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THE VOICING OF INITIAL FRICATIVE CONSONANTS IN PRESENT-DAY DIALECTAL ENGLISH

By MARTYN F. WAKELIN and MICHAEL V. BARRY

In this article the following counties are numbered and abbreviated in accordance with the system used in the *Survey of English Dialects*. Reference numbers on the maps and elsewhere, e.g. IV.8.9, VII.3.6, are those of the questions in the Dieth-Orton *Questionnaire*.

27	Bd	Bedfordshire
26	Bk	Buckinghamshire
33	Brk	Berkshire
36	Co	Cornwall
37	D	Devonshire
38	Do	Dorset
24	Gl	Gloucestershire
39	Ha	Hampshire
15	He	Herefordshire
28	Hrt	Hertfordshire
35	K	Kent
30	Mx	Middlesex
18	Nth	Northamptonshire
25	O	Oxfordshire
31	So	Somerset
34	Sr	Surrey
40	Sx	Sussex
32	W	Wiltshire
17	Wa	Warwickshire
16	Wo	Worcestershire
	I.o.W.	Isle of Wight
	St.E.	Standard English

The voicing of the initial consonants [f], [s], [θ] and [ʃ] in the present-day southern dialects of England has long been a problem to linguists, and especially in respect of its origin and history.¹ It has been widely held² that initial voicing must have taken place before the

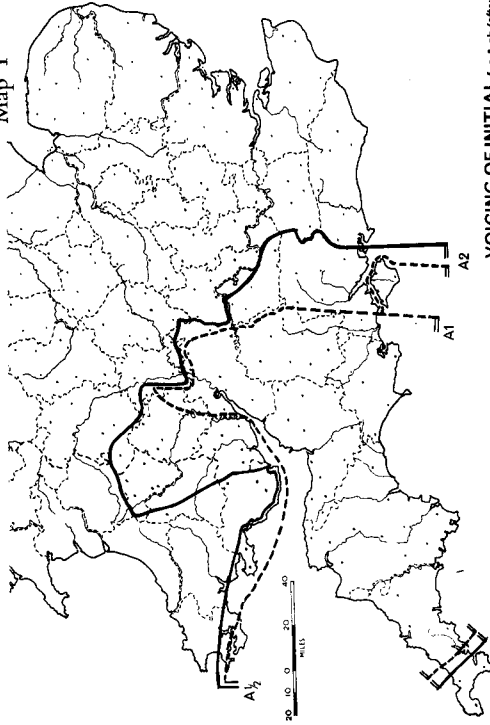
large influx of French words in the eleventh century and after, since it is usually claimed that these have not taken part in the process, or have only done so to a limited extent. Scholars are not agreed as to whether or not the voiced sounds were present in initial position at the time of the Anglo-Saxon invasions, or whether they arose as the result of a sound-change in the OE period. No convincing conclusions can be drawn from OE orthography.

The most recent overall survey of the problem is in A. J. Ellis's *On Early English Pronunciation*, Part V, London, 1889 (*EEP*), and Map 1 below summarizes his conclusions on the voicing of initial [f], [s], and [ʃ]. His remarks on the voicing of [θ] are not very systematic, but this voicing can be legitimately inferred from his information to have taken place, either generally or sporadically, in the SW. counties. Although Ellis's information has not the precision expected of modern research methods, it may be assumed that the area indicated on the maps based on his material represents at least roughly the area in which voicing was current in his day. With the publication of the *Survey of English Dialects*³ (*SED*), not all of which is at present in print, quite precise conclusions can be reached about the present state of the voicing of initial [f], [s], [θ] and [ʃ], and it is hoped that the large body of material collected by *SED* may in some measure contribute to a better understanding of the problem. The material from *SED* used in this article comprises both responses (rr.) given in answer to the *Questionnaire*⁴ and incidental material (i.m.), the latter consisting of additional, relevant matter collected by the field-workers of *SED* while in conversation with informants, and used as ancillary to the rr. It should be noted here that use has occasionally been made of i.m. forms which do not appear in the material actually published (or to be published) in the *SED* Basic Material Volumes.

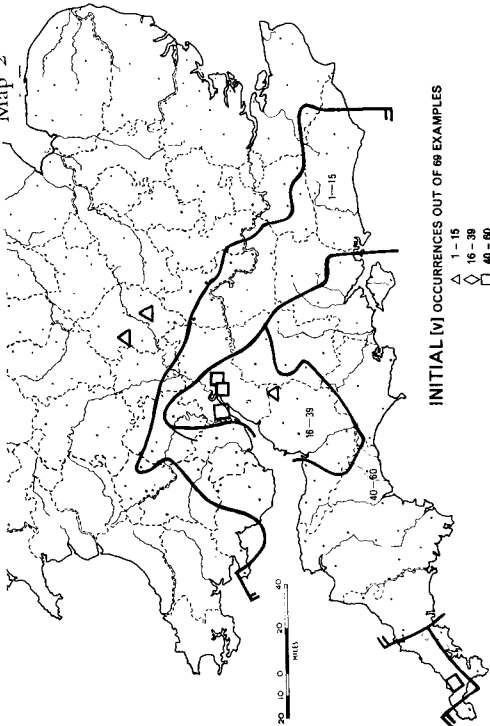
The material published in *SED* does not include recordings from Wales. However, the *Questionnaire* has been used in numerous localities there, and since A. J. Ellis shows voicing in S. Wales, it has been thought useful to include on the maps below the examples collected from this area.⁵ It will be noted that examples of initial [v] occur as far north as Radnorshire.⁶

By way of comparison with the map showing Ellis's material, Maps 2-5 below, based on an examination of the relevant words collected by *SED*, are intended to give an idea of the present-day situation. For the purposes of this article, 69 words containing initial [f] were examined, 59 containing initial [s], 16 containing initial [θ], and 28 containing initial [ʃ]. These include words beginning with the initial consonant combinations *fl*, *fr*, *sl*, *sm*, *sn*, *sw*.⁷ The object of the maps is

