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MODAL *DAREN'T* AND *DURSTN'T* IN DIALECTAL ENGLISH

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Section 4 of Book IX of Eugen Dieth and Harold Orton's *A Questionnaire for a Linguistic Atlas of England* (Leeds, 1952) is designed to elicit various forms of the modal auxiliaries, including *shall*, *will*, *ought*, *should*, *must*, *may*, and *might*. The last two questions are on *dare* in its modal form and in a pro-predicate position. The questions are phrased as follows:

- IX.4.17. Your neighbour would like to go and have a drink of beer, but he is so henpecked that he . . . DARE† NOT†.
18. He wanted to go for a drink, but was so henpecked that he . . . DURST† NOT†.

It will be noted that both the auxiliary and the negative in the suggested responses to both questions are marked with the dagger that "denotes that the word has been inserted for its morphological importance" (*Questionnaire*, p. x). Fieldworkers were instructed to obtain answers including these words, even if the first response of the informant was different and considerable pressure, to the point of suggesting the word, was needed to bring out the desired forms. This accounts for the fact that all but 7 of the 311 localities recorded in the *Survey of English Dialects* (henceforth referred to as *SED*) produced answers of the desired form to question 17, and all but 22 to question 18. Since not all the records are yet available in print, I am not sure how much pressure was necessary to produce these results, but none of the 150 responses from the 75 localities whose records are published in Volume I of *SED*¹ shows pressure or suggestion, and only two out of 24 of my own Norfolk records do. In view of the peripheral status of *dare* in the English modal system, the above results are rather surprising. They indicate that this usage is far more prevalent in dialectal than in standard English.

Before going on to look at the many different forms of this auxiliary and their complex distributions, let us first review its history and present status. Like most of the present-day modals, *dare* belonged to the class of preterite-present verbs in Old English: verbs which in Germanic came to use an original strong preterite as a present, and formed a new preterite with a dental suffix, after the manner of the

weak verbs. Thus in West Saxon the third person singular forms of *dare* were present *dearr* and preterite *dorste*. In Northumbrian there were singular forms in *darr*, in which the original *æ*, instead of breaking, was apparently retracted to *a*.² Preterite forms like *durste* are found, which derive their vowel from the present plural *durron*. These would give normal modern forms *dar* (*dare* shows lengthening in Early Modern English) and *dorst* or *durst*. Like the other modal auxiliaries, *dare* takes the reduced (enclitic) form of the negative particle, which then gives [dɛ:ənt, dɛrənt] as the standard form of the answer to IX.4.17, and [dɛ:sənt, dɛrsənt] to IX.4.18. The *OED* cites these as "still in common use" and actually preferred in the North to the new analogic forms *dares*, *dared*, especially when followed by the infinitive without *to*.

Dare has several times been classified above as a modal auxiliary. The distinguishing criteria for this small closed set of verbal auxiliaries may be stated as:

1. Absence of concord-marking suffix on the third person singular form of the present, e.g. *he can, will, shall, may, must, dare*.
2. Occurrence with the enclitic form of the negative particle *not*, e.g. *he can't, won't, shan't, mustn't, daren't (mayn't for some speakers)*.
3. Inversion with the subject nominal, e.g. *can he?* etc.
4. Occurrence with the following main verb in base form without the infinitive marker *to*, e.g. *he can come*, etc.

What might be called the "hard core" modals regularly show all these features; they are *will/would, shall/should, can/could, may/might, must*. The other three auxiliaries usually considered to belong to the class evince some irregularities. Thus *ought* most commonly takes *to* with the infinitive, and popular speech, in America at least, is coming to prefer *didn't ought* or even *hadn't ought to oughtn't*, or else to substitute the synonymous *shouldn't*. Both *need* and *dare* have homonymous counterparts which are transitive verbs, as in *he needs/needed money, he dared the dangerous climb*. *Dare* can also be intransitive, as in *to dare greatly is the mark of a hero*. These full or lexical verbs partake of none of the characteristics of the modals, as listed above. But when they are in construction with another verb, they show divided usage on all four characteristics:

need he go?	does he need to go?
you needn't bother	you don't need to bother
I don't think he need go	I don't think he needs (to) go
dare he eat a peach?	does he dare (to) eat a peach?
I daren't interrupt him	I don't dare (to) interrupt him
I don't think he dare do it	I don't think he dares (to) do it

The semantic differences between modal and full verb, especially with *dare*, are subtle but obvious. The modal meaning of *dare* has been variously stated as "in the speaker's view the predication has no undesirable consequences";³ "the event is entirely consistent with status as a proper member of the community: doing the deed involves no jeopardy";⁴ "inherent moral ability or justification."⁵ The full verb meaning, according to the *OED*, is "to have boldness or courage (to do something); to be so bold as." Forms which have some but not all of the modal markers are, for me at least, ambiguous. Thus *I don't think he dare do it* means something like "I consider that the rules of his community are such that if he did it he would suffer social consequences"; while *I don't think he dares to do it* means "I don't consider him brave enough to do it." But *I don't think he dares do it* and *he doesn't dare do it* are ambiguous, though in both cases inclining toward the full verb (or, in Twaddell's term, catenative⁶) meaning. Actually *dare* in the full modal use, except in the set phrase *I dare say*, is quite rare in standard English—probably considerably rarer than it was when the *OED* citations were collected (the latest is 1883).⁷ It is not so much that the catenative construction is replacing the modal (as, for example, *have to* is replacing *must*); this, as we have seen, would effect a change of meaning as well as of syntax. Rather, the particular combination of semantic constraints on the predication of the main verb—"adequate stable potentiality" for Joos⁸ and "predication not prevented by speaker's view of the environment" for Ehrman⁹—seems to be less in demand. In any case, as with *need* as well, the negative forms are used more than the positive; for this reason it was wise of Dieth and Orton to phrase IX.4.17/18 so as to elicit negative responses.

This brings us to the actual phrasing of the questions and its influence on the responses. In the first place, they are not actually questions, but incomplete sentences to be completed by the informant. This is undoubtedly the best—perhaps the only—way to directly elicit grammatical features of this sort, which are notoriously harder to get than lexical items. Its success depends on conditioning the informant so that he responds immediately without taking thought, and yet stays within the pattern that is expected—in this case by producing some kind of modal or quasi-modal response, rather than some quite natural but grammatically irrelevant extension of the narrative. Since IX.4.17/18 come at the end of a long string of questions of this sort, the informants were well conditioned to the pattern and produced almost no irrelevant responses. The wisdom of putting these, probably the most tricky of the modal auxiliary questions, at the end of the section was well rewarded.

