

CHANGES IN REGIONAL SCRIBAL PRACTICE: DEGREES OF STANDARDIZATION IN 15TH-CENTURY ENGLISH LEGAL COPIES FROM THE COUNTY OF DURHAM

Francisco Alonso Almeida & Alicia Rodríguez Álvarez
Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

ABSTRACT

During the Late Middle Ages it was quite usual in England to make copies of legal deeds which were compiled in cartularies or registers. These copies served the purpose of granting the preservation of title deeds, contracts, etc. in case of loss or destruction, as well as providing Chancery officials with documents which could be inspected to resolve, for example, land disputes. This paper intends to show how the scribes in charge of making these copies liable to Chancery inspection tried to eliminate regional dialectal features present in the original documents. It seems instead, that they adopted features dominant in Chancery English following thus the drift towards written standardization. In order to carry out this work we have used a corpus of documents produced in Durham, seat of an important chancery far away from the focus of influence of Chancery English.

KEY WORDS: standardization, Chancery English, dialectology.

RESUMEN

La realización de copias de documentos legales era una práctica muy extendida en Inglaterra durante la Baja Edad Media. Estas copias se conservaban en cartularios y registros no sólo para garantizar la conservación de títulos de propiedad, contratos de arrendamientos etc., en caso de que estos se perdieran o destruyesen, sino para facilitar a los funcionarios de la Cancillería su revisión en la resolución de disputas territoriales o de cualquier otra índole. Este trabajo pretende demostrar que los escribas que realizaban estas copias, susceptibles de ser revisadas por funcionarios de la Cancillería, intentaron eliminar rasgos dialectales locales presentes en los documentos originales. Asimismo, mostraban una tendencia a adoptar rasgos predominantes en el inglés de la Cancillería acusando así la presión ejercida por la estandarización de la lengua escrita desde las oficinas de dicha entidad. Con este objetivo hemos tomado como corpus de trabajo un grupo de documentos realizados en la zona de Durham, sede de una Cancillería muy productiva y alejada geográficamente del foco de expansión del inglés de la Cancillería.

PALABRAS CLAVE: estandarización, inglés de la Cancillería, dialectología.



0. INTRODUCTION

From the 12th century on, many English religious houses decided to copy the original charters that conferred lands and rights not only to the congregation but also to the gentry living in the area. These copies were compiled in volumes called cartularies and the reasons for their production were multiple. On the one hand, cartularies represented a safeguard for the estates of the religious houses in case the original charters were lost in a period of great insecurity; secondly, they provided a quick and easy reference, above all when the muniments of the house or of the noble families had to be inspected; finally, they recorded the history of the property of lands —the earlier owners, the line of descent, the acquisition of estates, etc.— and, in a way, they contributed to the preservation of the integrity of estates (Davis 1958:xi).

Durham Priory, as an important estate owner, had its own chancery in charge of copying not only the original documents written by the Priory scribes but also those devised by local professional scribes:

The northern nobility trusted the prior and convent sufficiently to make them guardians and trustees of their valuables, both money and armour. There still survive among the Durham muniments many family title-deeds deposited in the monastic treasury during the fifteenth century. Alternatively, the monastic chancellor might be asked to insert a copy of a particularly important document in his register. (Dobson 1973:183)

The composition of legal instruments as well as the use of stereotyped clauses or legal *formulae* were abilities already known in the 15th century by scribes working in public and private offices all over the country (Rodríguez-Álvarez 1997:50-60). Since formularies for private documents appeared at the end of the 15th century, the royal diplomata constituted the only model private charters followed (Hall 1908:246) and by the mid 15th century the diplomatic construction of charters had achieved such a level of homogeneity that it was impossible to say if a document had been issued by the Royal Chancery or by private scribes.