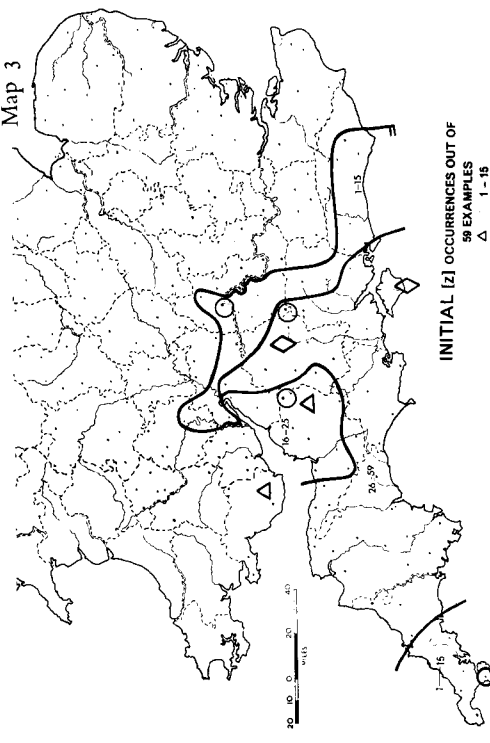
Map 1



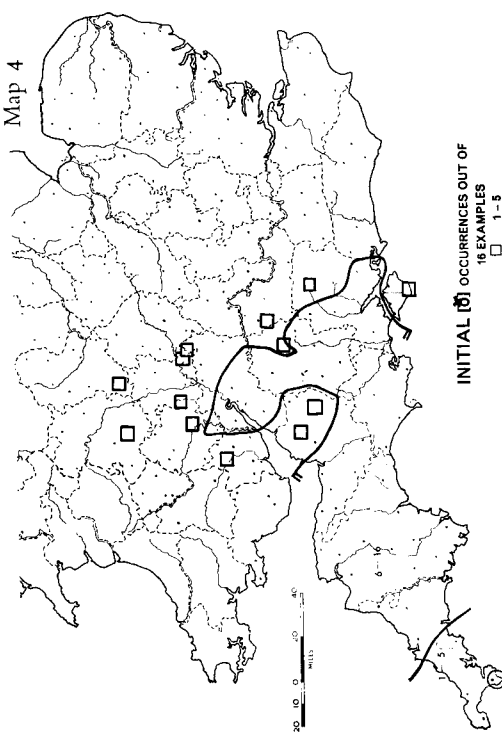
Map 2



Map 3



Map 4



to show the geographical range of the feature under consideration, and not to show the frequency of occurrence of the feature in each locality; for example, in the legend on Map 2, "16-39" indicates that out of the 69 words tested, between 16 and 39 were recorded with initial [v] on at least one occasion. In constructing these maps, i.m. has been used for any given locality only when it reveals an example of a voiced initial sound that does not occur in rr.; no special identification of the i.m. forms is made on any of the maps. Any general statistical comparison made between the maps must, of course, allow for the fact that the numbers of words investigated were not equal for each initial consonant; e.g. there were 69 words investigated for Map 2, but only 16 for Map 4. It will, however, be noted (Map 2) that initial [v] has the widest geographical distribution.

Map 2 shows that the voicing of initial [f] occurs most consistently in D and its immediate neighbours, namely NE. Co and NW. So, and also in Do, part of W, and S. and W. Ha. These are clearly the largest solid areas having the voicing of [f]. Gl, W and Ha seem to form the eastern boundary of the area of general voicing, while outside this there is a belt of occasional voicing. In the west a similar boundary may be drawn through Co from north-west to south-east.

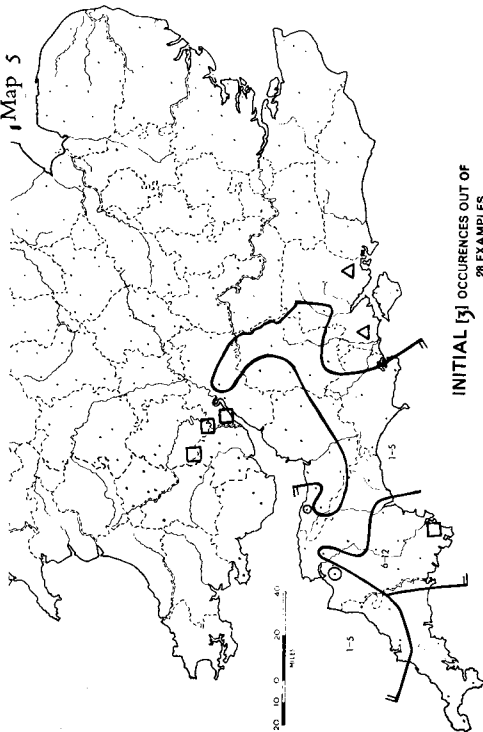
Map 3 shows that initial [s] is pronounced [z] in a rather more confined area. The areas of density are still clearly the same, but the outer belt is more thinly covered and does not extend as far to the north and east. There is, for example, nothing shown in Sr or in Wa.

Map 4 shows a more diminished area for initial [ð], as does Map 5 for initial [ʒ].

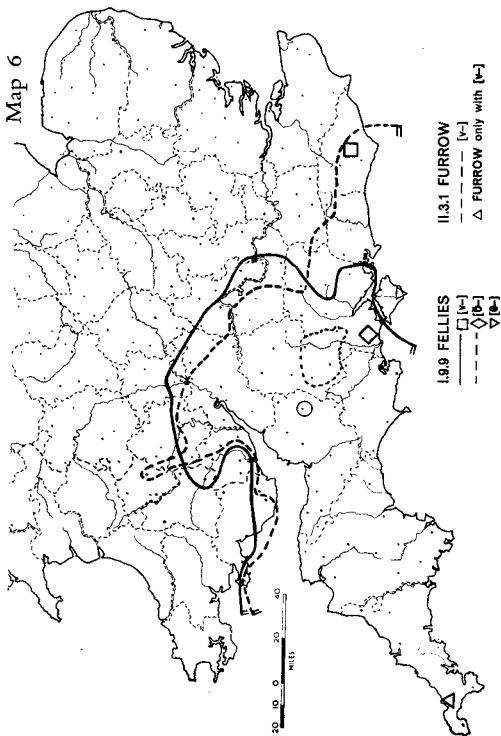
From a perusal of Maps 2-5, certain general statements can be made. Two areas of density may be said to emerge, as follows: (1) Devon, NW. So and NE. Co, (2) Do, part of W, and S. and W. Ha. The region in between is undoubtedly one characterized by voicing, but the tendency does not seem so strong—at least when considered merely on a numerical basis—as in the two adjacent areas. When the distribution is limited, e.g. in words which for some (presumably historical) reason do not seem to favour voicing, or in words with consonant combinations which react against it, the whole area of voicing diminishes until it leaves only these two focal points. Most of the maps illustrate this to a lesser or greater degree.

Boundary lines enclosing the area would be most suitably drawn double: an inner one would delimit the comparatively thickly-scattered area, while the outer one, further to the N. and E., would enclose the whole area. The inner NE. boundary is fairly constant, and encloses SW. Gl, most of W, and S. and W. Ha; the outer NE. boundary is not

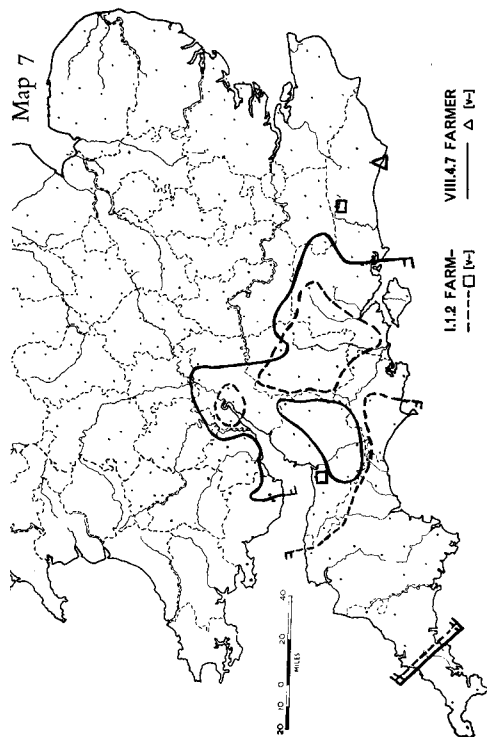
Map 5



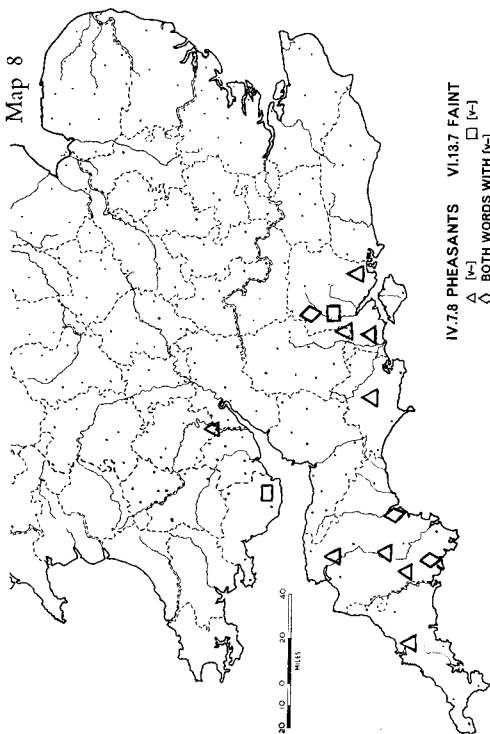
Map 6



Map 7



Map 8



so constant, and its fluctuations may be studied on the maps. The SW. inner boundary usually runs north to south through Co, while the outer boundary is formed by the Cornish coast-line.