Looking more closely at the questions, we can observe that they call for the modal *dare* in pro-predicate position; that is, the main predication, *go and have a drink of beer*, is introduced in the opening clause of 17 and is thus implied in the last clause. This means that many of the responses fail to inform us about whether or not the informant's usage complies with the fourth criterion for modal auxiliaries given above: i.e. whether or not he would use the infinitive marker *to* with a following verb.¹⁰ Nor can we tell what his practice with regard to inversion with the subject would be. We are thus left with only two of the four criteria of modal status: absence of the concord marker in the present and the enclitic negative. Only the latter applies to the preterite forms in the responses to 18, since there is no concord in the preterite. Fortunately the enclitic negative is one of the most reliable markers of auxiliary, if not always modal, status; only the copula and (decreasingly) the full verb *have* are exceptions to the rule that the enclitic occurs only with auxiliaries.¹¹ We are thus able to say that *dare* is still a modal, at least in the negative form, for all but five of the 309 informants who answered IX.4.17. Those five, all but one from south of the Thames, produced some variant of either *don't dare* or *doesn't dare*.¹² Usage is somewhat less unanimous in the preterite: in addition to these five, fourteen informants who used the enclitic negative in responding to 17 used a periphrastic form, usually *didn't dare*, in answering 18. Once again the majority, all but two in fact, were from south of the Thames.¹³ One informant, from Uffington in Berkshire (3302), had it both ways: his response was *didn't durstn't!*

The next point of interest in examining the form of the questions is the manner in which they are planned to get at tense distinctions. Successful elicitation of a preterite form in 18 depends wholly upon the informant's sensitivity to tense sequence and his perception that *wanted* has been substituted for *would like* and *was* for *is*. These are not the most reliable of cues, since *would like* is itself past-marked formally, if not semantically, and the use of *was* in this sentence is a bit odd—the sentence is at the least on the borderline of the class in which strict tense sequence is not observed (e.g. *my neighbour refused to contribute because he is stingy*). Even with the past-marked *wanted* in the first clause, I would naturally use *is* in the second unless my neighbour no longer was my neighbour, or was dead, widowed, or divorced. The contrast between the two questions would have been more obvious if strong temporal adverbs had been inserted, perhaps *often* in 17 and *last night* in 18. This is especially so since the questions are separated by quite an interval from other questions, notably those in section 3 of Book IX, in which a pattern of transforming the responses for tense is

set. In any case, I feel that the tense difference is not sufficiently strongly marked for us to accept unquestioningly that 161 informants, more than half of those recorded, have identical forms for the present and past forms of modal *dare*, as their responses would seem to indicate. There is no doubt, as will be discussed below, that the precarious state of modal *dare* is working to neutralize the tense distinction, but before we can conclude that this is as widespread as appears from the *SED* data, we will need more evidence.

With these cautions about the reliability of the data in mind, we are ready to examine the forms themselves.¹⁴ The first impression one gets is of great variety of form, both phonological and morphological, and exceedingly complex, almost capricious, distribution. In fact, so confusing were the data on first inspection that after a few tentative attempts at structuring them I set them aside in something approaching despair. It was only when the opportunity was afforded to delegate the work of sorting to a computer that I felt able to approach the problem again. From the computer sorting several significant patterns have emerged that otherwise might have been overlooked. Therefore, since the method has had an effect on the results, a brief description of it is relevant here.¹⁵

It was first necessary to reduce the phonetic variation of the recordings to a quasi-phonemic transcription and code the results for the working alphabet of the computer. This process, while certainly not rigorously phonemic, afforded at least a diaphonic basis for comparing different forms, which is satisfactory for the primarily morphological concern of this study, however inadequate it may be for a more detailed phonological analysis. The following conventions were used:

<i>Vowels:</i>	<i>Consonants:</i>
[ɑ] and [a] = A	[d̥], [t̥], [t̥] = T
[ɛ] and [æ] = E	[b̥], [ɹ̥], [r̥], [r̥] = R
[i] = I	[ʔ] = ?
[ɔ] and [ɒ] = O	
[ɔ̃] = U	
[ɜ̃] = 3	
[ə] and [ʌ] = @	

Length, whether marked [ː] or [ˑ], was coded :

r-colouring of vowels, whether alveolar or uvular (velar), was coded R, but distinguished from consonantal /r/ by position.

Stress, which was marked by some of the fieldworkers, was omitted. The fieldworkers also seem frequently to have neglected to mark syllabic /n/, so this distinction is disregarded.¹⁶

It was found that all the forms could be fitted into an overall schema of twelve positions or slots, as follows:

1. always D
2. stem vowel, A, E, I, O, U, 3, @
3. vowel length, :
4. *r*-colouring on stem vowel
5. consonantal R or non-syllabic @
6. *r*-colouring on non-syllabic @, or superscript @ on stem vowel
7. length or consonantal R after *r*-coloured non-syllabic @
8. S, Z, or D
9. syllabic @ after S, Z, D
10. always N
11. vowel
12. final T, D, or ?

