

Some Northern Dialect Features in Deloney's *Thomas of Reading*

María Fuencisla García-Bermejo Giner

UNIVERSITY OF SALAMANCA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It seems to be generally accepted that Thomas Deloney (1543?-1600) was the first English fiction writer to introduce non-standard features in his prose writings.¹ The beginnings of a tradition for their use in English literature had started about two centuries earlier with Chaucer and the Wakefield Master as is well known. In the 16th and 17th centuries, apart from cant and slang, the southwestern variety was most often represented in drama and poetry, probably because it was the one audiences were most familiar with, but Northern, Scottish, Irish and Welsh traits also appeared in poems and plays. Even if very often we must admit that this “imitated dialect” is just a literary convention, a stage dialect, in some cases it also provides us with information about real dialect features currently used at the time and thus it is a valuable source for historical dialectologists. As Wakelin (1972: 36) points out, the comments about dialect forms that 16th and 17th c. scholars made “should be read in conjunction with the imitated dialect of literature of the same period”.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse from a linguistic point of view some of the northern dialect² features which appear in Deloney's *Thomas of Reading* (c 1600) in an attempt to gather more information about the linguistic situation at the end of the sixteenth century and also assess this aspect of Deloney's production.

1.2.1 PREVIOUS STUDIES ON DELONEY'S NON STANDARD LANGUAGE: TORSTEN DAHL'S *INQUIRY INTO ASPECTS OF THE LANGUAGE OF THOMAS DELONEY* (1959)

Scholarly studies about Deloney did not really begin till 1912 with the publication of Mann's edition of his works and became more numerous once again after Lawlis³ produced a new edition of his novels in 1961. Between these two events scholars worked mostly on the literary aspects of his

¹ This is what Baker (1934-39.II: 175) tells us and is repeated by later scholars working on Deloney's style and language: “Deloney is probably the first English writer to spice his conversations with dialect and also the first to make play with malaprop.”

² As indeed the southern traits in *Jack of Newbury* and “A pleasant Dialogue between plaine Truth, and blind Ignorance” (Mann1912: 351-55) correspond to the archaetypal representation of the southwestern dialect: He resorts to suggesting the voicing of initial fricatives and to using *che, chill, cham, chud, ich*, etc. Wakelin1982: 5 and10, *Id.* 1986a: 15-16 and *Id.* 1988: 135-36 summarily deals with the dialect passages.

³ In Lawlis 1961: 345 ff. we find detailed bibliographical information about the earliest extant editions of Deloney's novels. All references will be to his edition unless otherwise stated. *Thomas of Reading* (hereinafter *T.R.*) was probably published c 1600 although the first reference we have is to the second edition, printed in 1602. There are two copies of the first extant edition of 1612. Lawlis uses the Huntington Library one collated with that in the British Library and those of 1623, 1632 and 1636. Mann uses the 1623 one. Reuter (1939: 23-27) described in a very thorough way the papers and books published in the first thirty years after Mann's edition.

prose fiction and ballads. Since then, research has continued on this part of Deloney's production⁴, together with its socio-historical contents⁵, a few studies have treated his sources⁶ or his influence on later writers⁷, but just a handful have been devoted to his style⁸ and language⁹.

As regards Deloney's use of non standard forms scholars have for the most part restricted themselves to general remarks about the realistic qualities of his dialogue. At most, mention has been made of the existence of passages in which southern and northern traits are represented. The presence of Italian and French characters whose foreign origin is shown by means of deviant spellings has also been remarked upon. In some cases these comments have not even included all the non standard varieties used by Deloney.

Only Dahl (1959: 41-43) has treated the non standard features in Deloney's novels with a bit more detail. He tried to develop Mann's early allegation (1912: 511) that "the dialect [of Jack of Newbury's prospective father in law] is of course only the conventional corruption of speech used by Elizabethan writers to represent dialects, e.g. by Shakespeare in *Lear*. But in *Thomas of Reading* Deloney makes a real attempt at northern English".

Dahl did not proceed beyond some general statements about a few of the dialect traits. Basically he just enumerated some of the deviant spellings and classified them as indicative of a southern or northern pronunciation. We have to take into account that at the time he wrote this paper he really did not have the means to carry out a more detailed analysis.