1. CARTULARY COPIES AND SCRIBAL AWARENESS: INITIAL ASSUMPTION

Since standardization had pervaded the form of regional documents, which followed the model of Chancery writings, we may also infer that the linguistic uses set by the Official records of the Chancery may have also provided a pattern to which the language of regional documents could adjust. Our assumption is that Durham clerks writing copies that could be checked by Chancery officials, such as the ones compiled in cartularies or registers, partly erased the regional or local usage of the original charters standardising their language in the copies which, nevertheless, would still have regional flavour and Durham features. This was pos-



sible because “by 1430 Chancery English had assumed its mature form” (Fisher 1977:881) and was well known by scribes all over the country who had become familiar with the Chancery linguistic habits and tried to accommodate to them to some extent.

This process of accommodation had already been noted by Fisher (1977:882-883; 1978-81:142; Fisher et al. 1984:24, 63-66), who observes how Chancery scribes changed the spelling of the petitions brought to them so that the copies to be inspected by the Chancellor and entered into the Rolls of Parliament “reveal the following drift towards modern standard” (Fisher et al. 1984:24). But of course these were Chancery scribes and our main concern is the linguistic behaviour of regional scribes. In this sense we agree with Sandved when he says:

If the various provincial scribes modified their habits of written language in such a way as to bring them into line with a certain kind of London English, I believe it was because they were aware that documents written in London revealed scribal practices which differed in well-defined ways from their own. (Sandved 1981:35)

2. CORPUS AND METHODOLOGY

In order to trace “the transition from dialects to a written standard” (Fisher 1978-81:136) we have analysed a group of twenty-eight charters classified in the *LALME* as anchor texts produced and dialectally located in Durham.¹ The documents —transcribed by Rodríguez Álvarez (1997)— date from the second half of the 15th century and they can be grouped into twelve sets, each set has the original charter/s² (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27), and the cartulary/register copy (3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 28), sometimes a draft of the original document is preserved (1).

Fifteenth-century Durham presented itself as an ideal place for this initial research, first because the Priory of Durham Cathedral was a powerful institution with its own chancery, but also because many documents issued by this office were preserved in both forms: original text/s and copy, and, of course, because this county was far away from the focus of written standardization in London and, therefore, the results obtained would be meaningful enough to check whether local spelling

¹ See the final appendix. The numbers we will use from now on refer to the documents listed there.

² Since in these documents more than one party was implied, the document was repeated as many times as parties were involved in the legal transaction. These copies could be produced on a same piece of parchment which was later cut into as many pieces as parties in the legal business, but the edges of each new piece are given a zigzag form. The legal implications of such a cutting is that all pieces must fit in perfectly to show the validity of the copies. According to this form these deeds are called *indentures*. Deeds could also be copied on different pieces of parchment with straight edges: *deed polls*.



forms are preserved in the copies or they are abandoned in favour of the new national standard: Chancery English.

Before proceeding with the description of the data obtained, we would like to make clear that our main concern is the spreading of standardised forms used in peripheral legal institutions outside London during the second half of the 15th century, rather than the genesis or motivations of the creation of a national standard. Therefore, we will not give a revision of the literature on Chancery English³ but just a contribution on a particular aspect of the overall phenomenon.

The methodology followed consists in the compilation of spelling and grammatical forms of the original charter/s that have been changed in the cartulary/register copy. This collection of spelling and grammatical differences has been done manually, and initial scrutiny discriminated no form at all. However, for the sake of clarity of conclusions, we have later decided to elaborate a questionnaire of items that would eventually serve for the purpose of comparison with Chancery forms. The questionnaire has been designed after the characteristics of Chancery standard established by Fisher (1977) and Fisher et al. (1984) and includes the items in (0) mainly concerned with spelling and grammar.

(0) The questionnaire:

1. 3rd person plural pronoun	2. -LY (adverbs)	3. 3rd person present singular	4. BETWEEN
5. ANY	6. GH	7. SH	8. WH

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. For the first item of the questionnaire, i.e. 3rd person plural pronoun, Chancery English normally prefers the forms with initial *th* (see Fisher et al. 1984:43-44), that is, the Scandinavian forms instead of the Anglo-Saxon forms with *h*. In the case of our manuscripts —see (1) below—, all the copies present *th* pronominal forms.