Maps 6-20 are intended to illustrate in greater detail the general statements made above. The maps make use of isoglosses as well as symbols; the principles underlying this system, which is under consideration for the proposed *Linguistic Atlas of England*, are as follows.

Within an isogloss area the locality dot indicates the occurrence of the "Leitform," i.e. the principal form within the isogloss area, within that area. The locality dot encircled by a ring—⊙—indicates the non-occurrence of the "Leitform." Where a symbol other than the ring encircles the locality dot—△—this indicates that both the "Leitform" and another symbolized form occur. Where both the ring and another symbol occur—⊕—this indicates that the "Leitform" does not occur, but another symbolized form does.

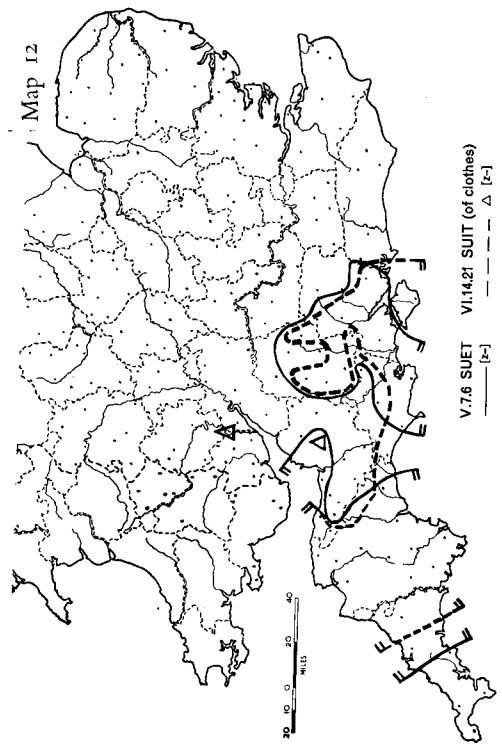
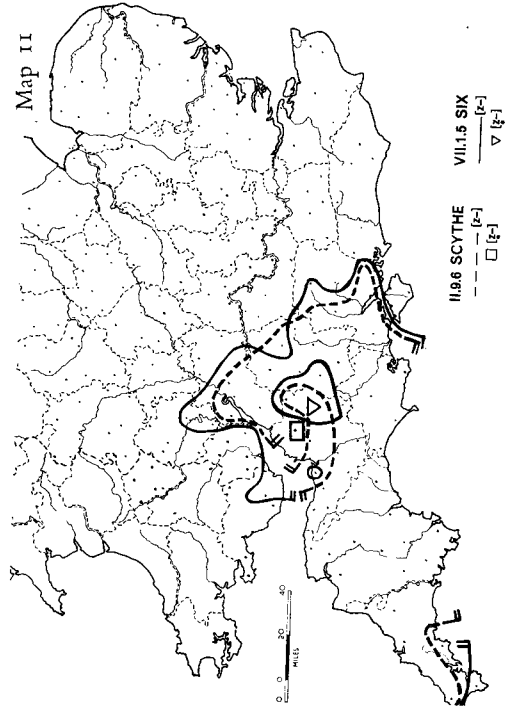
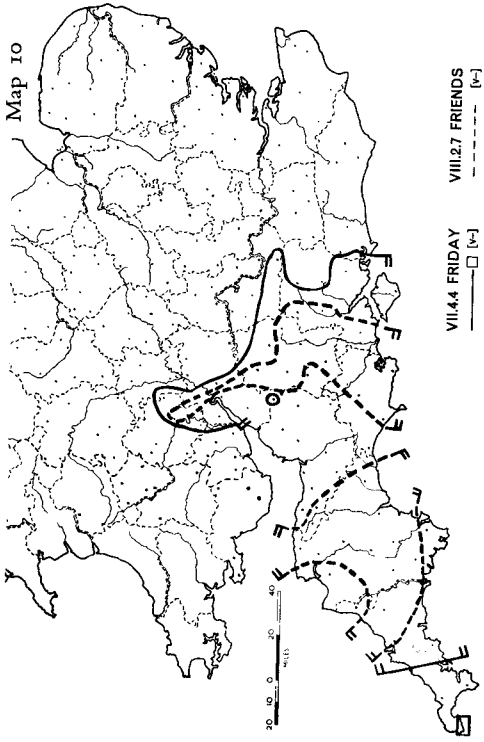
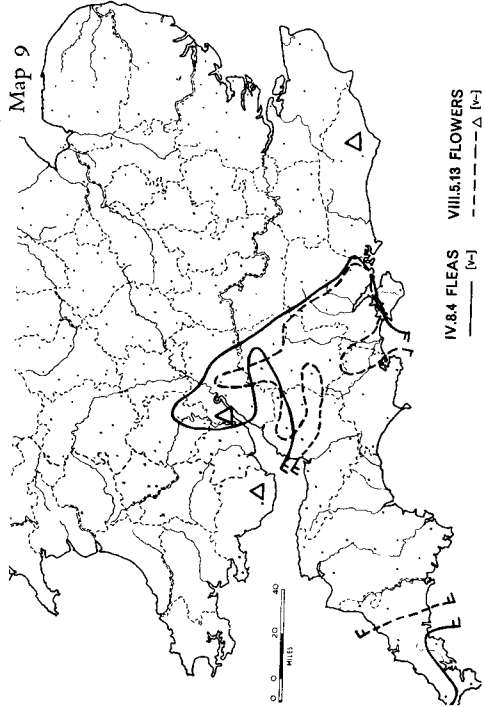
On the statistical maps—numbers 2-5—however this last convention does not apply. The occurrence here of a symbol in an isogloss area cancels the statistics given in numeral form for the relevant area.

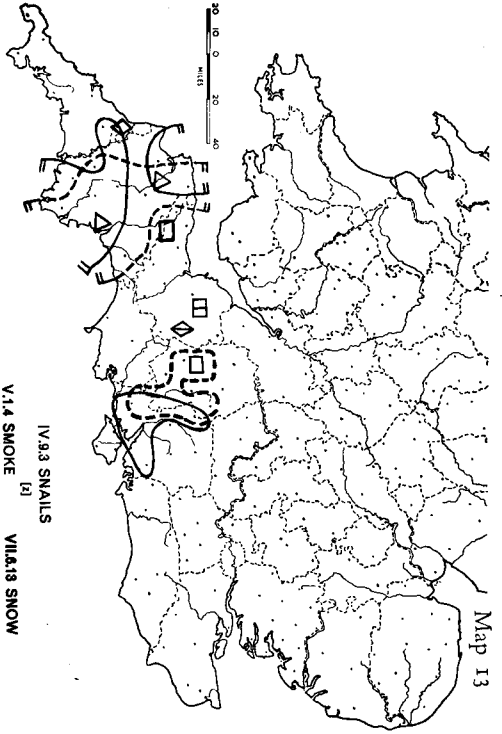
Outside the isogloss area, the locality dots are left unmarked without implication, except where the locality dot is incorporated in the top of a symbol—△—which indicates that the symbolized form occurs.