Some of his comments can be argued against. For instance, he asserted that: "we should note that Cuthbert of Kendal, who refers to 'my country man Hodgekins' ..., speaks ordinary English. Nor is Hodgekins's opponent, Wallis, according to Mann "none other than the hero of Scottish history" ..., characterized through linguistic peculiarities" (Dahl 1951: 42). This is not completely true:

- 1.- Wallis's origins are suggested by means of some lexical traits. For instance, he is the only character to use the Scottish expression "the valewof a plack or a bawby" (VIII 309).
- 2.- We find phonological and lexical peculiarities in the speeches of Cuthbert of Kendal that point to his northern origin:
 - (a) He uses northern *sale* (V 290) for *soul* ¹⁰.
 - (b) He (II 278) shares with Hodgekins (IV 286) and Wallis (VIII 310), and apparently also with the Smith (VIII 308), the expression *foul evil* ¹¹, associated with the north.
 - (c) His speeches are very colloquial, more so than those of the other clothiers, apart from Hodgekins's. He is the only one to use expressions such as *young giglote* (II

⁴ Interesting literary studies are those by Pratt 1951 and 1983, Howarth 1953, Smith 1968, Dorsinville 1973, Loretelli 1978, Wasserman 1980, Jordan, 1981, Domnarsky 1982, Simons 1983 and Devine 1986.

⁵ See about this aspect of Deloney's production, for instance, Mackerness 1951-52 (who treats Deloney's anti-Catholic attitude), Lawlis 1960, Schlauch 1963, Schall 1972, Margolies 1985, Mustazza 1989, Halasz 1991, Linton 1992 (who addresses feminist issues in his prose fiction), Shaw 1992 and also other general works like those of Baker 1934-39, Reuter 1961 and 1982, Shaw 1986 or Wright 1981.

⁶ About Deloney's sources see Mann 1912, Rollins 1935 and 1936, Roberts 1957, Schall 1972, Schlauch 1963, Mattern 1966, Patzold 1971 and 1972, Reuter 1961 and 1986 a & b.

⁷ Bache 1955, Donow 1966, Stewart 1987, Booth 1992 have traced other writers' indebtedness to him.

⁸ See Rollins 1935 and 1936, Reuter 1961 (both about euphuistic traits in his prose) and Wada 1986.

⁹ Among them Dahl 1951, Reuter 1939 and 1986, Gómez Soliño 1981 and 1982, Wada 1986.

¹⁰ Lawlis (1961: 383) initially thought that "Hodgekins ... apparently is the speaker" but a few years later (*Id* 1967: 576 n.30) he indicated that the word could be Cuthbert's although "Hodgekins or Martin[of Byram] could be speaking up for him". A reading of the paragraph in question and the linguistic evidence I am presenting convince me that Cuthbert is the speaker.

¹¹ The Smith uses *foul ill* where *ill* may be a variant of *evil*. The Oxford English Dictionary hereinafter OED) shows as its earliest and only citation for *foul evil* one in E. Topsell, *The history of foure-footed beastes* (1607). *Evil* as *illness, complaint*, appears in other compounds such as *yelow euyll*, i.e. *jaundice*, or as *fallyng evel levyll* i.e. *erysipelas*. Mann (1912: 552) mentions a citation from Dekker's *Worke for the Armourers* (1609) which suggests there was some kind of relationship between *foul evil* and the north: "Diseases now as common and as hurtful to them as the Foul Euil to a Northern Man, or the Pox to a French man"

277), *puling* [*baggage*] (II 279), *lobcocke* (V 288), *draggletail* (V 291, OED's first citation is from a 1705 text) or *tallow face*. (V291) apparently more widespread at the time but today associated with the north and East Anglia. The words *bonny Lasse* and *lassy* (OED's first citation for *lassy* is from an 1802 text and for the spelling *lassie* from a 1724 one) he sings in one of his "country Ligges" (V 289) are in common use in the north and the Midlands nowadays but not in the south.