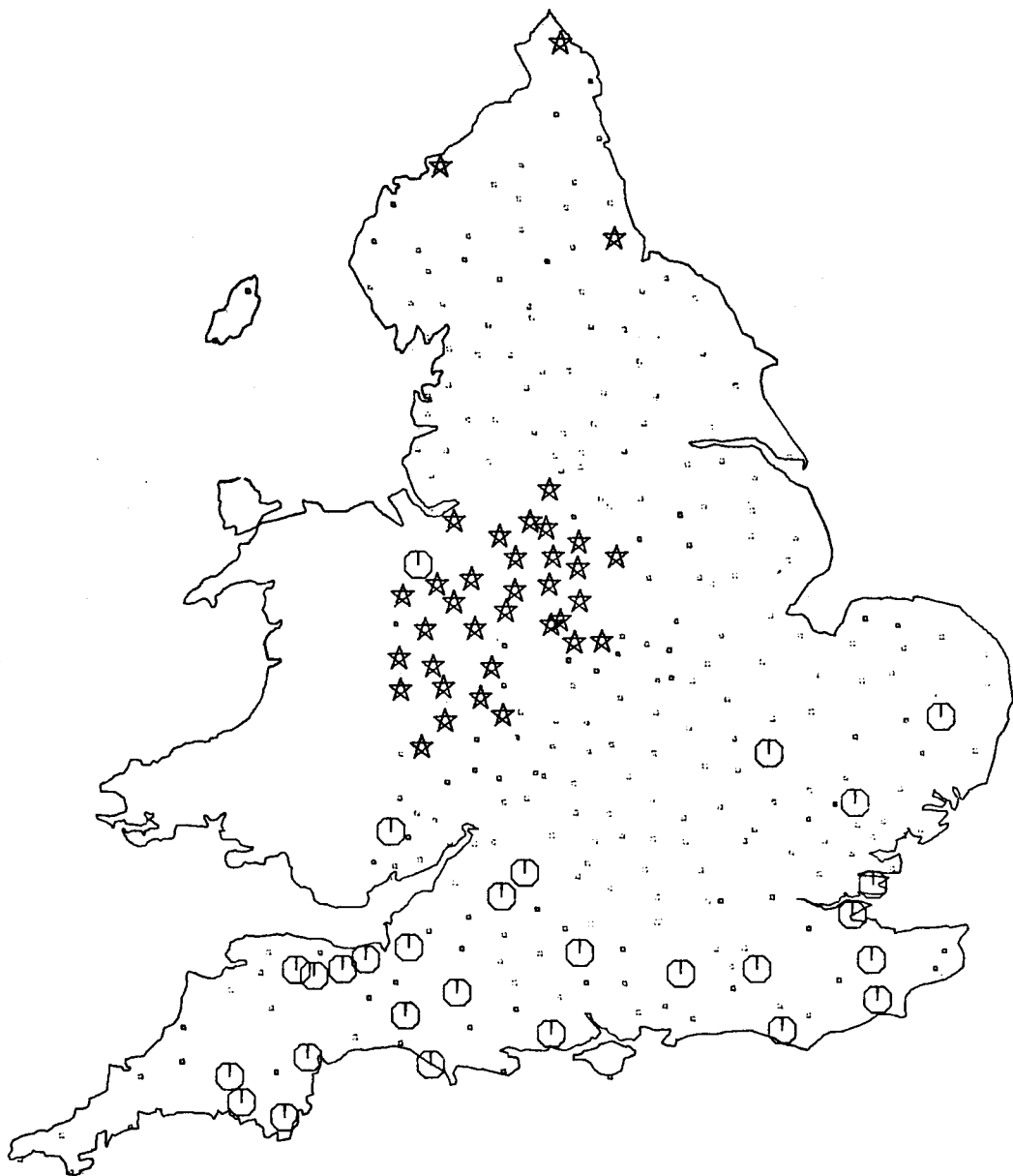
Any slot except 1, 2, and 10 may be blank. It will be noted that R in either slot 4 or slot 6 indicates an *r*-coloured vowel or diphthong, while R in 5 or 7 indicates a consonantal R. Both may, of course, be present. The schema may thus be represented in this fashion (∅ means blank):

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
D	A	:	R	R	R	R	S	@	N	@	T
	E	∅	∅	@	@	:	Z	∅		O	D
	I			∅	∅	∅	D			E	?
	O						∅			∅	∅
	U										
	3										
	@										

All varieties of both present and preterite forms may be transcribed in terms of this schema. A few examples will illustrate the coding. Present forms (responses to question 17) are on the left and preterite forms (question 18) on the right.

0101 [daʙ:nə]	= DA:R	N@	[dɔʙ:snt]	= DO:R	S NT
0306 [da:dnt]	= DA:	D NT	[dosnt]	= DU	S NT
0503 [dæəndnt]	= DE @	D NT	[daʔ:snt]	= DA:R	S NT
0606 [da:ɪənt]	= DA: R	@NT	[dosnt]	= DU	S NT
1107 [dɛ:əʔ:dnə]	= DE: @R:	DN@	[dəʔ:dnə]	= D@:R	DN@
4004 [dɛəʔrnt]	= DE @RR	NT	[dɛəʔrsnt]	= DE @RRS	NT

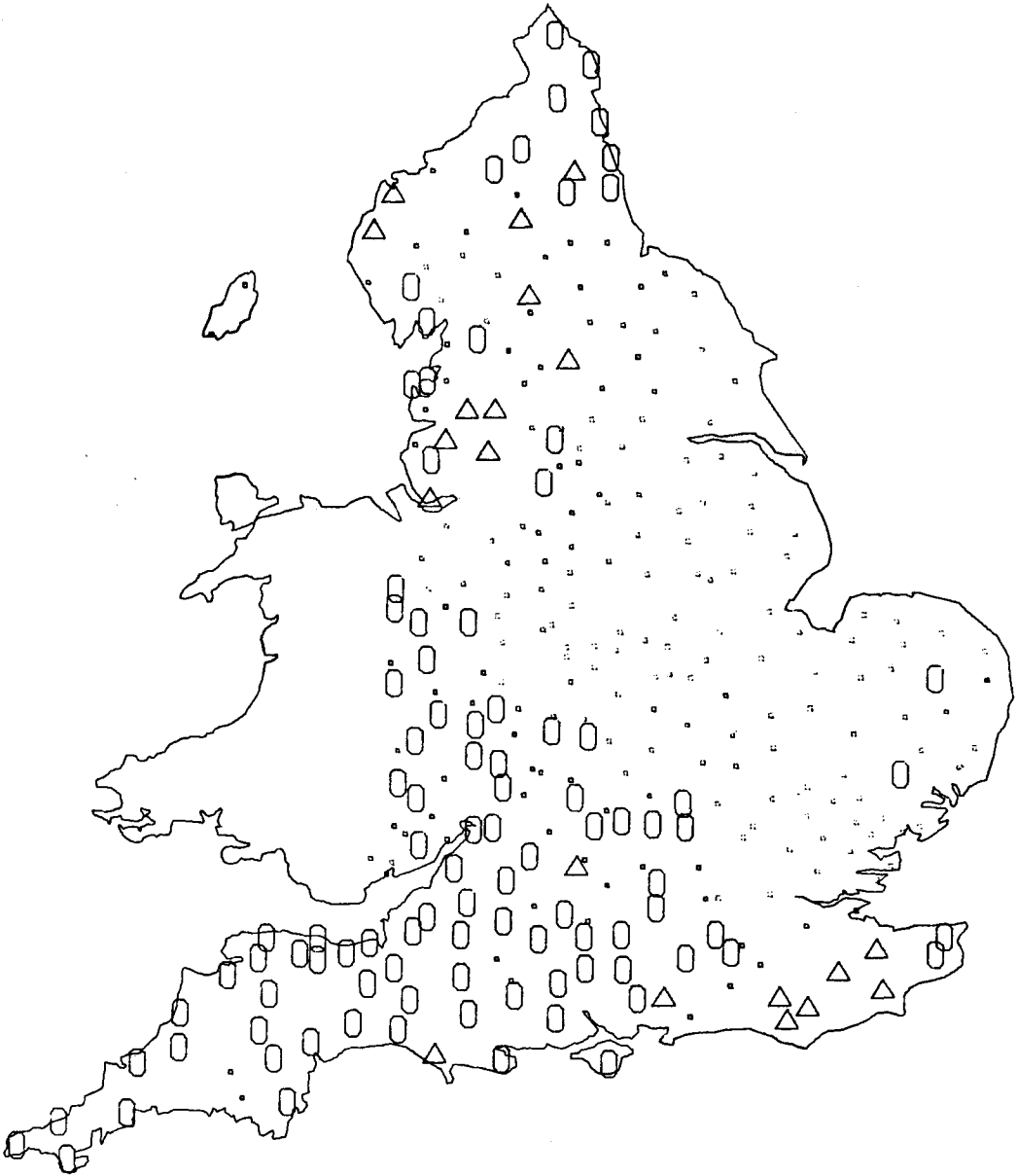
Aligning the forms in this fashion allowed the computer to be easily programmed to sort out any given feature or combination of features with no danger of confusion or ambiguity. But since the forms with blank spaces are a bit difficult to read, they will be closed up in the