COMMENTARY ON THE MAPS

Map 6. I.9.9 FELLIES (OE *felg* sg.), and II.3.1 FURROW (OE *furh*). The distribution of [v] in these ancient English agricultural words is solidly spread throughout the whole of the south-west to the tip of Co, extending into mid-Wales, and with an occasional example in Sx. It will be noticed that except in the south-east, [v] in FELLIES has a slightly wider spread than in FURROW. This may possibly be accounted for by the fact that FELLIES has largely fallen into disuse in modern speech, along with the objects it signifies. This being so, [v] is preserved, unmodified by the impulse towards St.E. pronunciation which has affected more common words, e.g. FURROW. A small area in S. W with [ð] in FELLIES is to be noted: this presupposes a series [f] > [v] > [ð]. [θ] in FELLIES in Ha 7 (I.o.W.) is unexplained, but suggests that [f] has become [θ], the change presumably having taken place too late for the new [θ] sound to take part in the change to [ð].

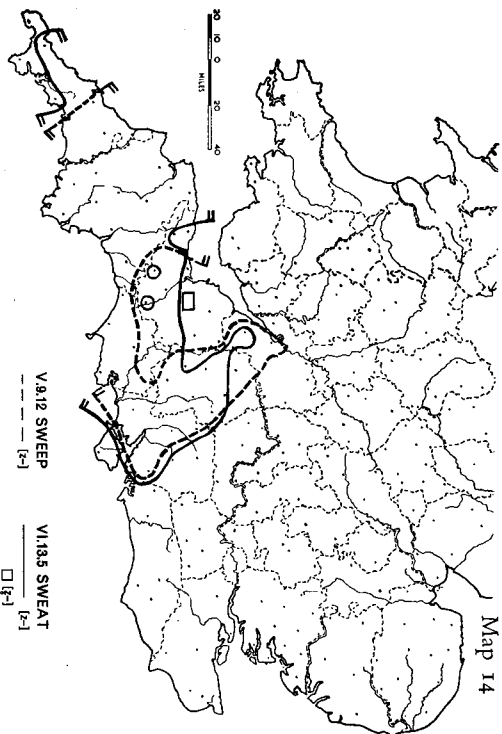
Map 7. I.1.2 FARM- (F *ferme*) and VIII.4.7 FARMER (AF *fermer*). FARM is first attested in English in 1297 according to *OED*. The coverage on the map is smaller and not so concentrated as in FURROW





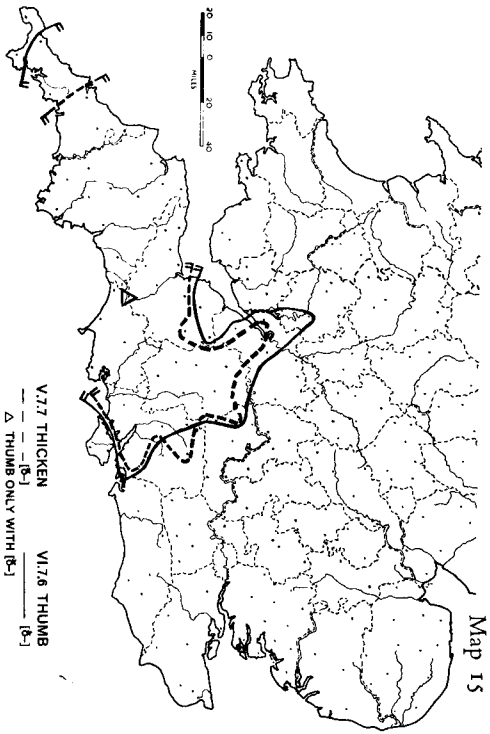
IV.9.3 SNAILS
 [2]
 V.1.4 SMOKE
 [2-]
 [2-]
 VIII.1.8 SNOW
 [2-]
 [2-]

Map 13



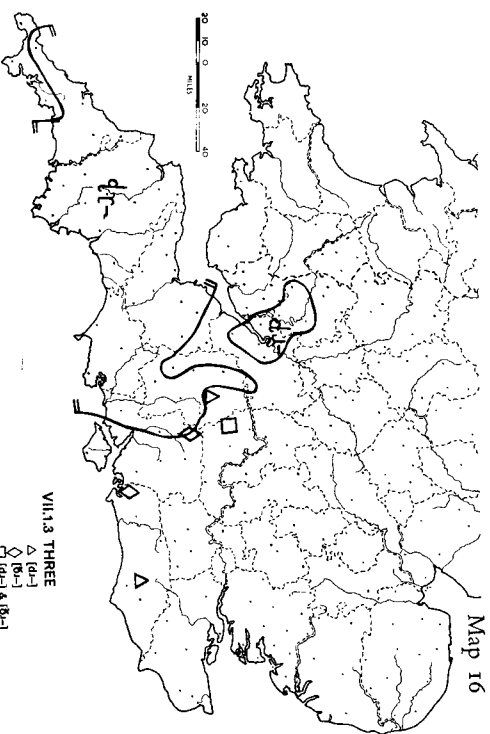
V.9.12 SWEEP
 [2-]
 [2-]
 VII.1.5 SWEAT
 [2-]
 [2-]

Map 14



V.1.7 THICKEN
 [2-]
 [2-]
 VI.7.6 THUMB
 [2-]
 [2-]
 THUMB ONLY WITH [2-]

Map 15



VII.1.3 THREE
 [2-]
 [2-]
 [2-] & [2-]

Map 16

and FELLIES, but FARMER (first attested in English in 1382) has a slightly wider coverage than the FARM- compounds.

Map 8. VI.13.7 FAINT *v.* (OF faint, feint *adj.*) and IV.7.8 PHEASANTS (AF fesant, fesaunt, OF fesan, *sg.*). The areas showing initial [v] in these two words are reduced much further. The first occurrence of FAINT *v.* in English is recorded by *OED* in 1300, and of PHEASANT in 1299.

Map 9. IV.8.4 FLEAS (OE flēah *sg.*) and VIII.5.13 FLOWERS (OF fleur, flur, flor *sg.*). Initial [fl] > [vl] over a somewhat wider and more concentrated area in FLEAS than in FLOWERS (first recorded occurrence in English c. 1200). The isolated (i.m.) example of [v] in FLOWERS in Sx is, however, worthy of note.

Map 10. VII.4.4 FRIDAY (OE frīgedæg) and VIII.2.7 FRIENDS (OE frēond *sg.*). Initial [fr] or [fr̥] > [vr] or [vr̥]. Initial [v] in FRIDAY has a slightly wider distribution. The distribution of [vr] or [vr̥] in FRIENDS shows remarkably well the two focal areas of voicing, with a large gap (in So) between them.

Map 11. II.9.6 SCYTHE (OE sīðe) and VII.1.5 SIX (OE sex, six, siex, syx, etc.). Initial [z] in SIX has the widest distribution of any of the [s]-words tested, extending into Glamorganshire. Both SCYTHE and SIX show a small pocket of initial [s] in NE. So.

Map 12. V.7.6 SUET (AF *suet, *sewet) and VI.14.21 SUIT (AF siwte, etc.). The two focal areas stand out. SUET is first recorded by *OED* in 1377, and SUIT (in the sense of "livery, uniform") c. 1297.

