THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PODCAST
TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE 86:
FAMILY OF REBELS

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Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 86: Family of Rebels. In this episode, we're going to conclude our look at Henry II's reign as ruler of England and western France. The final years of Henry's reign were consumed with putting down rebellions, but the rebels weren't simply restless nobles. They were also Henry's own children – and his wife. So it was a family of rebels. The end of Henry's reign also marked the gradual re-emergence of English writing. So we'll also look at the first major document composed in Middle English since the end of the Peterborough Chronicle.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. You can always reach me directly by email at kevin@historyofenglishpodcast.com. And I'm also on twitter at englishhistpod.

Also, one quick note about Patreon. As you probably know by now, you can sign up to support the podcast at Patreon.com. Just go to historyofenglishpodcast.com and link from there. The Patreon site includes bonus mini-episodes, and now it also includes a transcript of each new episode as soon as it is released. I continue to work on the transcripts of old episodes, and I hope to have an update on that in the near future. But for now, transcripts of the new episodes will be available at Patreon.

So with that, let's turn to this episode. I'm going to begin by moving the historical narrative forward up to the death of Henry II. Then in the second half, I'm going to switch gears and look at a very important document that appeared around that time called the Ormulum.

But let's begin with Henry II as ruler of England and much of western France. Over the last couple of episodes, we've seen how Henry pieced together a massive realm. It was so large that later historians called it an empire. It made Henry rich and powerful, and it gave him access to vast resources. It also left him with many enemies along his extensive borders. That included Louis VII – the King of France – who was concerned about Henry's power and influence. But Henry's greatest threat came from within. As his sons grew older, they grew impatient. And they started to demand their own pieces of Henry's empire. And when they didn't get what they wanted, they were eager to rebel. So Henry had to manage all of these threats – both foreign and domestic.

To trace these developments we should probably start with the marriage of Henry and his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine. The marriage had always been a political union. But it also produced eight children – five sons and three daughters. The eldest son, named William, died as a small child. So that left four sons – Henry, Richard, Geoffrey and John.

Henry and Eleanor's marriage may have had a fairy tale beginning, but it didn't have a happy ending. It was more like a Greek tragedy. The marriage ended in jealously, separation, warfare, and imprisonment. If Henry and Eleanor ever loved each other, it appears that that affection came to an end by the time Eleanor gave birth to their youngest child named John. Shortly after John was born in 1166, Eleanor left Henry and returned to Aquitaine.

The historical sources don't give a specific reason for the separation. But the most popular theory is that Eleanor was furious with Henry because he was having an open affair with a woman named Rosamund Clifford. The affair is well documented, and by all accounts, Henry had a strong affection for his young mistress.

The name Rosamund was an old Germanic name. It combined Germanic root words meaning 'horse' and 'protector.' But Henry gave the name a new Latin spin. He called Rosamund – "Rosa Mundi" – which in Latin meant the 'rose of the world.'

Again, it isn't clear if the affair was the actual cause of the separation. But shortly after the affair began, Eleanor headed to Aquitaine. Now as we know, Eleanor was feisty and headstrong. She had already married and divorced the King of France. And now she had married and separated from Henry, the King of England. Despite a troubled history with her husbands, she remained very close to her children – especially her son Richard – later to be known as Richard the Lionheart. Richard also took up residence in Aquitaine. And he helped his mother administer the duchy with expectations that he would one day inherit the region.

The year that Eleanor left Henry was the same year that Henry invaded Brittany in northwestern France. And that turned out to be good news for another one of the middle sons of Henry and Eleanor. After that invasion, Henry soon arranged a marriage between his son Geoffrey and the heiress to Brittany. This arrangement set up Geoffrey as the future Duke of Brittany.

So from this point on, the ultimate division of Henry's empire began to take shape. The two middle sons would each have their own region. Richard would one day receive Aquitaine in the south of France. And Geoffrey would one day inherit Brittany in the northwest. But most of the empire would pass to the eldest son named Henry. Of course, that included the northern regions of Normandy and Anjou – and it also included England. So the younger Henry was destined to become the next King of England. Since the king and his son were both named Henry, I'll refer to the son as "Young Henry" to try to keep them separate.

So Henry's empire was be divided between his three oldest sons. But I mentioned earlier that there was a fourth son named John. It appears that John was originally destined for a life in the Church, so no specific land was earmarked for him – at least not at this point. John later became known as John Lackland. And that name "Lackland" came from the fact that he lacked any specific land or territory in his father's realm. But by all accounts, John was Henry's favorite son. So he will play a big role in our story going forward.