MAP 1 NEGATIVE PARTICLE

☆--No FORMS

○--N FORMS



MAP 2 R AND R-COLOURING
O--FORMS WITH R-COLOURING
△--FORMS WITH CONSONANTAL R

citations given in the rest of this paper, with the added convention that when R indicates *r*-colouring and when [ə] appears as a superscript in the original records, they will be indicated by a raised R and @ respectively. Thus the forms given above would be cited as follows:

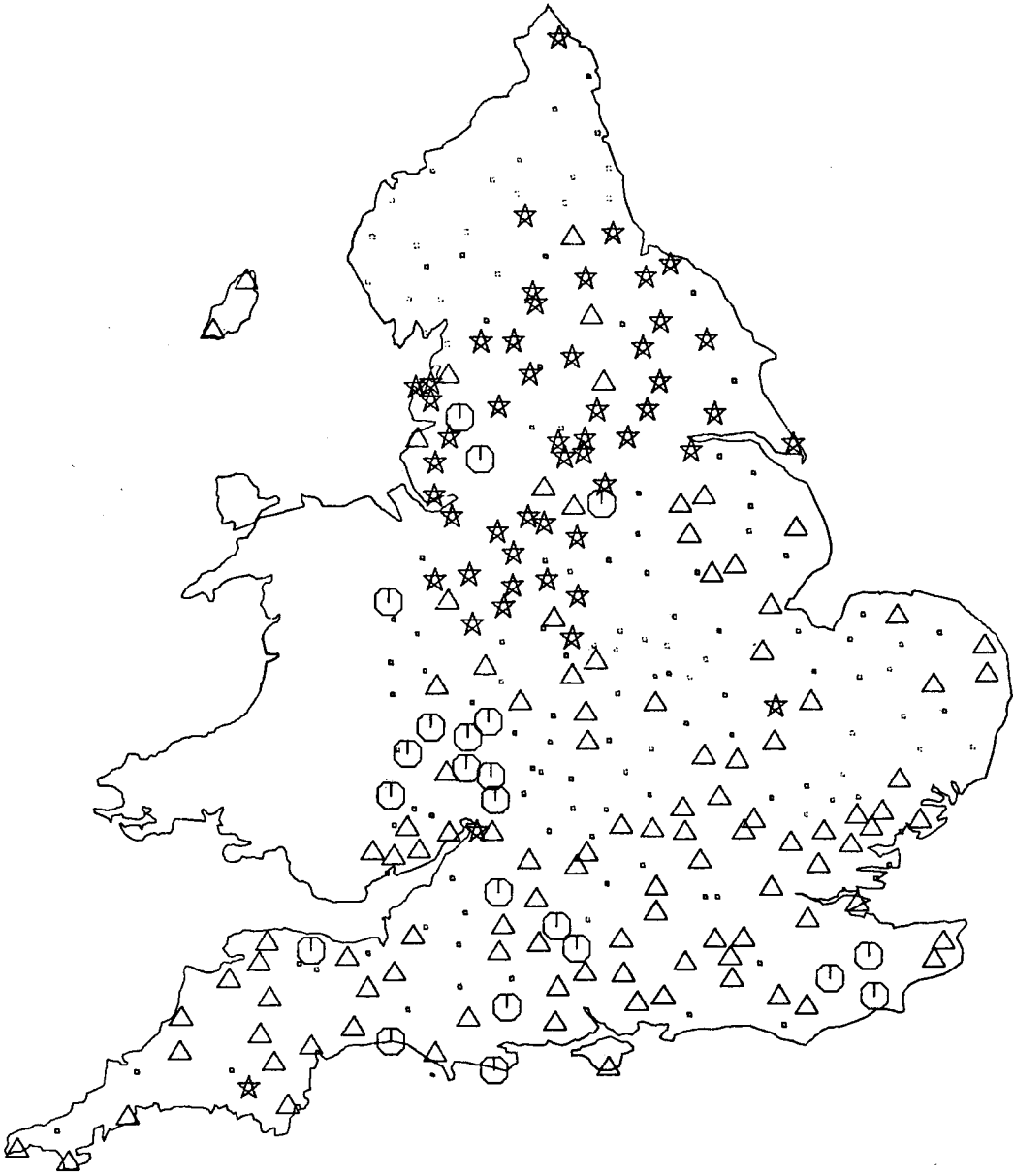
0101 DA: ^R N@	DO: ^R SNT	0606 DA:R@NT	DUSNT
0306 DA:DNT	DUSNT	1107 DE:@ ^R :DN@	D@: ^R DN@
0503 DE@DNT	DA: ^R SNT	4004 DE@ ^R RNT	DE@ ^R RSNT

The computer sorting produced a great deal of information of varying degrees of interest. I have selected the following points for discussion here, though they do not necessarily exhaust the interesting facts derivable from this set of data:

1. Form and distribution of the negative particle.
2. Distribution of localities showing *r*-colouring or consonantal R in one or both forms.
3. Distribution of localities where informants gave identical responses for both questions—
 - a. present forms
 - b. preterite forms
 - c. mixed forms.
4. Distribution of stem vowels.
5. Distribution of S in slot 10.
6. Distribution of Z and D in slot 10.

On *a priori* grounds we might expect patterned geographical distribution in items 1, 2, and 4, which deal with features more or less subject to regular phonological or morphological development. In items 3, 5, and 6, on the other hand, the operative factor is more likely to be analogy or levelling, and the geographical distribution less clearly patterned. This is in general what we find.