2. DELONEY'S LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND.

So very little is known about Deloney's life that really we can only guess at what his reasons to use dialect forms were or as to how he learnt about them. A silk-weaver by trade, of French descent, he seems to have received a good education, as indicated by his translations from Latin and French. He also appears to have been a keen reader of contemporary literature and very interested in drama. Due to his profession he travelled through the country and learnt about customs and traditions¹² that he would later include in his writings. This may also have been the way in which he gained a first hand knowledge of regional varieties spoken at the time. His descriptions of London, Newbury, Reading or Westminster, as well as other places in southern England and East Anglia, show that he must have known them very well.

Scholars have traced his indebtedness in writing his ballads and novels to books on the history of England, geography and natural history, to Shakespeare, to euphuistic works like Fortescue's *The Forest*, to ballads and pamphlets and to contemporary drama and jest books. These last two sources are the most important as regards his dialect passages:

- (a) Collections of jests and jest-biographies such as *A Hundred Merry Tales*, *Westward for Smelts*, *The Life of Long Meg of West Minster*, *Wits, Fits and Fancies* and *Mery Tales*, *Wittie Questions and Quicke Answeres* contain stories Deloney made use of in his novels¹³. Deloney adapts them to suit his narrative purposes using drama techniques but in such a way that as Lawlis (1961: XVII) points out: "...the dialogue is far superior to that of the jestbooks: it rivals the dialogue in the better comedies of the London stage".

Dialect is basically used for comic purposes in jest books. However, in Deloney it also individualizes and makes stand out minor characters. Indeed the south-western variety of Jack of Newbury's father in law has a comic intentionality, but the northern traits in *T. R.* are sometimes just a means of characterization. The story of Hodgekins of Halifax would become just another episode in the novel if some of the characters involved in it did not have linguistic peculiarities.

- (b) As Baker (1934: 191) points out, Deloney "made an intelligent study of the methods employed on the contemporary stage". So much so that some chapters in his novels could easily be turned into plays and this is what happened at a later date when other writers, like Dekker, used them as sources for their own works. Therefore it does not seem farfetched to think that Deloney would also imitate its use of dialect. Northern traits were first used in drama around this time. Nathaniel Woodes introduced them in his morality *The Conflict of Conscience*, printed in 1581. A few years later we find them in Munday's et al. *Sir John Old Castle* and in Robert Greene's *The Scottish History of James IV*.

3.1. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

¹²Roberts 1957 treats this aspect in detail.

¹³Deloney may have actually read these collections or made use of orally transmitted material. There is no doubt that he was well acquainted with the jestbooks of his time. See about this subject especially Pätzold 1972. We must not forget the fact that he himself translated Des Périers' collection from the French as *The Mirrour of Mirth and Pleasant Conceits*. See about this Hassell 1955 and Reuter 1982.

Deloney tried to suggest the northern origins of four characters in *T. R.*: two clothiers, Hodgekins of Halifax (west Yorkshire) and Cuthbert of Kendal (south Westmoreland, present day Cumbria), a smith from the Halifax area and a thief, Wallis (who, as we have seen, may have been a Scots). Basically he does so by means of deviant spellings which imply a pronunciation different from that of the other characters. In a few occasions he recurs to well known forms which at the time must have already become traditionally associated with the north and therefore easily understood by his readers. *Giff* <if>, *cragge*, *sall* <shall>, *wald* <would>, *sick*¹⁴ <such> (Hodgekins (IV 286, VIII 311) and the Smith (VIII 308)) had been repeatedly used in the literary representation of northern speech since Chaucer. Deloney chose to ignore dialect syntax and morphology and kept dialect lexis to a minimum.

3.2 PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS.

I will attempt to show that the pronunciations underlying Deloney's variant spellings were currently used in the north in the late sixteenth c. When possible, it will be indicated whether contemporary scholars considered such traits as northern. Information as regards the traces of these pronunciations and spellings in the north of England in our days has been included in footnotes. Information has been gathered about the previous existence of the deviant spellings in Middle English texts, where their presence was not a literary convention, and, when possible, in *The Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (McIntosh et al. 1986; hereinafter LALME). Most of them, now traditionally considered Scottish, are in fact attested in northern, midland and even southern texts in the Middle English and late Middle English periods.

3.2.1 EARLY MODERN ENGLISH /i/ - NORTHERN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH /ai/ < ME iþ MAI (HODGEKINS (IV 286 ELSEWHERE MY).