Although it has been impossible to show the material in map form, an examination of I.9.1 SLEDGE (MDu sleedse), V.6.10 SLICE (OF esclice, esclisse), VII.6.14 SLIPPERY (< SLIPPER *adj.* < OE slipor) and IV.9.2 SLUGS (cf. Norw. dial. slugg, sluggje *sg.*) shows that the consonant combination [sl] apparently does not assume voicing of the first element readily, and [z] in all four words has a negligible distribution. Initial [z] occurs in SLEDGE only at 37 D 7 and 39 Ha 1; in SLICE at 37 D 7 and 39 Ha 6; in SLIPPERY at 32 W 3, 37 D 7/8/10, and 39 Ha 5/6 (with initial [z̥] at 31 So 2); and in SLUGS at 37 D 2 and 39 Ha 6. The two focal areas stand out again. SLIPPERY, the only one of the four words derived from OE, has the widest distribution, with six examples. SLEDGE (first recorded in 1617, according to *OED*) and SLUG (first recorded as an animal in 1704, according to *OED*) were both late additions to the English language. A tendency for words widely in use to assume voiced initials is obviously restricted here by the initial combination.

Map 13. V.1.4 SMOKE (OE smoca), IV.9.3 SNAILS (OE snegel, snægle, etc. *sg.*) and VII.6.13 SNOW (OE snāw). As compared with the

other two words, SNOW has a large incidence of initial [z]. None of the other words with St.E. [sn] which were examined have more than four examples, mostly restricted to Devon. It is difficult to see why [z] occurs so infrequently in SNAILS and so (comparatively) frequently in SNOW.

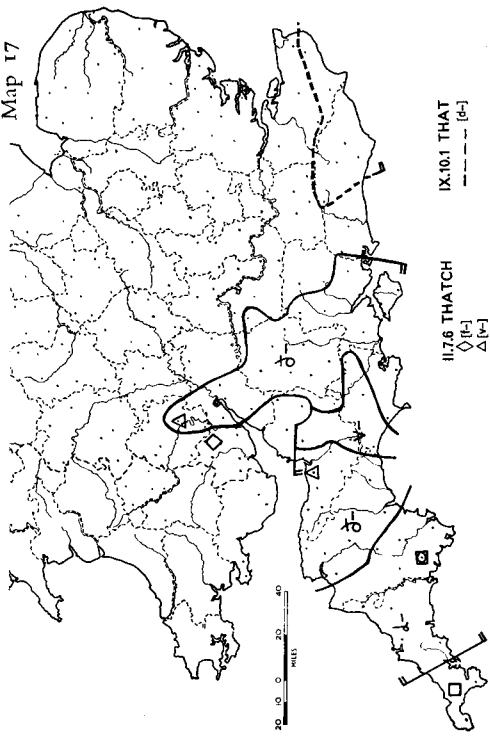
Map 14. VI.13.5 SWEAT (OE *swāetan*) and V.9.12 SWEEP (ME *swepe*). Voicing is apparent in the combination [sw] in a much wider area than in any other [s] combination, presumably because of the semi-vocalic nature of the [w]. Nevertheless, the distribution is not as extensive as in SIX.

Map 15. V.7.7 THICKEN (< THICK *adj.*, OE *picce*, + -EN) and VI.7.6 THUMB (OE *pūma*). There is little to be said about the voicing of initial [θ]. As already noted, the area of voicing is less extensive than that characterized by the voicing of [f] and [s]. Apart from this, it will also be seen that So again shows a gap in the north-east of the county. Although not shown here, isolated examples of [ð] occur in THURSDAY in S. Shropshire and S. Staffordshire and are perhaps remnants of what at one time may have been the northernmost boundary of the area. All the examples of words having initial [θ] or [ð] are of OE origin. The sound does not occur in French.

Map 16. VII.1.3 THREE (OE *þri*, *þrie*, *þrio*, *þrēo*). [θ] combines only with [w] and [ɹ] or [ʀ]. There are, unfortunately, no words in THW- in the *Questionnaire*. (A)THWART meaning "diagonally" occurs, but not consistently enough to allow a map to be drawn. [θ] + [ʀ] > [ʀ] in the south-west, presumably via an intermediate stage [ðʀ], but usually remains [θɹ] in the south-east, where voicing is absent. The SW. variety of *r* is so retracted as to effect retraction of the preceding [ð], which is subsequently closed and becomes the plosive [d]. In the type [ðɹ], exemplified in W. Brk and W. Sx, the *r* is presumably not sufficiently retracted to have this effect on the preceding consonant.

Maps 17 and 18. II.7.6 THATCH- (OE *þæc n.*, *þecc(e)an v.*) and II.2.2 THISTLE (OE *þistil*, -el). These words are unique in having an initial [d] distribution: [d] for St.E. initial [θ] occurs in no other words investigated by *SED*. *OED* records no spellings in *d*- in either word, but in both cases initial [θ] > [d] presumably via an intermediate stage [ð]. This closure is of a different origin from the SE. change of St.E. [ð] (< [θ]) > [d], e.g. in THIS, THEY, THERE;⁸ but for purposes of comparison, Map 17 also shows the contemporary distribution of [d] in the word THAT as ascertained by *SED*. [d] in THATCH is restricted to S. Devon and E. Co, and in THISTLE to D, E. Co, and NW. So. In both cases [θ] > [v] in Do, once again presumably via [ð]. The various other initial consonants are shown on the maps.

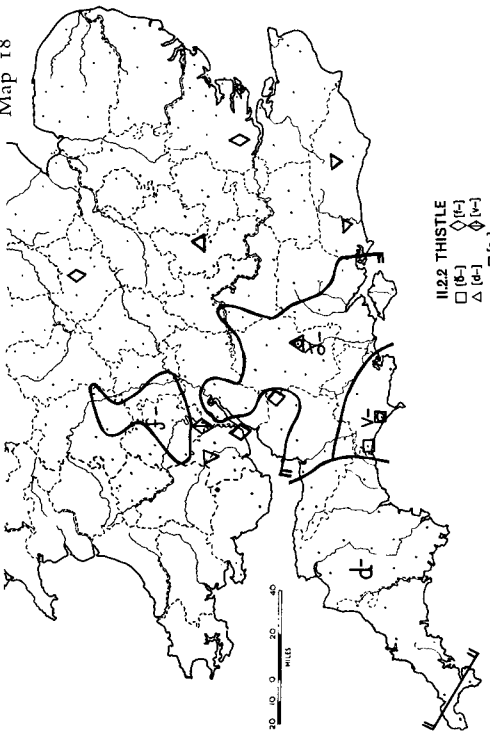
Map 17



II.7.6 THATCH
 ◇ (I-)
 △ (V-)
 □ (B-)

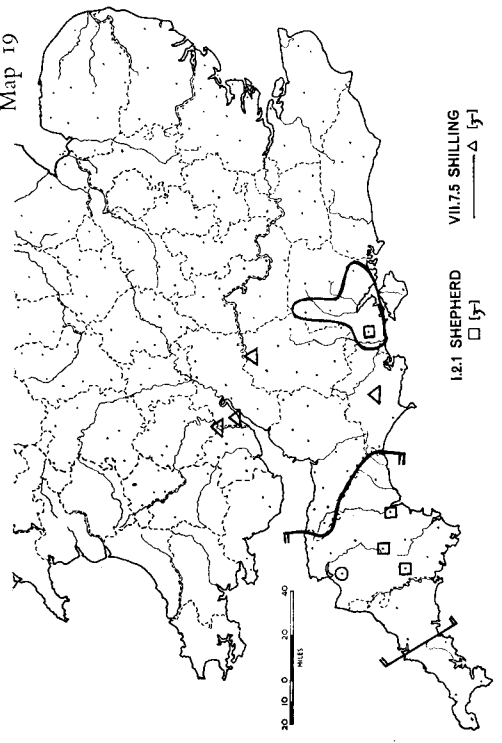
IX.10.1 THAT
 - - - - (G-)