(1)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>thaym</i> (4)	<i>thaym, thayme</i> (5)	II
<i>thair, thare, thayr</i> (4)	<i>thei, lthere</i> (5)	

³ For outstanding contributions in this field, see the seminal studies by Samuels (1963), Fisher (1977, 1978-81), Fisher et al. (1984), Richardson (1980); comprehensive studies such as Sandved (1981) Gómez-Soliño (1985b); works on particular authors or collections such as Davis (1955), Samuels (1981), Lucas (1994), Gómez-Soliño (1981, 1997), Rodríguez (1999); very good revisions such as Blake (1996:169-181); clarifying remarks on the term “standard” in Smith (1996:68-77); studies on the role of the first printers in the process of standardization such as Scragg (1974:64-67), Samuels (1981), Fisher (1984), Gómez-Soliño (1985a), Brengelman (1980:360-340).



<i>yer</i> (8)	<i>their</i> (9)	IV
<i>yai</i> (12)	<i>thei</i> (14)	VI
<i>yer</i> (12)	<i>their</i> (14)	
<i>yai</i> (13)		
<i>yar</i> (13)		
<i>yai</i> (15)	<i>thei, þei</i> (16)	VII
<i>yair</i> (15)	<i>their</i> (16)	
<i>yai</i> (17)	<i>thei</i> (20)	VIII
<i>yer</i> (17)	<i>their</i> (20)	
<i>yai</i> (18)		
<i>yai</i> (19)		
<i>yer</i> (19)		
<i>þeim</i> (21)	<i>theym</i> (22)	IX
<i>their, theire</i> (21)	<i>their</i> (22)	
<i>they</i> (23)	<i>they</i> (24)	X
<i>them</i> (23)	<i>theym</i> (24)	
<i>their, theyr</i> (23)	<i>þere, þeir</i> (24)	
<i>thay</i> (25)	<i>they/thei</i> (26)	XI
<i>they, theire</i> (25)	<i>their</i> (26)	
<i>them</i> (25)	<i>theme</i> (26)	
<i>thayr</i> (27)	<i>ther, there</i> (28)	XII
<i>theym</i> (27)	<i>them</i> (28)	

In some cases these forms were also used in the original charters (groups II, IX, X, XI and XII); however, groups IV, VI, VII and VIII show a change from *y*- forms to *th*- forms. Although Fisher only makes a distinction between non-Chancery forms with *h* and Chancery forms with *th*, it seems obvious that the presence of *y*- forms indicate a local usage of Durham (Benskin 1982-1985: 14-15). Therefore the general abandonment of *y* forms and the adoption of *th* pronoun forms may be interpreted as an approach to Standard uses. Even when the documents have been written by the same scribe, the forms with *th* replace those with *y*; such is the case of document 20, written by the same scribe as documents 17 and 18.

3.2. The second item studied is -LY (adv). According to Fischer (1977:884; also Fisher et al. 1984:49), adverbs “never end[s] in *lich*” in Chancery English. In fact, all the adverbial forms attested in our manuscripts have lost the final sound [-tʃ], and they end in [-li], always spelt out as *-ly* as seen in (2).



(2)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>indeferently</i> (4)	<i>indifferently</i> (5)	II
<i>yberly</i> (4)	<i>yberly</i> (5)	
<i>erly</i> (8)	<i>yerely</i> (9)	IV
<i>peseabyly</i> (17)	<i>peasably</i> (20)	VIII
<i>peseabyly</i> (18)		
<i>peseabyly</i> (19)		
<i>entrechangeably</i> (21)	<i>entrechangably</i> (22)	IX
<i>peasably</i> (25)	<i>peaseably</i> (26)	XI
<i>goodly</i> (27)	<i>goodly</i> (28)	XII

3.3. The third person present singular is generally indicated in Chancery English by *eth/ep* (Fisher et al. 1984:45). The forms obtained for this item in our corpus are given in (3):