Mai probably represents a pronunciation with /ai/. The process of diphthongization of ME iþ# had been fully achieved in northern English in Deloney's days, whereas in southern English it was still at the /ɔi/ stage¹⁵. Both Alexander Gill (1619) and Simon Daines (1640) equate Northern ME iþ# and Southern ME ai. OED gives a citation of *mai* from the northern *Cursor Mundi* (c 1340). Woodes used a similar variant, *may*, in *Conflict of Conscience* (1581).

3.2.2 EARLY MODERN ENGLISH /Uu/ - NORTHERN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH /au/ < ME U# FAULE (HODGEKINS (IV 286; ELSEWHERE FOULE).

In Deloney's days <au> could stand for /au, Au/ and also maybe for /Åu, Å: /, frequent from the very beginning of the 17th c. (Dobson 1968: §235 ff). OED does not record any such spelling for *foul*.¹⁶ Given the context in which it appears, "the faule eule", a confusion with a dialect form of *fall* is possible. ME U# had undergone a series of changes since 1400, to /Uu/ in the 1500s, to /UU/ in the 16th and 17th centuries, not culminating in /au/ till the 18th c.¹⁷ For Gill in 1619 /au/ for /u: / was a typical northern feature (Danielsson I: 15 & II: 102). The diphthongization took place in the north much earlier than in the south, as attested by the orthoepists, although not "north of a line running

¹⁴ It could just be the adjective *sick* i.e. *Mentally affected or weak* and not the northern form of *such*. The Smith says: "Are you sick fules? what the deell doo you meane to breake your crags?" (VIII 308)

¹⁵ About the development of ME iþ# see among others Dobson1968: §§137,140, Brook1975: §4.226, Ekwall 1975: §§69,70, Wyld1925: 223ff, Barber1976: 316, Wakelin: 1977: 38, 108. EDD records "[mai]" in parts of Sc. and in Nhb., Dur +ma#, m Cu., w. Cum. +mei, Wm., nm Yks. +ma#, nnwe & sw Yks, n. Lan. +mái, nw Lan, s. La. +ma#, sw Lan. +mái, n. Der., Lin., e. Suf., Ess., w. Som., w. Cor. SED IX.11.3 records a few cases of *my* which is [mɔ] generally in the north and [mæɔ] in I.Ma.

¹⁶ OED considers *faule* a frequent form of *fall* and EDD of *fold* (i.e. *farm yard*) also. An indicator of the confusion existing about the word underlying this spelling is the fact that OED records Robert Anderson's *Cumberland Ballads* (1802) *faul yeat*, as a variant of *fall gate* whereas EDD recording the very same citation considers it stands for *fold gate*.

¹⁷ About the diphthongization of ME U# see among others Jespersen1909: §8.27, Wyld1925: 230 ff, Ekwall1975: §102, Dobson1968: §160ff, Barber1976: 290-92, Gimson1989: §7.26. About the present day variants of ME U# see among others Wells1982: §§2.2.18, 3.1.1, 4.4.5, Wakelin1977: 88 & 90, Orton1978: Introd., Kolb1966: 254-66, Anderson1987: §3.3, etc.

from southern Cumbria to the Humber estuary" (Wells1982: §3.1.1) which leaves Hodgekins of Halifax and Deloney on the safe side.

3.2.3 OEA#: *SALE* (CUTHBERT, V 290), *SAUL* (HODGEKINS (IV 286) ELSEWHERE IN THE TEXT *SOULE*) *SEA*, *GAE*. (HODGEKINS (IV 286; ELSEWHERE *SO* AND *GO*).

OE **a#** remained as such in the north, and joined ME **a#** of other origins, but became ME **o#4** in the south. In Deloney's days it had become /æ: /, **E**: /, and in the north also /e: /, **E'** /¹⁸. The identity of ME**a#** and ME **e#4** is recorded by the 1600s in northern speech and northern orthoepists also attest before the 17th c. that of ME **e#4** and ME **e#j** =/i: /. Gill (1619) indicates (Danielsson1972: I.15 & II.102; Dobson1968: I.146)that /Eð/ was current in the north in words with OE **a#** .

*Sea*¹⁹ was common in the north and Scotland in the 16th c. There is just one citation for it in OED, in the Scottish *Legend of the Bishop of St. Androis* (1583). *Gae* is found as early as the 10th c. in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* (950) and it has come to be a traditional form in the representation of Scottish and northern English²⁰. OED gives us a few 16th c. citations, all from Scottish texts.