Map 18



II.2.2 THISTLE
 □ (B-)
 ◇ (I-)
 △ (D-)
 ▽ (V-)

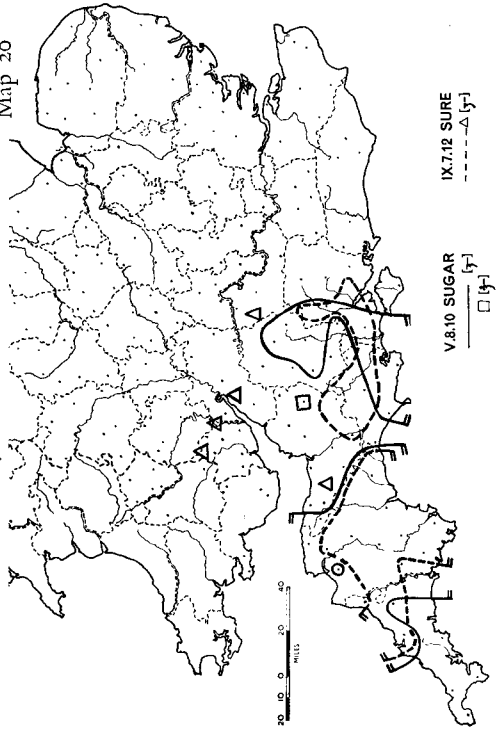
Map 19



I.2.1 SHEPHERD
 □ (I-)

VII.7.5 SHILLING
 ▽ (V-)
 △ (I-)

Map 20



V.8.10 SUGAR
 □ (I-)

IX.7.12 SURE
 - - - - (V-)
 ▽ (I-)

Map 19. I.2.1 SHEPHERD (OE scēaphirde) and VII.7.5 SHILLING (OE scilling). The voicing of initial [ʃ] is much less consistent than the voicing of any of the other sounds considered above. In many words there is no [ʒ] sound recorded in any locality, while those words in which this sound does occur are entirely limited to D, with isolated examples in W. Ha. In all cases the examples are very scattered, though D and W. Ha seem to be focal areas. SHEPHERD, an English word, is a surprising case, presenting only four examples of initial [ʒ].

Map 20. V.8.10 SUGAR (OF çucre) and IX.7.12 SURE (OF sur-e, seur-e). It is unusual for OF loan-words to have a wider distribution of a voiced initial fricative than native words. Nevertheless, SUGAR and SURE have a wider incidence than SHEPHERD and SHILLING.

It is not the object of this paper to attempt an explanation of the rise of the voiced initial fricative consonants [v], [z], [ð] and [ʒ]. Nevertheless, a few remarks of an historical nature may be tentatively made.

It is obvious first of all that initial [f], [s], [θ] and [ʃ] tended to assume a voiced quality during (or perhaps even before) the OE or early ME period everywhere south of a line approximating to Watling Street, except perhaps in SW. Co. This is clear not only from the sporadic examples in present-day dialectal usage (see Maps 2-5), but also from the testimony of place-names⁹ and the statements of glossarists.¹⁰ The Moore-Meech-Whitehall lines¹¹ are thus seen to be drawn somewhat too far to the south and west. Comment must be made here on the diminution of the numbers of voiced examples west of Co, loc. 3, and the prevalence of voicing in N. and NE. Co (cf. Ellis's conclusions, shown on Map 1).¹² It is probable that the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Co took place mainly from the north-east of the county.¹³ If this is so, there is a longer tradition of English in the north-east than in the west of that county; the English originally adopted by the Cornish-speaking inhabitants was presumably the West-Saxon dialect of their immediate neighbours and invaders. In remote W. Co, English penetrated more gradually, not reaching everywhere for some hundreds of years; and, as this happened probably under the influence of education, the English used was therefore a non-SW. or a modified SW. variety, in which the voicing of initial fricative consonants was considerably weakened or even non-existent. The sounds under consideration are not the only examples of what is apparently a general phenomenon: a more "standard" type of speech was noted in the extreme south-west even in Ellis's time,¹⁴ and seems to be borne out by

the evidence collected by *SED*,¹⁵ though, of course, it is not a modern standard speech that we should expect to find here, but an archaic one.

The tendency towards initial voicing, which perhaps originated in the sentence in intervocalic positions, was probably present in the OE period in the areas under discussion since it is true, generally speaking, that French words do not seem as comfortable with voicing as the native ones, either in the ME period or in present-day rural dialects (see below). There seems to be no difficulty in assuming that the OE orthographic system would obscure the feature: OE has no special symbols for the voiced medial sounds [v], [z] and [ð], simply spelling them *f*, *s*, and *þ* or *ð* respectively, as in *wulfas*, *hūsas* and *baþian*. The absence of any symbols for the voiced medial sounds strongly suggests that the letters *f*, *s*, and *þ* or *ð* would likewise be made to suffice for voiced initial sounds, especially if these were a later development in OE from their voiceless equivalents. The pronunciation of OE *sc* was probably (at least in late OE) something approaching to [ʃ], but it seems doubtful whether this was voiced in medial positions, e.g. in *fiscas*, *wascan*, as were [f], [s] and [θ]: even if it was voiced, the voiced sound had no special symbol. The fact that FISHES and WASH, for example, still have [ʃ] in modern English (cf. WOLVES, HOUSES, BATHE) implies that OE *sc* symbolized only a voiceless sound medially, while the small distribution of initial [ʒ] in modern English southern dialects suggests that the same may be true of OE initial *sc*, namely that it symbolized only a voiceless sound, and that the voiced equivalent was later adopted in the area under discussion by analogy with initial [f], [s], and [θ]. In this connexion, it is noteworthy that initial [ʃ] is never voiced in SW. Co (see above).

As against the tendency towards voicing in initial positions, we must set the influence of St.E., especially in SE. England. The area under consideration is surrounded by large towns except in the south-west. As the evidence presented above shows, K, Sr and Sx have now almost no signs of voicing, whereas in ME the Kentish texts are distinguished by this feature more than texts from other dialect areas. Initial [v] and [z] are quite common in Sx place-names for the ME period and later. The cause of the loss of voicing in all three counties is probably due to the influence of the London dialect. It must further be borne in mind that St.E. and London influence have exerted themselves all along the S. coast as far, at least, as I.o.W.: holiday resorts and ports abound here. Further to the north and west, Oxford, Reading and Birmingham have probably assisted St.E. in bringing about the disappearance of the feature. The further one travels to the south-west, the fewer large towns there are, and the dialects of the small market

towns are variants of the rural dialect of the surrounding countryside rather than different dialectal types exerting outward influence. As noted above, there may be a different reason for non-voiced initials in SW. Co, while the blank spaces on the map in So may perhaps be due to complex factors relating to settlement and population in the medieval period.