(3)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>berys</i> (1)	<i>berys</i> (3)	I
<i>has</i> (1)	<i>has</i> (3)	
<i>occupies</i> (1)	<i>occupiesse</i> (3)	
<i>grauntes</i> (1)	<i>grauntes</i> (3)	
<i>doose</i> (1)	<i>doose</i> (3)	
<i>berys</i> (2)		
<i>has</i> (2)		
<i>grauntes</i> (2)		
<i>occupies</i> (2)		
<i>doos</i> (2)		
<i>Has</i> (4)	<i>hath</i> (5)	II
<i>hase</i> (4)		
<i>berys</i> (8)	<i>berith</i> (9)	IV
<i>has</i> (8)	<i>hath</i> (9)	
<i>hase</i> (12)	<i>hath</i> (14)	VI
<i>has</i> (13)		
<i>hase</i> (15)	<i>hase</i> (16)	VII



<i>berys</i> (17)	<i>berith</i> (20)	VIII
<i>has</i> (17)	<i>hath</i> (20)	
<i>langes</i> (17)	<i>belongith</i> (20)	
<i>byndys</i> (17)	<i>byndith</i> (20)	
<i>lefs</i> (17)	<i>leuith</i> (20)	
<i>berys</i> (18)		
<i>has</i> (18)		
<i>langys</i> (18)		
<i>byndys</i> (18)		
<i>lefs</i> (18)		
<i>berys</i> (19)		
<i>hase</i> (19)		
<i>langes</i> (19)		
<i>byndys</i> (19)		
<i>lefs</i> (19)		
<i>witnesseth</i> (21)	<i>witnessith</i> (22)	IX
<i>hath</i> (21)	<i>hath</i> (22)	
<i>grauntith</i> (21)	<i>grauntith</i> (22)	
<i>berith</i> (23)	<i>berith</i> (24)	X
<i>hath</i> (23)	<i>hath</i> (24)	

It should be noted here that due to the scarcity of forms for this item, we have also recorded the auxiliary *has* in those cases of the present perfect tense. The examples in the original documents show a tendency to use Northern final *-s* (see groups I, II, IV, VI, VII and VIII) save for the groups IX and X, which coincide with the last decades of the 15th century and therefore the strongest influence of Chancery habits. Except for groups I and VI, the use of final *-th* in the cartulary and register copies is very consistent showing the adoption of the Chancery convention.

3.4. The item BETWEEN offers different variants which are distributed in the manuscripts as shown in (4):

(4)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>betwix</i> (1)	<i>betwix</i> (3)	I
<i>between</i> (1)		



<i>betwix</i> (2)		
<i>betwene</i> (4)	<i>betweyne</i> (5)	II
<i>bitwix</i> (6)	<i>betwix</i> (7)	III
<i>betwyx</i> (8)	<i>betwix</i> (9)	IV
<i>be twyx</i> (12)	<i>betwix</i> (14)	VI
<i>be twys</i> (13)		
<i>be twex</i> (15)	<i>betwix</i> (16)	VII
<i>betwix</i> (17)	<i>betwix</i> (20)	VIII
<i>betwyx</i> (18)		
<i>be twyx</i> (19)		
<i>betwix</i> (21)	<i>betwix</i> (22)	IX
<i>be twix</i> (23)	<i>be twix</i> (24)	X

According to Fisher “*betwix* appears to have been favored by the Signet of Henry V and Privy Seal and in the non-Chancery indentures. *Betwene* is the favored form in the Chancery documents” (Fisher et al. 1984:50). The original documents as well as the copies of our corpus present the non-Chancery form *betwix* (and other variants such as *be twex*, *bitwix*, *betwyx*, (*be twix*) as the dominant form with just one case of *betwene* and its variant *betweyne* in group II.

3.5. Regarding the item ANY, the forms found are the ones in (5):

(5)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>ony</i> (1)	<i>ony</i> (3)	I
<i>ony</i> (2)		
<i>ony</i> (17)	<i>ony</i> (20)	VIII
<i>ony</i> (18)		
<i>ony</i> (19)		
<i>any</i> (19)		
<i>eny</i> (23)	<i>ony</i> (24)	X
<i>eny, ony</i> (25)	<i>ony</i> (26)	XI
<i>ony</i> (27)	<i>ony</i> (28)	XII