It may well be that Deloney was following a literary tradition when using the spelling *sale* for *soul* and was indeed trying to represent the current northern pronunciation of the word with *saul*. A variant with /au/ or /ʌu/ was common in the north at the time (Dobson 1968: §172). It resulted from ME **o#4** being raised through the influence of a following *w* which was then absorbed and the resulting late ME **u#** experienced the same developments we have discussed earlier²¹. OED indicates that *sale* existed in the 15th and 16th centuries but offers only one citation from *Cursor Mundi* (c 1340). We know of its presence in *A Hundred Merry Tales* (1526, among Deloney's sources; Blake1981: 56) as a northern form. LALME (II.256) records a few instances of this spelling in northern and north Midland texts. OED mentions the existence of *saule* since the 14th c. and considers it Scottish and northern since the 16th. It also records forms such as *sawl* since the 14th c. or *sawle* between the 13th and the 16th. In the ME period it is located in East Midland, West Midland, South West Midland, South Eastern, South Western and northern texts, as well as in Chaucer's *The Reeve's Tale*, in the speech of one of the northern students. LALME (IV 257) records it frequently in the north, north Midlands and East Anglia. From the 16th c. onwards the only OED citations are from Scottish texts.

3.2.4 OE A + NG: NORTHERN *LANG* (IV 286; ELSEWHERE *LONG*)

Lang represents a variant descended from OE a lengthened before the group *-ng* which remained as **a#** in the north, and was shortened again in ME²². The citations in OED correspond mostly to Scottish texts, but there are also some from northern, south West Midlands, south East Midlands and

¹⁸In Dobson's opinion (1968: §§98 ff). Among others see also Kniezsa 1983 for a full discussion of the development of ME**a#** in the north and Kolb1966: 208ff. The diphthongs and monophthongs resulting from what Wells (1982: § 3.1.5) calls the Long Mid Mergers seem to have displaced in this case "the traditional-dialect vowel, which (in words deriving from northern Middle English /a: /) is a front diphthong [æ̃ ð ~ æ̃ a ~ ea]" (*Ibid.*: § 4.4.4).

¹⁹In Mann's edition *sae*. We also have *mae* for Lawlis's *may* in this same paragraph, a possible "regularization" on the part of the printer. In Mann's edition there is also *meere* for *more* twice in the same sentence where Cuthbert of Kendal's uses *sale* (V 290). About the important role played by printers and editors as regards literary dialects see Blake 1989. EDG-Ind. records as variants descended from the form with OE **a#**: "[seð]" in ne Yks. +**se#**, sið, nw Yks., snw Yks +sia, sið, e. Yks +sið, m Yks., nm Yks +sið, sm Yks +sið; "[siA]" in e. Cum. +sið, w.Cum +sið, n. &e. Wm. +sið, s.Wm., n. Yks +sið, nw, nnw & snw Yks, nw Lan.; and "[s#]" in me. & s. Nhb., n.s. Dur. Rydland (1982: §§5.6, 9.10, etc.) confirms the existence of such pronunciations nowadays in South East Cumbria, SED (IX.10.7) only recorded a variant pronunciation of *so* in the north, [suð] in Yks.

²⁰EDG-Ind. records "[ga#]" in e & m. Cum., Wm. but w. Wm. + ga, snw. Yks., n. Lan., +**ge#**, guð, nw Lan., "[geð]" in m. Yks., "[gi#]" in se. Nhb., and "[gið]" in s. Sc. Nowadays such pronunciations seem to have disappeared, SED (VIII.7.9, VIII.6.2 (a)) records others descended from the southern form and only some with /a: / in La., We., Cu., and [A:] in Yks. Rydland (1982: §3.9, 7.10a) confirms the existence of variants with /a: /.

²¹Unfortunately SED did not record *soul* in the north and whereas we find confirmation of the pronunciation suggested by *saule* in EDD such is not the case for *sale*. In EDG-Ind. "[saul]" appears in parts of Sc. and in sw. Nhb, Wm., nnw, snw & sw Yks +soul, em. Lan., +sol, se Lan., s. Lan +soul, Glo. +sðul, se. Ken., [sʌul] in parts of Sc. and in nw. Der. and w. Wil; "[sa#]" appears in parts of Sc.