For those who like their isoglosses neat and consistent, the negative particle is most satisfactory. The alternatives involved are, in the computer notation described above, N@, NT~@NT, and N (presumably syllabic). The distribution of N@ agrees almost exactly with that shown in the responses to IX.5.2, *he doesn't*, and IX.7.10, *she isn't*: it occurs in a clearly defined area in the West Midlands, including Cheshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire, and northern Hereford (see Map 1).¹⁷ In this area the enclitic negative derives from the OE *ne* rather than from the newer *not*. Forms with syllabic N are not so compactly localized, though 22 of the 28 localities reporting present forms with N are south of the Thames and none are in the North (Map 1). Since they all (with the single exception of 0704) occur in NT



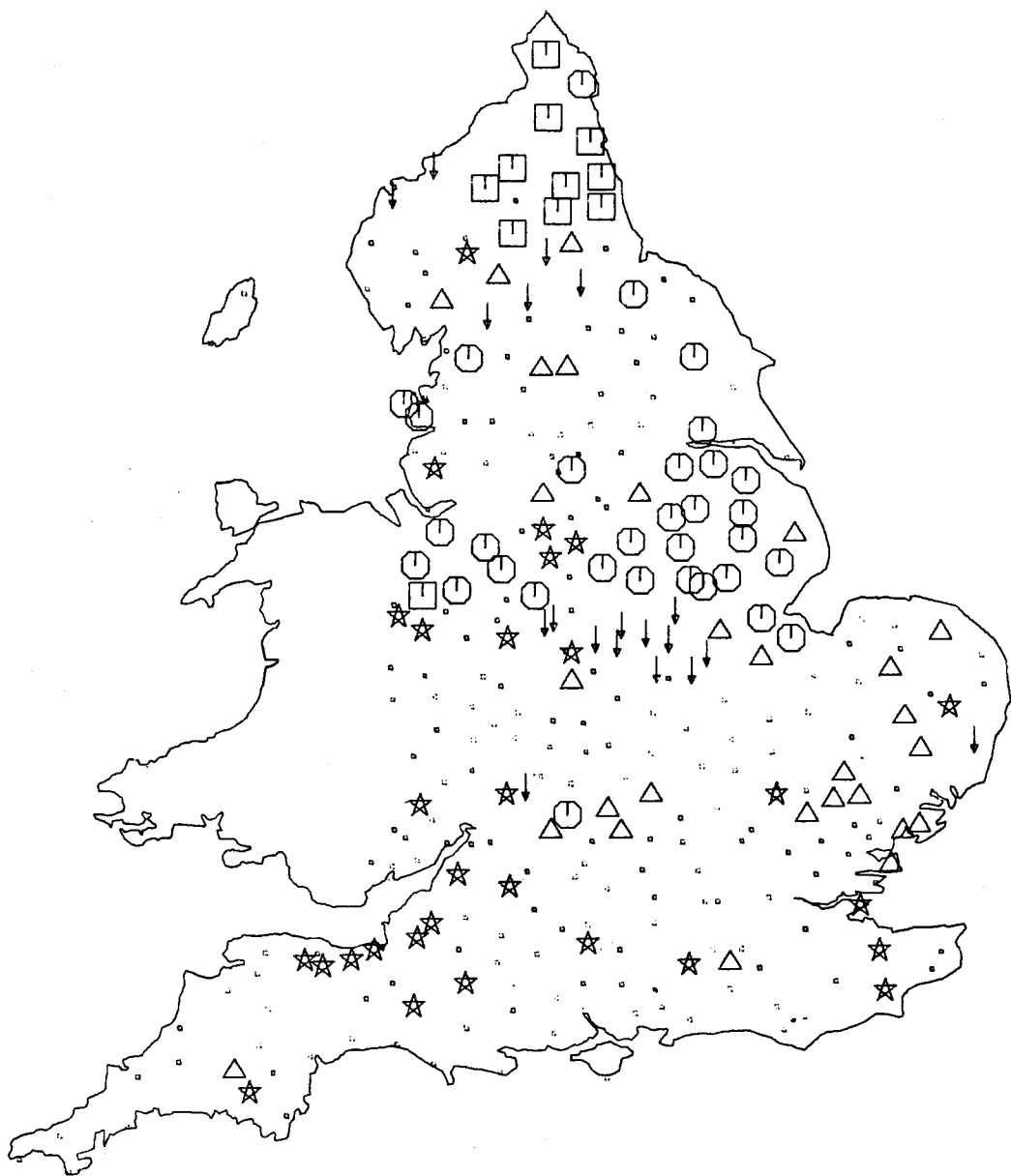
MAP 3 ETYMOLOGICAL PRESENT

☆--FORMS WITH A
 △--E FORMS; ○--3, © FORMS

rather than N@ territory, N may be assumed to result from dropping the final T in clusters like RDNT, SNT, or DNT, rather than from loss of final @. Concentration of these forms in the South and especially the Southwest is paralleled in the responses for *she isn't*, for which the standard form of the particle is N throughout Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and southern Somerset. For *he doesn't*, on the other hand, only three forms in N are reported, all from southern Somerset (3108, 3109, 3113). The difference is probably to be accounted for by the fact that the prevailing form of *he doesn't* in this region is some variation on *he don't*, the final cluster of which is not complex enough to cause loss of final T.