The most extended form both in the charters and in the copies is *ony*, which, according to Fisher et al.(1984:28), was abandoned after the 1430's in Chancery



documents. There is just one case of the preferred form among Chancery scribes: *any* (19), and not even in a copy.⁴ The form *ony* was rather unacceptable in Chancery English, as stated by Gómez-Soliño (1985a:100),⁵ yet it was the form generally used also by Caxton who used the form *eny* only as a secondary form in *Eneydos* (Gómez-Soliño 1985a:100). This form is more likely to appear as part of the repertoire of the Type II standard than anywhere else due to the strong Suffolk influence from where this form is adopted. Indeed *ony* “gozaba de cierta aceptación en Londres durante los años... 1438 y 1441” (Gómez-Soliño 1985a:101).

3.6. The spelling representation of the Old English voiceless glottal fricative /h/ is notoriously *gh* in Chancery English (Fisher 1977:884). Scribal hesitation in the way this phoneme should be represented is noticeable in the five hundred ways of writing the word *through* recorded in the *LALME* like *thurgh*, *thorough*, *þorowe*, *drowgz*, *yhurght*, *trghug* and *trowffē* (Smith 1999:11). Such a tremendous number of provincial forms are regarded to be “communicatively dysfunctional” (Smith 1996:76) and this “dysfunctionality” might reasonably have put some social, communicative and linguistic pressures on the spelling system so as to adopt the Chancery form with *gh* as the standard form, as Smith (1996:76) clearly indicates. The preference for this standardising spelling also influenced the writing of our scribes.

(6)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>rights</i> (1)	<i>rightes</i> (3)	I
<i>rightes</i> (2)		
<i>knyght</i> (4)	<i>knyghtes</i> (5)	II
<i>right</i> (4)	<i>ryght</i> (5)	
<i>thorow</i> (6)	<i>throw</i> (7)	III
<i>right</i> (6)	<i>righte</i> (7)	
<i>right</i> (10)	<i>ryght</i> (11)	V
<i>thrught</i> (15)	<i>throggh</i> (16)	VII
<i>oght</i> (17)	<i>oght</i> (20)	VIII
<i>thurght</i> (17)	<i>throggh</i> (20)	
<i>oght</i> (18)		
<i>thurght</i> (18)		

⁴ There are also two instances of *mony* (23) and *meny* (24).

⁵ In the analysis of spelling variables and 15th-century standard carried out by G. Rodríguez (1999: 156), she has found that *ony* (together with *any*) is the form selected by Gresham and Calle in their letters.



owhtt (19)

thurgh (19)

<i>aught</i> (23)	<i>aght</i> (24)	X
<i>ryght</i> (25)	<i>right</i> (26)	XI
<i>noght</i> (27)	<i>nozt</i> (28)	XII
<i>knyght</i> (27)	<i>knyght</i> (28)	

As seen in (6), there exists a major tendency to use *gh* for OE /h/ in all documents under study. Yet it should also be noted the few cases where the scribes fail to keep this trend. These cases are found in the vicinity of a back vowel such as /ɔ/, /o/ and /u/, which is basically an indication of the instability of the velar variant opposed to the palatal variant of the OE /h/ phoneme (*thrught* (15), *owhtt* (19), and *nozt* (28)). The palatal variant seems not to create confusion so as to its complete identification by scribes. In that sense, *gh* is systematically to be found after /i/-/i/ (*right* (1,2,3,4,5, etc), *knyght* (4, 5, 27 and 28)).

3.7. The Chancery form for the item SH to represent the voiceless post-alveolar fricative /ʃ/ is like the modern spelling *sh*. The forms found in our documents are the ones in (7):

(7)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>sall</i> (1)	<i>sall</i> (3)	I
<i>sal</i> (2)		
<i>sall</i> (4)	<i>shall</i> (5)	II
<i>sall</i> (8)	<i>shall</i> (9)	IV
<i>shall</i> (10)	<i>shall</i> (11)	V
<i>shuld</i> (10)	<i>shuld</i> (11)	
<i>sall</i> (15)	<i>shall, shal</i> (16)	VII
<i>sall</i> (17)	<i>shal. shall</i> (20)	VIII
<i>sall</i> (18)		
<i>sall, sal</i> (19)		
<i>shall</i> (21)	<i>shall</i> (22)	IX
<i>shall, shal</i> (23)	<i>shall</i> (24)	X
<i>shal</i> (25)	<i>shal</i> (26)	XI
<i>sall</i> (27)	<i>shall</i> (28)	XII



The examples in (7) show that although the original charters display both forms, with and without *sh*-, there is a significant preference for the Chancery spelling *sh* in the copies.