²²See about this northern trait among others Wakelin 1977: 90-91, Brook 1975: §§2.85, 4.72, *Id* 1978: 64, Trudgill 1990: 19ff. Dobson1968: §71 notes that the orthoepists only record *o* in *long*.

southern ones up to the 17th c. when we find it as a northern literary dialect feature in R. Brathwait's *A Strappado for the devil* (1615). Chaucer had been the first one to use it as a northern trait in *The Reeve's Tale* spelt *lange*. From the 18th c. onwards it has become a traditional form to represent the speech of Scottish or northern characters²³.

3.2.5 ME o5# - EARLY MODERN NORTHERN ENGLISH /y: /: *GUD*, *GUDE* (THE SMITH (VIII 308) AND HODGKINS (IV 286); ELSEWHERE *GOOD.*), *FULE* (THE SMITH, VIII 308; ELSEWHERE *FOOLE.*)

In Deloney's days *good* could be pronounced with /u: /, the normal development of ME o5#, and with /U/ by early shortening of ME o5# to identity with ME u& or by later shortening of /u: / < ME o5#²⁴. In the North words with ME o5#²⁵ were also pronounced with /y: / and /iu/. It seems likely that /y: /, /iu/ were respectively the sounds underlying these spellings, although for a reader not familiar with the northern dialect *gud* could stand for a common southern pronunciation.

OED shows citations for *gud* and *gude* mostly from Scottish texts but also from others written in southern, midland and northern dialects. The earliest examples of *gud* appear in *King Alisaunder* (13..) and in Hampole's Northumbrian poem *Prick of Conscience* (1340), which also has *gude*. As shown in LALME (II: 279-84 and IV: 187) *gud* and *gude* are attested in Scotland and northern England and there is the odd case here and there in the Midlands and East Anglia. The situation seems to change in the 16th c., both spellings apparently becoming a convention to indicate a northern or Scottish pronunciation. We find *gud* in W. Bullein's *Dialogue Against the Pestilence* (1564-78) where it marks the speech of "a beggar from Redesdale (Northumberland)" and it also indicates a northern or Scottish pronunciation in William Warner's *Albions England* (1589); Giles Du Wes in *An Introductione for to lerne to rede, to pronounce and to speke French trewly* (c 1532) says "Ye shall pronounce ... v after the Skottes, as in this worde *gud*". This seems to imply that such a spelling was generally identified with a variant /gy: d/. Holinshed (1577-86) uses *gude* in a sentence by a Scottish character and Nathaniel Woodes tries to show a Scottish or northern pronunciation with it in *Conflict of Conscience* (1581) (Blake 1981: 74-75). Both spellings also appear in texts where they are not a literary convention. *Gud* is present in T. Starkey's *England in the Reign of Henry the Eighth* (1538) and in G. Harvey's *Letterbook* (1573) (alternating with *good*) and we find *gude* in the *Acts of Chapter of the Collegiate Church of SS. Peter and Wilfrid, Ripon (Yorkshire)* (1504). *Fule*²⁶ is traditionally considered a Scottish form. OED provides us with two citations from northern texts, one in *Cursor Mundi* (a 1300) and another in *Alphabet of Tales* (c 1400).

As the centuries have gone by *gud*, *gude* and *fule* have become part of the traditional literary dialect spellings to indicate a northern or Scottish pronunciation.

3.2.6 LOSS OF INTERVOCALIC /v/: *DULE*, *EULE* (HODGKINS (IV 286; ELSEWHERE *EUILS*, *EUILL.*), *DEEL* (THE SMITH (VIII 308; ELSEWHERE *DIUEL*, *DIUELL.*).