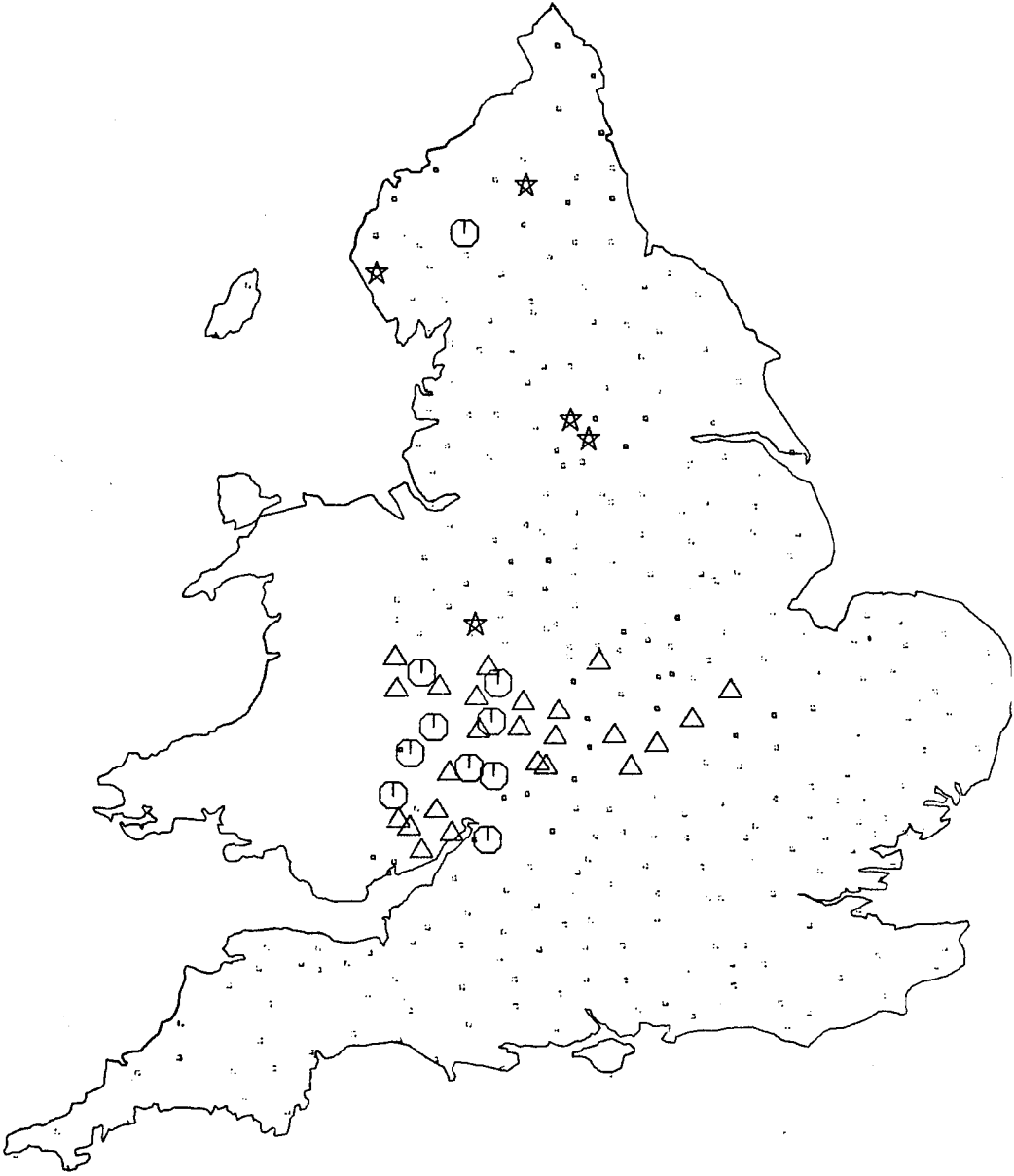
The distribution of *r*-coloured vowels and diphthongs and of consonantal R also shows the expected regional patterning. In general, they occur in the North, except for Westmorland and the East Riding, and southwest of a line running southeast from the Welsh border in northern Shropshire, skirting south of London and across Kent (see Map 2). Since the distinction between *r*-coloured vowels and post-vocalic R is phonetically a delicate one on which fieldworkers cannot be expected to be uniform, these two features can hardly be separated, but for what it is worth we may note two foci of consonantal R, one in southern Lancashire and the other in Sussex and central Kent. In any case, no special conclusions with regard to the presence or absence of *r*-colouring and consonantal R in these words are indicated; they occur just where we would expect them in words having etymological /r/, and are replaced by a central off-glide or vowel length or both in the appropriate *r*-less areas.

Before we can look at the distribution of the stem vowels, we must take account of the fact that in more than half the localities the responses to both questions were identical or differed only in non-significant phonetic details. In 73 cases it seems to be the preterite that has been extended to the present, since they have either S or D, which must be considered as preterite markers, the first deriving from the historic preterite *dorste*, *durste*, and the latter from a new weak preterite of the general form *dared*. In 88 cases, on the other hand, no S or D is present, so we may conclude that the present form has been extended to the past. But analogy has been at work in other ways as well. Forms such as DA:SNT (0621), DASNT (1308), DA:SN@ (0806), and DA:^RSNT (0501, 0502) for both present and past show the vowel of the present and the S of the past, while forms like DURNT (0203), D3:^RRNT (0508) and D@:^RNT (3105, 3803) show the vowel of the preterite without the S. These blends seem to indicate a confusion as to the stem of the verb when the present and preterite fall together. But on the whole the levelled forms (if indeed they are that, and not simply the result of



MAP 4 ETYMOLOGICAL PRETERITS

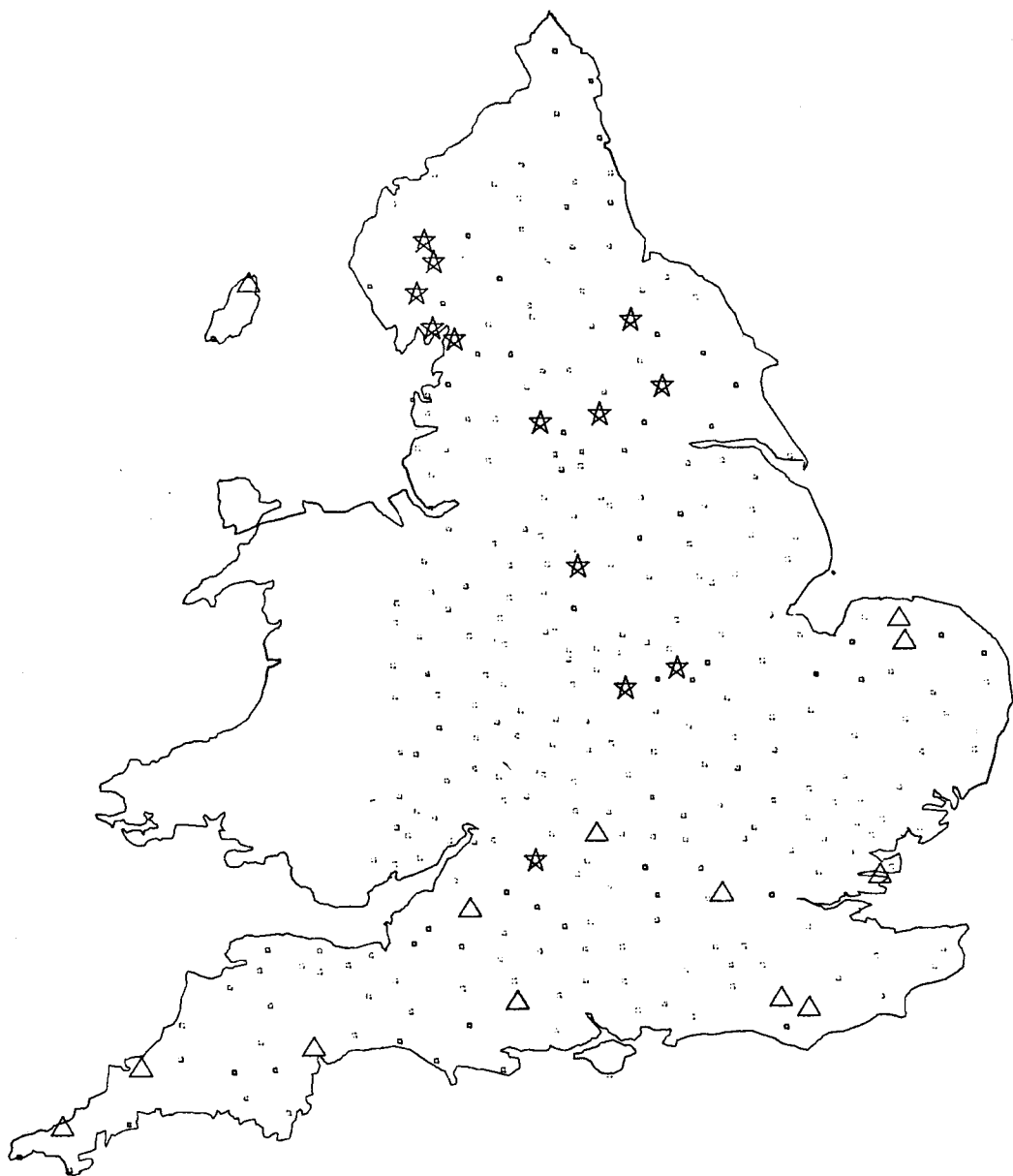
○ --0 FORMS; ◻ --0: FORMS; ↓ --U FORMS
 △ --3, © FORMS; ☆ --3:, ©: FORMS