3.8. The forms recorded for the item WH are presented in (8):

(8)

ORIGINAL CHARTER/S	CARTULARY/REGISTER COPY	GROUP
<i>wheer</i> (1)	<i>wber</i> (3)	I
<i>wbeere</i> (2)	<i>whilke</i> (3)	
<i>whilke</i> (2)		
<i>whom</i> (10)	<i>whome</i> (11)	V
<i>wherof</i> (10)	<i>where</i> (11)	
<i>qwylk</i> (12)	<i>whilk</i> (14)	VI
<i>qwylk</i> (13)		
<i>whylk</i> (13)		
<i>qwylke</i> (15)	<i>whill</i> (16)	VII
	<i>whilk</i> (16)	
<i>qwen</i> (17)	<i>when</i> (20)	VIII
<i>qwyll</i> (17)	<i>which</i> (20)	
<i>qwen</i> (18)		
<i>qwyll</i> (18)		
<i>when</i> (19)		
<i>whylk</i> (19)		
<i>which</i> (21)	<i>which</i> (22)	V
<i>whych</i> (25)	<i>which</i> (26)	XI
<i>whilke</i> (27)	<i>whilk</i> (28)	XII

There are only two spelling variants: Northern *qw* (Fisher et al. 1984: 35) and Standard *wh*. *Qw* is frequently used in the original texts, whereas *wh* is the dominant form in the copies. However, although *wh* spelling has been standardised in the copies, the velar sound [k] corresponding to a more Northern type of pronunciation is still retained where [tʃ] is expected: *whilk* (4, 14, 16, 28) instead of *which*.

3.9. Other items were also analysed but they did not provide useful information since Chancery spelling was well established in the original deeds or, the other way round, Chancery conventions were practically absent from the copies. This is the case of the morpheme for the past tense. Most of the occurrences in the



original charters and in the copies show the *-d* suffix, however in a few early texts we have the Northern form in *-t*. In this way, in group I we have all the past forms in *-d* except the verb *accordit* that appears in both original charters (1 and 2); however the form adopts the suffix in *-d* in the register copy *-acordid* (3). A similar example occurs in group II where the forms *acordett* (2) and *auisset* (2) are used in the original deed and although the *-t* suffix is preserved in the copy in *acordytt* (3) becomes *-d* in *auysed* (3).

In the same way, although the texts present very few words with mute *h*, most of them include this graph, following the Chancery convention (Fischer et al. 1984:30): *heirs/heires/heyses* (groups II, IX, XI). Nevertheless, it is noticeable the insertion of *h* in the copies of original charters where the *h* was absent: *arrys* in 8 but *heires* in 9 (group IV); *arys* in 17, 18 and 19 but *heires* in 20 (group VIII).

4. CONCLUSION

From the discussion offered above it has become clear that fifteenth-century legal texts produced by non-Chancery scribes provide significant information about the process of standardization. Durham scribes show a tendency to use standard forms in copies rather than in the original deeds, though the original documents were not exempt of Chancery forms, as can be seen from the chart below in (9) which summarises the preferences of scribes in original documents and copies:

(9)

NO. ITEM	ITEM	CHANCERY	ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS	COPIES
1	3rd person plural pronoun	th- pronouns (Scandinavian origin)	y- pronouns th- pronouns ((þ- pronouns))	th- pronouns
2	-LY (adverbs)	-ly	-ly	-ly
3	3rd person present singular	-eth/-ep	-s ((-th))	-th ((-s))
4	BETWEEN	betwene	betwix variants ((betwene))	betwix variants ((betweyne))
5	ANY	any	ony (eny) (((any)))	ony
6	GH	gh	gh (((w))) (((wht)))	gh (((w))) (((t)))
7	SH	sh	sh s	sh (((s)))
8	WH	wh	wh qw	wh

Key: brackets indicate non-dominant forms.