These spellings seem to point to variants in which /v/, especially in the north, was early vocalized or lost. There are no citations for *eule* in OED or EDD, nor does LALME (IV: 162-63) record any similar spellings. We could consider it as representing *evle*, showing a form with vocalic /l̥j/ and /e/ as its stressed vowel. However in *T.R.* *u* for *v* is consistently found only in intervocalic position. It appears to be an analogous spelling to those in the previous section and to *dule*. Kökeritz (1953: 188-89), discussing Shakespeare's spellings *deale* for *devil* and *eale* for *evil*, mentions the presence of

²³EDD locates it in texts from Sc., N.Cy., Nhb., Dur., Lakel., Cum., Wm., Yks., Lan., nw Der. and Wor. In EDG a pronunciation "[laE]" is recorded in parts of Sc. and in Nhb., Dur., Cum. Wm., Yks. and Lan. Upton (1994: 248-49) gives [laE] for Cu., Yks., We., Nhb., Du., La. and Nf.

²⁴See Dobson 1968: §§ 36-38 and Ekwall 1975: §§15, 16.

²⁵See Gerson 1967 §5.4 for a full discussion of the development of ME o#j in the northern dialects. See also among others Dobson 1968: 159, and §154, n4, Wakelin 1972: 75 & 71, *Id.* 1977: 88, Gimson §7.78 and Wyld 1925: 235. In SED VI.13.1 (a & b), VII.8.7 and V.8.4, VI.5.18, VIII.3.2 we find variants of this word which can be traced back to these forms. Wakelin 1977: 88 and Wells: II, §4.4.4, as well as Orton 1978: Introd. ME and Anderson: §§3.32, 3.33, 3.35 indicate that the influence of RP is causing these variants to disappear.

²⁶SED VIII.93 only records one variant of *fool* in the north, [fiVl] in Nb.

rule for *revel* in *Midsummer's Night Dream* and in *King Edward the First* (1593) by George Peele. Given the confusion existing between *evil* and *ill*, this variant could represent *ill* and not *evil*²⁷.

In Deloney's days *devil* could be pronounced with /i, e, i:/²⁸. Although OED specifically indicates that *dule* is characteristic of Lan. and says that it was common in the 15th and 16th centuries it only records one citation in the northern *Destruction of Troy* (c 1400). It has become common in the traditional representation of northern dialects²⁹. /di:l/ would be the form suggested by *deel* which survived till the 19th c. in Scotland and the north country (see EDD).

3.2.7 NORTHERN /HW/ -SOUTHERN /KW/: *WHIAT* (HODGEKINS (IV 286; ELSEWHERE *QUIET*))

Whiat represents a pronunciation with initial /hw/ for /kw/ common in the north since ME times at least³⁰. The loss of the initial aspirate of /hw/ started as early as the 12th c. in the south and south-east Midlands and was accepted in the standard language towards the end of the 18th c. It has been retained to this day in the far northeast³¹

OED only records a similar variant, *whiet*, but offers no citations. Robert Greene had used *whayet* in *Scottish History of James IV* (1598) (Blake 1981: 76). Earlier on Woodes had suggested this same trait with the spelling *hwick* for *quick* in *Conflict of Conscience* (1581).

3.3 LEXICAL ANALYSIS

3.3.1 *FAUSE LIZAR LOWNES* (HODGEKINS, IV 286)

The combination *fause lownes*, that is, *false loons*, worthless persons, rogues, is considered "Chiefly Scottish and North. dial." by OED which presents citations of *lown*, *lowne* from Scottish and English texts since 1508³². OED records just one citation of *lizar*, with an unclear meaning, "We'll to the harning drive, when in fresh lizar they get spleet and rive" (1730, W. Starrat in a collection of Scottish poems edited by A. Ramsay). Mann (1912: 553) thinks it stands for *lazar* but we have found no confirmation of the existence of such a variant for this word. Lawlis (1967: 572) says it may represent *leasow*, i.e. *pasture*, *meadow*, a word for which EDD gives variants such as *lisor*, *lezzar*, *lezzar*, *lezzur* in Midland and Scottish texts. Deloney tried to make clear the meaning of Hodgekins's dialect by preceding and following it by paragraphs in which the narrator or another character paraphrased what he said. Related to *fause lizar lownes* we read: "by the reason of **false** borderers and other **euill minded** persons ..." (IV 285), "... by **theeves** your clothes are so often stolne from you, ... I thinke it not amisse to ordaine this death for such **malefactors** ..." (IV: 286). (Boldface not in the original). Thus, we could also consider the possibility that *lizar* might be related to *lease*, i.e. *to tell lies*, to *leeser*, i.e. *a destroyer*, *a loser*, to an adjectival use of *leisure*, or even, in