MAP 5 ANALOGICAL PRETERITS

☆--FORMS WITH A:

△--E:, E© FORMS; ○--3:, ©: FORMS



MAP 6 BLENDS

☆--FORMS WITH A:, A
△--FORMS WITH E:, E©

misinterpretation of the question, as suggested above) remain etymologically consistent, with back vowels U and O and central @ and 3 appearing with S, front vowels E and once I with D in the South and A with D in the North, and E or A when neither S nor D is present.

No particularly significant regional patterns of levelled forms seem to appear; the localities reporting them are intermingled among those having two distinct forms. It is possible that the same kind of mingling might occur even within the same village. But there do seem to be some regional favourites for the levelled form when it does occur. Thus in Northumberland and again in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire the prevalent levelled form is the preterite DO:^RSNT, DO:SNT, etc., while in the intervening area of Yorkshire it is the present DA:NT, DA:^RNT. In the Southwest, the Home Counties, and East Anglia the preferred levelled form is the present DE:NT, DE:^RNT, etc., which is in effect the standard present *daren't* extended to the past. But there is very little regional rhyme or reason for the levelled forms; they are one of the clearest indicators of the confusion that prevails in this decaying modal.

Points 4, 5, and 6 above—the distribution of stem vowels and of post-vocalic S, Z, and D—can best be taken together. On the basis of these features we can divide the forms into four main groups, with sub-groups in each—

1. Etymological forms:

- a. In the present, those having no consonant except the regionally predictable R before the N, and with stem vowel E or A.
- b. In the preterite, those having S and a central or back vowel, O, U, 3, @.

2. Analogical forms:

- a. In the present, those having Z and stem vowel A or E.
- b. In the preterite, those having D and stem vowel A or E.

3. Levelled forms:

- a. In the present, those of form 1*b* or 2*b*.
- b. In the preterite, those of form 1*a* or 2*a*.

4. Blends:

All forms not conforming to 1*a*, 1*b*, 2*a*, 2*b*.

Etymological Forms. I have so named these because they can be considered direct descendents of the OE *dearr*, *darr*, *dorste*, *durste*. Clearly, present forms like Yorkshire DA:NT, Derbyshire DA:N@, Essex DE:@NT, and Devon DE:@^R:NT are of this sort. The stem vowels show rather clear-cut regional distribution, with A: and A in the

North and NW Midlands, E: and E@ scattering through the rest of the Midlands and dominant in the Home Counties, East Anglia, and the South (Map 3). A cluster of forms in 3: or @: in the SW Midlands, with similar forms scattered across the South from western Somerset to Kent, presents a problem to which I will return. Scattering forms in E: through the North may be attributed to the influence of standard English, but it is hard to account for isolated forms in A: in Rutland (1901), Gloucestershire (2406), and Devon (3710).

Etymological preterites show vowel variation which presumably goes back to the OE variation between *dorste* and *durste*. Thus the prevailing vowel from Lincolnshire and north Cheshire is O, with O: in the far North, while the South Midlands and South have 3, 3: or @ (Map 4). Scattered 3 and 3: forms in the North Midlands and North are attributable to the influence of standard *durst*. There is a focal area of forms in U in Leicestershire and a few others appear in NW Yorkshire and in Cumberland.

Analogical Forms. These are so called because they seem to represent morphological alignment of modal *dare* with the weak verb paradigm rather than the preterite-present pattern; i.e. a 3rd singular present *dares* and preterite *dared* (with appropriate regional variation in stem vowel), as is the case with the full verb *dare*. In the present, the analogical forms should show Z, since S must in virtually all cases be considered a levelling of the S of the preterite. Present forms in Z are very rare, there being only five recorded in the whole country, only three of which can be unequivocally considered as analogical forms: 1201 DA:ZN@, 0609 DAZ@NT, and 3104 DI@^{RZ} NOT. The second and third of these are levelled into the preterite; the first has the etymological preterite D3:SN@. At 1208 both the present and preterite forms are D3:ZNT: this is probably a levelling of the preterite with voicing of the S; similar voicing in etymological preterites occurs at 0507, 0602, 0611, 0625, and elsewhere. At 2201 the recorded form is actually [daznt], which is nearly identical with three of the four remaining Suffolk forms, [dasnt], probably best considered as levelled preterites. Since the preterite form at 2201 is DE@NT, this is an example of cross levelling (or perhaps of total confusion in the informant!). Two more forms which may be analogical presents with devoiced Z are 0109 DA:SNT (preterite DA:DNT) and 1506 DE:SNT (preterite DE:DNT).

Analogical preterites are somewhat more frequent than the presents: there are 29 clear cases, four of them scattered in the North and the rest

concentrated in a triangular area with its base on the Welsh border and its apex in Nottinghamshire (Map 5). Once again, as with the present forms, there is a concentration of forms with stem vowel @ in the SW Midlands. In both cases it seems to me that two interpretations are possible. If the vowel is considered to be an unrounding and centring of the U of the preterite and thus identical with the prevailing vowel of the etymological preterite in the South and East, then these forms are blends. If, however, the vowel is considered a retracting of E, the characteristic vowel of the present in this region, the presents are etymological (*daren't*) and the preterites are analogical (*daredn't*). The latter seems the more likely explanation to me.