The summary of forms above in (9) suggests that Chancery forms are more dominant in the copies than in the original deeds. Yet local and non-Chancery forms still appear in both types of documents, though more frequently in the original ones than in the copies as seen from the use of *s* to indicate the 3rd person present singular, the use of *s* to represent [ʃ], and the use of Northern *qw* for PDE *wh*. The reason for adopting less local forms in copies have already been pointed out: these copies were later on stored for preservation in cartularies and registers that could be inspected by Chancery officials. Therefore, we may conclude that local scribes were more “careful” when producing the copies for storage than the documents themselves. This shift towards Chancery features reveals a sort of scribal awareness that may contribute to the spreading of a written standard either by intentionally eliminating all local forms from their writings or by mixing local and standard forms in a clear attempt to follow the dominant linguistic trend in administrative writing.



WORKS CITED

- BENSKIN, M. "The Letters and <y> in Later Middle English, and Some Related Matters." *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 7 (1982-1985): 13-30.
- BLAKE, N. *A History of the English Language*. London: Macmillan, 1996
- BRENGELMAN, F.H. "Orthoepists, Printers, and the Rationalization of English Spelling." *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 79 (1980): 332-354.
- DAVIS, G.R.C. *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain: A Short Catalogue*. London: Longmans, Green, 1958.
- DAVIS, N. "The Language of the Pastons." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 40 (1955): 119-143.
- DOBSON, R.B. *Durham Priory 1400-1450*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1973.
- FISHER, J. "Chancery and the Emergence of Standard Written English in the Fifteenth Century." *Speculum* 52 (1977): 870-899.
- "Chancery Standard and Modern Written English." *Fifteenth-century Studies*. Ed. R.F. Yeager. New Haven, Conn.: Archon, 1978-1981. 161-185.
- FISHER, J., M. RICHARDSON, & J.L. FISHER. *An Anthology of Chancery English*. Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1984.
- GÓMEZ-SOLIÑO, J. "Thomas Wolsey, Thomas More y la lengua inglesa estándar de su época." *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* 3 (1981): 74-84.
- "William Caxton y la estandarización de la lengua inglesa en el siglo xv." *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* 10 (1985a.): 95-118.
- "La génesis del inglés estándar moderno." *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* 11 (1985b.): 81-106.
- "Pastons, Celys and the Standard Language in the Late Fifteenth Century." *Proceedings of the 9th International Conference of the Spanish Society for Medieval English Language and Literature*. Ed. M. Giménez Bon & V. Olsen. 1997.117-139.
- HALL, H. *Studies in English Official Historical Documents*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1908.
- LUCAS, P. "Towards a Standard Written English? Continuity and Change in the Orthographic Usage of John Capgrave O.S.A. (1393-1464)." *English Historical Linguistics 1992*. Ed. F. Fernández, M. Fuster & J.J. Calvo. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1994. 91-104.
- MCINTOSH, A., M.L. SAMUELS & M. BENSKIN, eds. *Linguistic Atlas of Middle English (LALME)*. 4 vols. Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1986.
- RICHARDSON, M. "Henry v, the English Chancery, and Chancery English." *Speculum* 55 (1980): 726-750.