²⁷OED indicates that "Although *ill* is not etymologically related to *evil*, the two words have from the 12th c. on been synonymous, and *ill* has often been viewed as a mere variant or reduced form of *evil*. This esp. in Sc., where *v* between two vowels early disappeared, and *devil* ... became *deil* ... so that *evil* might have become *eil*, hence, in 15th -16th c. Sc., *euil*, *evyl* is often found written where *ill* was the word pronounced". Probably for this reason in Sc. and the north *ill* appears in "popular names of diseases or distempers" such as *Falling-ill*. OED gives us several citations for this use, *foule ill* in P. Holland, *Plutarch's Philosophie* (1603), *falling ill* from a 1652 poem in J. Watson's *A Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems* (1711) and from a 1893 Northumberland glossary, *milk ill*. As a matter of fact in *T.R.* together with *faule eule* and *foul evil* we also have *foule ill*, used by the Smith (VIII 308). The closest pronunciation mentioned in EDD is "[ee'ul]" in w. Som., spelt *ill*. Unfortunately SED did not record any forms of *evil* and only one of *ill* in the north, [Ç:] in La.

²⁸About contemporary forms of *evil* and *devil* see Dobson §§9 & n2, 10, 11, 75, 326, 334, 400.

²⁹EDD locates it in 19th c texts of n.Cy., Cum., Wm., w. Yks and Lan. where apparently it implied [diul] or [diɔl]. Such forms seem to have disappeared nowadays. See SED VIII.8.3 and VIII.1.20 which record [divl, dEvl, d:ivl, dÇvɔl, d^çi:vl, dEvl]. No instances of variant forms of *evil* appear.

³⁰Wakelin 1982: 15 says that this pronunciation existed "even as early as late Northumbrian". See also OED's statements under "Q" and Wells 1982: §4.4.9.

³¹EDD records "[hwaiɔt]" in Sh.I. and Wm. and "[waiɔt]" in s. Dur., n.e.m.&w. Cum, nnw &snw. Yks. and n. Lan. SED did not record any forms of this word in the north. However in words like *quarrel*, *queen*, *quey* or *quick* (SED: IV.4.6, III.13.9, III.1.5, IV.8.6, VI.7.11,12, etc.) we find initial /w/ in Cu., Du., We., La. Yks. and Db. and /hw/ in Du. See also Orton 1978: Ph212, 222, 223 and Anderson 1987: Map 112. Rydland (1982: 9.16.1a) records /wai-ɔv/ in Cumbria.

³²In EDD *lown* appears in texts from Scotland, N.Cy., Nhb., Nhp, and Shr. transcribed as [lu#n].

sense, to a combination of *lazy*, in the north *bad*, *wicked* and *lither*, in Scotland, the north and the West Midlands, *idle*, *lazy*, *slothful*.

3.3.2 BOARING THEIR EYNE (HODGEKINS (IV 286)

A possible meaning of this expression, not recorded in OED, could be *straining their eyes*. *Eyne* is a common form for *eyes* in the North and west Midlands descended from the weak OE plural. In EDD we find under *Bore* vb. the expression heard in Stf. *To bore one's eyes out*: i.e. *To tire the eyes*. OED records under *Glower* a citation from the Scottish W. Guthrie's *Sermons* (a 1665) which implies a similar meaning, "Their the poor men stood gazing and glowering out their eyne, to behold the place where he ascended".

4. CONCLUSION.

Deloney gives us a truthful representation of northern speech forms at the very end of the sixteenth century. Some of them have come to be considered more representative of Scotland but back in Deloney's days they were also in use in the north of England. Even taking into account the always conjectural nature of orthographical interpretation, it seems that he is accurate enough in his representation of northern pronunciations. He adds to our knowledge of contemporary dialect lexis. Thomas Deloney gave us meaningful clues about northern English at the turn of the 16th c. Wakelin (1986b: 741) stated that the dialectology of the Early Modern English period "has been largely neglected in our day, since the 'evidence' available is regarded as difficult or impossible to evaluate". A thorough and wide ranging study of the data contained in the drama, poetry and prose of this period is possible. It would contribute to a better knowledge of the Early Modern English non standard varieties.

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