As against this general tendency—namely, the loss of voicing owing to the encroachment of St.E.—it should be noted, however, that the voicing of initial [f], [s], [θ] and [ʃ] is perhaps not entirely a recessive feature. The nineteenth-century dialectologists tell us that French words do not usually have voiced initials (see Note 16, below), and yet the evidence presented in this paper shows conclusively that some of them do now, and that the distribution is quite a wide one, e.g. those of FARM and FARMER (see Map 7). Can it be that two factors, fundamentally opposed, are at work here? On the one hand, in some cases voicing has spread since the last century, appearing now in words which, according to earlier writers, did not have it. On the other hand, conformity to St.E., which grew stronger as time went on, has worked in the opposite direction, thus bringing about the opposite effect. We thus have a complex situation, as the present article serves to illustrate.¹⁶

We have, in this paper, been examining *classes* of words rather than individual words, but in fact the history of each word needs to be examined individually. Who knows what reasons may have prompted FARM, a word common in agricultural vocabulary (this may be significant), to assume or retain an initial [v] and FAINT hardly ever to assume or retain it? To make matters even more complicated, it may be surmised that different reasons apply in different areas to the same words, so that, for example, we find initial [z] in SUIT (Map 12) in He 6 and also in Ha 5, but its presence in these localities may be accounted for by a number of different reasons depending on physical geography, historical considerations, social phenomena and the like. Some words, used principally by certain classes, may never have fully penetrated to the agricultural population. There is no easy answer.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the evidence—both for ME and for the present-day SW. dialects—is limited.

A concluding note on the words of French origin may not be out of place. It has often been stated¹⁷ that French words do not appear with a voiced initial as regularly as the English ones. Indeed, it does seem that the English words have a slightly more concentrated and a wider distribution than the French, and that they extend further to the north and east of the area under discussion.

We have postulated a geographical area—the whole of the south

and south-west—in which the voicing of initial [f], [s], [θ] and [ʃ] was present from early times. We may further surmise that, generally speaking, the area tended to diminish as St.E. influence encroached. The voicing receded further and further into the south-west until certain quite small regions were left as enclaves. Loan-words from French and other languages when taken into English had voicing extended to them on an analogical basis, e.g. a man who said [vu:ʀ] FURROW would presumably also say [veɪt] (VII.4.11, 37.7), [ve:t] (ibid., 39.1) FÊTE (first occurrence in 1745, according to *OED*);¹⁸ that is, voicing would take place in loan-words in those areas *in which voicing was still strongly prevalent*. Where it was weakening (i.e. in the north and north-east and the south-east), borrowings retained their voiceless initial: in those areas the tendency to voicing was not still strong enough to compel the new words to conform. The ME evidence seems to be ambiguous: French words in ME may indeed be *written* with *f* and *s* but this does not exclude the possibility of their initial consonants being regularly voiced by at least some *speakers*. Words with initial *th* and *sh* (or their orthographical variants), whether containing a voiceless or a voiced initial, had to be written thus; there was no other way since distinctive letters for [ð] and [ʒ] were lacking. Nevertheless, the initial sounds were undoubtedly voiced by some speakers. Voicing may have been the norm with some speakers and not others, and yet it seems doubtful whether there was anything like conformity, even in the south-west where the tendency to voice was strongest. The histories of pronunciation and spelling by no means coincide at every point, and obviously the ME documents do not tell the whole story.

NOTES

We acknowledge with pleasure permission to use unpublished material from the archives of the Institute of Dialect and Folk Life Studies of Leeds University. Our thanks are due to Mr Kenneth R. Lodge for preparing the maps, and to the Editors of *Leeds Studies in English* for much helpful advice with regard to the reproduction of the maps.

- ¹ For a recent theory, see W. H. Bennet, "The Southern English Development of Germanic Initial [f s p]," *Language*, 31 (1955), 367-71, who postulates an Anglo-Saxon origin derived from Low Franconian. See also H. Kurath, "The Loss of Long Consonants and the Rise of Voiced Fricatives in Middle English," *Language*, 32 (1956), 435-45.
- ² E. Jordan, *Handbuch der mittelenlischen Grammatik, Erster Teil, Lautlehre* (Heidelberg, 1925), §§208, 215; K. Luick, *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache, Erster Band, II. Abteilung* (Stuttgart, 1929-40), §703; K. Brunner, *An Outline of Middle English Grammar*, transl. G. Johnston (Oxford, 1963), §36, n. 1; A. J. Ellis, *EEP*, V, 38; J. Wright, *The English Dialect Grammar* (Oxford, 1905), §§278, 320; J. Kjedergvist, *The Dialect of Pewsey* (London, 1903), pp. 94-6 (following Ellis); Bennet (see Note 1 above). B. Widén, *Studies on the Dorset Dialect* (Lund, 1949), p. 79 n., states, "It is probable that the sound-change which made initial *f* become *v* was still at work at the time of the great influx of AN words into the dialect." See also F. T. Elworthy, *The Dialect of West Somerset* (E.D.S. 1875), pp. 68-74.
- ³ H. Orton and E. Dieth, *Survey of English Dialects, Basic Material* (Leeds, 1962-). The relevant volumes are: IV (Southern), ed. Harold Orton and Martyn F. Wakelin (Leeds, 1967-68) and II (West Midland), ed. Harold Orton and Michael V. Barry (Leeds, 1969-).
- ⁴ Eugen Dieth and Harold Orton, *A Questionnaire for a Linguistic Atlas of England* (Leeds, 1952), reprinted in revised form in the *Introduction to SED* by Harold Orton (Leeds, 1962), pp. 39-113.
- ⁵ This material was collected by Mr D. R. Parry, using the Dieth-Orton *Questionnaire*, while preparing a dissertation for the degree of M.A., and is deposited in the archives of the Institute of Dialect and Folk Life Studies at Leeds University. See D. R. Parry, "Studies in the Linguistic Geography of Radnorshire, Breconshire, Monmouthshire and Glamorgan-shire," unpublished M.A. dissertation, Leeds University, 1964.
- ⁶ We have not considered Southern Ireland. The feature probably still exists in some dialects there; see *EEP*, V, 26-31 (records voicing in the extreme south-east of Wexford), and P. L. Henry, "A Linguistic Survey of Ireland, Preliminary Report," *Lochlann*, I (1958), 53-208.
- ⁷ It does not include words beginning with [θɹ], since this consonant cluster has a development additional to the simple voicing of [θ] (see p.56, above). Words beginning with [s] + voiceless consonant, e.g. [sp], were not tested, although the [s] in these combinations is very occasionally voiced or partially voiced, as is also sometimes the consonant following it. Note, for example, the following from *SED*: [zb] in SPOKES, I.9.6, 37.7; [zβ] (by the side of [zβ]) 37.10 in SPIDER, IV.8.9, 37.2; [zɹ] in STITCH, V.10.4, 39.1; [zɹɹ] and [zɹɹ] in STRAIN, V.5.2, 33.3 and 39.7, respectively; [zβɹ] and [zβɹ] (by the side of [zβɹ]) 31.4 in SPRING, VII.3.6, 37.7 and 38.4, respectively. The full list of words tested is given at the end of this article.
- ⁸ Initial [θ] > [ð] in unstressed words, according to E. J. Dobson (*English Pronunciation 1500-1700*, Vol. II, Oxford, 1957, §360) in the fourteenth century, and [ð] was then extended to stressed forms. The change of [ð] to [d] in these words must, therefore, be subsequent. Dobson further notes (*op. cit.*, §374) that Bulloker (c. 1530-c. 1590) describes a change of initial *th* (i.e. of southern [ð]) to [d] in E.Sx and K in *that, thorn, and those*. In all localities where *SED* recordings were made, St.E. [ð] appears to be rapidly ousting the older [d].
- ⁹ The evidence of place-name spellings (field-names were not consulted), as revealed by the volumes of the English Place-Name Society, is confined to the voicing of initial [f]. Insofar as this can be considered representative, it confirms the conclusion that voicing has gradually receded from the east. There is no orthographical evidence for voicing in K after 1481, according to J. K. Wallenberg, *The Place-Names of Keni* (Uppsala, 1934), though it is known to have once been widespread. Comparatively few examples are recorded by the EPNS in Sr and Mx, where the last examples are noted in 1675 and 1480, respectively, with the notable exception of Vauxhall (< Faukeshale), which only has *v* from 1719 onwards. Perhaps, therefore, voicing disappeared in Mx place-name pronunciations about the same time as it did in K, but persisted longer in Sr, south of the Thames. This persistence is much more evident in Sx, where *v* is recorded often as late as the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, and in seven instances is preserved up to the present day. *V* is very rare in the SE. Midlands: Hrt has one undated example, and Bk has one dated 1493. No examples are recorded for Bd, while Nth has two, one being still in use. *V* occurs in Essex occasionally, in one instance as late as 1480. Further west, Wa has three, the latest being 1594, and Wo five, one of which was preserved as late as 1830. No evidence is available for Brk, and W. H. Dugnan, *Notes on Staffordshire Place Names* (London, 1902), gives no examples for that county. The orthographical use of initial *v* for [f] in place-names seems therefore to have persisted widely only in Sx and Sr until the seventeenth century, and only in Sx into