- RODRÍGUEZ-ÁLVAREZ, A. *Documentos notariales vernáculos del condado de Durham (siglo XV): estudio y edición*. Córdoba y Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Servicio de Publicaciones Universidad de Córdoba y Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 1997.
- RODRÍGUEZ, G. "Spelling Variables and Conformity to the Standard in the Late Fifteenth Century." *'Woonderous Ænglisse': Selim Studies in Medieval English Language*. Ed. Ana Bringas López. Vigo: Servicio de Publicaciones, Universidade de Vigo, 1999. 145-159.
- SAMUELS, M.L. "Some Applications of Middle English Dialectology." *English Studies* 44 (1963): 81-94.
- "Spelling and Dialect in the Late and Post-Middle English Periods." *So Meny People Longages and Tonges: Philological Essays in Scots and Mediaeval English Presented to Angus McIntosh*. Ed. M. Benskin & M.L. Samuels. Edinburgh: Michael Benskin & M.L. Samuels. 1981. 43-54.
- SANDVED, A.O. "Prolegomena to a Renewed Study of the Rise of Standard English." *So Meny People Longages and Tonges: Philological Essays in Scots and Mediaeval English Presented to Angus McIntosh*. Ed. M. Benskin and M.L. Samuels. Edinburgh: Michael Benskin & M.L. Samuels, 1981. 31-32.
- SCRAGG, D.G. *A History of English Spelling*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1974.
- SMITH, J.J. *An Historical Study of English: Function, Form and Change*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- *Essentials of Early English*. London: Routledge, 1999.



APPENDIX

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

REPOSITORY	SHELFMARK	DATE	GROUP
1. D.U.L. (5) ⁶	D.C.D. Misc.Ch.1069 (dorse)	1441, 16 September	I
2. D.U.L. (6)	D.C.D. Misc.Ch.656	1441, 16 September	
3. D.U.L. (7)	D.C.D.Pr.'s Rg. Ill, f.273*r-v	1441, 16 September	
4. D.U.L. (10)	D.C.D. 1.9. Spec.43	1447, 26 August	II
5. D.U.L. (11)	D.C.D. Car. iv, ff. 145r-v	1447, 26 August	
6. D.U.L. (14)	D.C.D. 3.4.Spec.6	1450, 15 February	III
7. D.U.L. (15)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 66v	1450, 15 February	
8. D.U.L. (19)	D.C.D. 4.10.Spec.16	1465, 24 June	IV
9. D.U.L. (20)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 198v	1465, 24 June	
10. D.U.L. (21)	D.C.D. 1.4.Spec.50	1465, 3 December	V
11. D.U.L. (22)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 54r	1465, 3 December	
12. D.U.L. (24)	D.C.D. 4.10.Spec.22a	1469, circa 25 March	VI
13. D.U.L. (25)	D.C.D. 4. 1 O.Spec.22b	1469, circa 25 March	
14. D.U.L. (26)	D.C.D. Car.iv, ff.199v-200r	1469, circa 25 March	
15. D.U.L. (27)	D.C.D. 4.10.Spec.25	c. 1470, 11 November	VII
16. D.U.L. (28)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 200r	c. 1470, 11 November	
17. D.U.L. (29)	D.C.D. 3.10.Spec.45a	1470, 11 November	VIII
18. D.U.L. (30)	D.C.D. 3.10.Spec.45c	1470, 11 November	
19. D.U.L. (31)	D.C.D. 3.10.Spec.45b	1470, 11 November	
20. D.U.L. (32)	D.C.D. Car. iv, ff.191v-192r	1470, 11 November	

⁶ The numbers in brackets follow the document numbers in Rodríguez Álvarez 1997: 11-12. The cartulary and register copies are in bold.

21. D.U.L. (36)	D.C.D. 3.10.Spec.44	1480, 2 November	ix
22. D.U.L. (37)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 191v	1480, 2 November	
23. D.U.L. (43)	D.C.D. 2.4.Spec.24	1490, 10 January	x
24. D.U.L. (44)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 105r	1490, 10 January	
25. D.U.L. (51)	D.C.D. 3.10.Spec.58	1500, 4 November	xi
26. D.U.L. (52)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 194r-v	1500, 4 November	
27. D.U.L. (55)	D.C.D. 1.6.Spec.46	no date specified	xii
28. D.U.L. (56)	D.C.D. Car. iv, f. 90v	no date specified	

ABBREVIATIONS

Car.:	Cartulary
D.C.D.:	Dean and Chapter Muniments
D.C.R.O.:	Durham County Record Office
D.D.C.L.:	Durham Dean and Chapter Library
D.U.L.:	Durham University Library
E.P.:	Eden Papers
Misc. Ch.:	Miscellaneous Charters
Pr.'s Rg.:	Prior's Register o Priory Register

