that social change itself does not (and indeed cannot) directly cause linguistic change is not to say that language is insulated from the rest of culture: only that we need to make certain important distinctions, in terms of the levels on which 'causal' factors operate, and the detailed relations between cultural facts and the properties of linguistic systems. Linguistic change for instance may be accelerated in periods of massive social change, through increased contact betweeen previously isolated sectors of society, weakening of old ties and development of new ones, etc.; but these are enabling or encouraging conditions, not direct causes.

Similarly, and more relevant to this volume's concerns, certain types of social change (e.g. development of a more 'centripetal' society, with prestige