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the eastern half of the West Midlands, as disclosed by spelling evidence, *Wo* is the only county with any appreciable tendency towards voicing of initial [f]. The absence of any spellings except those in *v* seems to suggest that the voicing of initial [f] was more firmly grounded than voicing of the other fricative consonants. No exploration of place-name material has been made by us in the SW. counties, but only in the "fringe" area. See B. Sundby, *Studies in the Middle English Dialect Material of Worcestershire Records* (Bergen-Oslo, 1963), pp. 201-7, for evidence of ME voicing in *Wo*.

- ¹⁰ For example, T. Sternberg, *The Dialect and Folk-Lore of Northamptonshire* (London, 1851), claims various "West Country" characteristics for the SW. Nth speakers, including the "interchange" of [v] and [f], the "retention" of [z] for [s], and the "substitution" of [d] for [ð]—"though but slightly, in comparison with the usage prevailing in the more Southern provinces" (p. xii). Major B. Lowsley, *A Glossary of Berkshire Words and Phrases* (E.D.S., London, 1888), p. 4, states that initial [f] is always pronounced as [v].
- ¹¹ The Moore-Meech-Whitehall line for *f/v* is drawn from the Thames estuary through *Mx* and the southern tip of *Hrt*, to the south of *Bk*, through the centre of *O*, the NE. tip of *Gl*, the centre of *Wo*, and ends in the extreme south-west of Shropshire. The position of this line is possibly due to the fact that it relies upon many readings from fifteenth-century texts, when St.E. influence was already spreading the use of [f], [s], [θ] and [ʃ].
- ¹² Locs. 4 and 5, which are obviously "border" locs., yield examples of voicing, out of the respective totals of 69, 59, 16 and 28, as follows:
- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----|----|-----|----|-----|---|-----|---|
| Loc. 4 | [v] | 14 | [z] | 9 | [ð] | 3 | [ʒ] | 0 |
| Loc. 5 | | 25 | | 12 | | 3 | | 0 |
- It will be noted from this that loc. 4, in the south, usually yields fewer examples than loc. 5 in the north.
- ¹³ For an exposition of this theory, see W. G. Hoskins, *The Westward Expansion of Wessex* (Leicester University Press, Occasional Paper No. 13, 1960).
- ¹⁴ See *EEP*, V, 171.
- ¹⁵ For example, the typical D [Y(:)] sound, the modern reflex of ME. δ_1 in words like *FOOD*, *BOOK*, gives way to a more "standard" type [u:] or [o] from the middle of *Co* to the extreme south-west.
- ¹⁶ Our colleague, Mr Stanley Ellis, has drawn our attention to the fact that A. J. Ellis, *op. cit.*, makes no reference to the voiced pronunciation of the final affricate in the *So* form *UCH* (= I, 1st person sg.), but that [Adʒ] has been recorded on a tape-recording of an informant from Merriott, *So* loc. 13. This may be an example of another type of voicing which, although absent in the nineteenth century, has been adopted by some speakers since.
- ¹⁷ See Note 2 (above). If voicing is not altogether a recessive feature, however, some French words may not have given up voiced initial consonants, but actually adopted them in the last hundred years; cf. above, p. 13.
- ¹⁸ There are other examples in *SED*: thus *OLD-FASHIONED* (first rec. *OED* 1653) occurs with [v] in the second element at V.6.6, 32.5; [z] in *SOFA* (first rec. *OED* 1625) occurs at VIII.7.7, 37.10.

Complete list of words examined

Note. Where frequency of occurrence warranted the inclusion of a word which is not a key-word in the *Questionnaire*, the key-word is given below in brackets following the word actually used. Some key-words, although beginning with a relevant initial consonant, were not included since the questions concerned were answered by a variety of rr. differing from the key-word.

Words containing initial [f]

Faggot(-wood) (Kindling-wood), Faint, Fallow-land, Farmer, Farmstead, Farmyard, Farrow, Fart (To break wind), Farthings, Father, Fault, Feed (III.3.1 and III.5.1), Feet (VI.10.1 and VI.10.10), Fellies, Fern, Fester, Few (VII.1.19 and VII.8.21), Fields, Fifth, Fight, Filly, Find, Finger, Finish, Finished, Fire, First, Fist, Fitch, etc. (Pole-cat), Five, Flap, Fleas, Fledged, Flies, Flitch, Flood, Floor, Flour, Flowers, Foal, Fog, Fool (April fool), Foot, Ford, Forehead, Forelock, Forks, Fortnight, Forty, Forwards, Found *p.t.*, Found *p.p.*, Four, Fowls (Hens), Fox, Freckles, Friday (VII.4.4), Friends, Frogs, From, Front, Frost (Hoar-frost), Furrow, Further, Furze (Gorse), Pheasants.

Words containing initial [s]

Cinders, Sack, Saddle, Salting-trough, Saturday, Saw *p.t.*, Saw-dust, Sowing-horse, Scythe, Sea-gull (Gull), Second, See, Seedlip (Sowing-basket), Seesaw, Seven (VII.1.6 and VII.5.4), Sew, Sexton, Sight, Silver, Sit, Six, Sixpence, Slaughter-house, Sledge, Slice, Slide, Slip (III.1.11 and III.4.6), Slippery, Slope, Slugs, Slush, Smoke, Snails, Snead (Shaft of scythe), Snore, Snout, Snow, So, Some, Something, Son, Soot, Sort (Kind, VII.8.16 and VII.8.17), South, Sow, Such, Suck, Suet, Suit *n.*, Suits, Sun, Swath, Swear, Sweat, Sweep, Sweets.

Words containing initial [θ] (words beginning with *thr-* are excluded; see Note 7 above)

Thatch, Thatching, Thatcher, Thaw, Thicken, Thigh, Thimble, Third, Thirsty, Thirteen, Thirty, Thistle, Thousand, Thumb, Thunder, Thursday.

Words containing initial [ʃ]

Chemise, Shaft (I.9.4), Shafts (I.9.4), Shall (IX.4.2), Shan't, Share, Sheaf, Shear, Shears, Sheaves, Sheep, Sheepskin, Shelf, Shell, Shepherd, Shilling, Shirt, Shoe, Shoes, Should, Shouldn't (IX.4.8 and IX.4.9), Shoulder, Shovel, Shut, Shy, Sugar, Sure.