Levelled Forms. These have been discussed above at some length. But the discussion there concerned only those cases where the two responses were identical. There are further cases where either the present or the preterite form, or both, are levelled but not identical with the other form. Thus in thirteen localities an analogical preterite form appears in the present, coupled with an etymological preterite or a blend. Examples are 0201 DA:DN@ DURSNT; 0306 DA:DNT DUSNT; 0204 DA:DNT DA:SNT; 2601 DE:@DNT D@SN? An example of cross levelling at 2201, where the cited present form is morphologically preterite and the cited preterite morphologically present, has been given above. There are at least eight others, including 1902 DE:@DNT DE:@NT; 0604 and 0620 DOSNT DA:NT; 1707 DUSNT DE:RNT. In the light of the possible confusion about tense discussed above in the analysis of the questions, these mixed forms are perhaps not to be taken very seriously.

Blends. If we exclude the SW Midland presents and analogical preterites in @ (see above), the blends, with one exception, represent extension of the vowel of the present into the preterite, with retention of the etymological S of the preterite. There are 24 of these, 12 with stem vowel A or A: and 12 with E or E: (Map 6). The vowels are distributed as they should be—A in the North and E in the South—with one exception, an anomalous DA:SN at 3201. The present form at this locality, DE:RN?, shows the correct regional vowel. There is one example of a blend of the opposite sort—an extension of the preterite vowel into the present: 0203, where both present and preterite are DURNT.

What conclusions are to be drawn from this exceedingly complicated and confused situation? One, undoubtedly, was suggested early in this

paper: it is difficult to elicit with accuracy grammatical forms as deeply involved in the syntactic and semantic fabric of the language as the modal auxiliaries are. The difficulty is compounded when another grammatical feature, tense alternation, is also sought. How accurately the first-response citations given in answer to questions IX.4.17/18 reflect actual usage of the informants could only be decisively settled by a more intensive survey, preferably one in which the forms were caught in actual use rather than as responses to questions. The discussion here has taken no account of what might be the most accurate revelation of actual usage: the secondary responses and incidental forms which the fieldworkers occasionally record.

On the assumption that the data do reflect actual usage in at least a majority of the localities, we are justified in another conclusion: that the modal *dare* is in a very unstable state morphologically, which is perhaps partly a consequence of its position on the periphery of the modal system. The particular confusion about tense is not, after all, restricted to *dare* or to the present day. It must have been a somewhat similar confusion in the Germanic past which caused the preterites of so many of the modals to move into the present. In fact, there seems to be something in the semantics of the modals that encourages moving past forms into the present—perhaps a conflict or overlapping of the notion of contingency conveyed by modality and the notion of remoteness conveyed by past-marking. At least two of the “new” weak preterites—*should* and *might*—are undergoing this second preterite-present shift in modern English. In any case, this seems to be an area where dialectology, to which Harold Orton has so notably contributed, can supply information of value to other branches of linguistics.

NOTES

- ¹ Harold Orton and Wilfrid J. Halliday (eds.), *Survey of English Dialects, The Basic Material. Vol. 1, The Six Northern Counties and the Isle of Man* (Leeds, 1962).
- ² A. Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959), §144, n. 1.
- ³ Madeline Elizabeth Ehrman, *The Meanings of the Modals in Present-Day American English* (The Hague, 1966), p. 96. Further evidence on the status of the negative preterite in standard English under various forms of elicitation will be found in two papers by Randolph Quirk: “Co-existing Negative Preterit Forms of *Dare*” and “Acceptability in Language,” both reprinted in his collection, *Essays on the English Language: Medieval and Modern* (London, 1968).
- ⁴ Martin Joos, *The English Verb, Form and Meanings* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), p. 192.
- ⁵ W. F. Twaddell, *The English Verb Auxiliaries*, 2nd ed., rev. (Brown University Press, 1963), p. 13.
- ⁶ Twaddell, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

- ⁷ For statistics on the frequency of modal and quasi-modal *dare* in the million-word Standard Corpus of Present-Day Edited American English prepared at Brown University, see J. Svartvik, "Plotting Divided Usage with *DARE* and *NEED*," in *Studia Neophilologica*, 40: 130-40 (1968).
- ⁸ Joos, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
- ⁹ Ehrman, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
- ¹⁰ In re-examining my own field records from Norfolk, I find that I recorded a following verb in six out of twenty-four cases, e.g. [ɪdɑ:sn 'gou] from 2112. But I cannot be sure that failure to do so, in my practice or that of the other fieldworkers, always means that there was no following verb in the response. In any case, following verbs are not reported in the printed volumes of *SED*.
- ¹¹ Note that it nicely distinguishes auxiliary *do* from the full verb: *I came to the meeting but he didn't* but not **I did my work but he didn't his*.
- ¹² The localities are 2505, 3208, 3303, 3304, 4003 (in all citations in this paper the first two digits indicate the county and the last two the locality, as in the list on p. 31 of the Introduction to *SED*). No responses were obtained from 2108 and 2606.
- ¹³ The localities are 2506, 2912, 3203, 3207, 3301, 3402, 3404, 3503, 3907, 4001, 4002, 4006.
- ¹⁴ All the forms have been taken directly from the field records of *SED*. I transcribed about two-thirds of them myself in 1956-57, when I was at Leeds University as a Fulbright Senior Research Fellow. Those from the six northern counties I have verified from the printed list in Part 3 of Vol. 1 of *SED*. The rest were kindly transcribed for me by members of the *SED* staff: Robin Brown, Philip Tilling, and especially Stanley Ellis, the editor of the present volume. It is a pleasure to record my gratitude to them and to the whole staff of the Survey, who have always been most co-operative and helpful. This is perhaps the appropriate place also to acknowledge my debt to Harold Orton, without whose friendly encouragement and co-operation my work in English dialectology would not have been possible. I am happy to be able in some part to repay my debt by this modest contribution to his birthday volume.
- ¹⁵ I am indebted to Gerald M. Rubin, staff programmer of the Department of Linguistics of Brown University, for the programming on which the following discussion is dependent. The work was done under his direction on the IBM System 360 computer at the Brown University Computing Laboratory.
- ¹⁶ As I have shown elsewhere ("A Modified System of Phonemic Transcription for One Idiolect of English," in *Papers in Linguistics in Honor of Léon Dostert* (The Hague, 1967), pp. 37-45), the syllabicity of /n/ is predictable from the context in any case.
- ¹⁷ The maps used in this article were produced directly from the data by the Cal Comp plotter in connexion with the Brown University System 360 computer. So far as I know, this is the first time that dialect maps have been made in this fashion. Credit is due to Gerald Rubin, whose ingenuity and perseverance as a programmer made these maps possible.