These general plans for Henry's succession were finally formalized a couple of years later in the year 1168. In that year, Henry tried to come to terms with the Louis VII – the King of France. Now, as you might remember, both men had been married to Eleanor of Aquitaine. So there was probably some personal jealously between them. But beyond that, Henry's empire had eclipsed Louis's kingdom is size and power. So Louis was always looking for ways to destabilize Henry's realm, usually by supporting Henry's enemies.

So in the year 1168, the two kings tried to settle their differences. They negotiated a peace treaty – which ultimately fell apart. But that treaty is important because it outlined the ultimate division of Henry's empire between his sons. And the agreement did that because Henry's lands in France were technically held as a vassal of the French king. So Henry needed Louis to agree to the division.

The agreement stipulated that eldest son, Henry – aka "Young Henry" – would receive Normandy, Anjou and Maine, and he would hold those regions as Louis's vassal. Young Henry would also get Brittany, but he would then turn around give it to his brother Geoffrey who would hold it as a vassal. The agreement also stipulated that Richard would one day receive Aquitaine, and he would hold it as Louis's vassal.

So that pretty much took care of the future division of Henry's lands in France. But it didn't address the matter of England, because England was held as a separate kingdom. And as I noted, England was also destined to go to the eldest son, Young Henry. So a couple of years later, in 1170, two important ceremonies were held.

Down in Aquitaine, Richard was formally declared the Duke of Aquitaine. And up in England, Young Henry was formally proclaimed as the King of England. I actually mentioned this ceremony a couple of episodes back in the context of the discussion about Thomas Becket. Becket was the Archbishop of Canterbury at the time, but he was in exile in France. So Henry had to get some other church officials to preside over the coronation.

The important thing to understand about these developments is that Young Henry was given a title, but he wasn't really given any power. This was a customary practice back in France. These coronations were designed to create an orderly succession, but they weren't intended as a grant of actual power. They were mostly ceremonial. So Young Henry now had the title of 'King,' but he was really just a king in waiting.

A couple of year later, Young Henry married the daughter of the French king, Louis VII. The marriage had been arranged since they were small children, but it was finally formalized at this point. So Young Henry now had two separate connections to the French king. Louis was his wife's father and his mother's ex-husband. (Yes, these relationships did tend to get incestuous.) And that relationship between Young Henry and Louis the French king will become very important as we move forward.

So let's focus on Young Henry for a moment. He was now technically the king, but 'king' in name only. Even though he didn't have the power and resources of the king, he tried to live like a king. He kept a large retinue of supporters, including many young nobles and knights. His court was lavish, and he lived well beyond his means. He was known for his ***largess***, and that's kind of an important term.

The term ***largess*** refers to a person's generosity and willingness to make lavish gifts, and it sometimes refers to the actual gifts that are made. ***Largess*** is a noun, but it first appeared in English in its adjective form – as the word ***large***. And that word ***large*** first appeared around the current point

in our story. The original meaning of the word ***large*** was 'generous, bountiful, and liberal in giving.' So again, it was the adjective form of the word ***largess***.

These words came from French, and they were important because they were a fundamental part of the emerging code of conduct which came to be known as chivalry. That code of conduct required the knight to defend the weak, show compassion and courtesy, and be generous with his supporters by making gifts. In the terminology of the day, he was to provide a ***largess***. The Latin root of ***largess*** and ***large*** meant 'abundant.' And it came to mean abundant gift-giving. And again, the adjective form ***large*** meant 'generous and bountiful.' Of course, the word ***large*** evolved over time – acquiring a much more general sense as something great in size or scope.

I mentioned that the word ***large*** entered English around this time. So you may be wondering how we know that given that English writing was so rare during this period. Well, around this time, a series of old homilies – or sermons – were written down in English. These are called the Lambeth Homilies, and they were copied sometime in the 1170s. Since they were copied from earlier Old English documents, the language is primarily Old English – not Middle English. The scribes did update the language in places – re-phrasing some passages and incorporating a few new words here and there. For example, the text is the oldest surviving English document to use the words ***fruit***, ***oil***, ***prove*** and ***juggler*** – all from French. You might remember that the word ***juggler*** originally referred to a minstrel or all-around entertainer. The text also contains the first known use of Norse words like ***skill***, ***wing***, and ***thrust***. And since this was a collection of sermons, it isn't surprising to find the first known use of certain Latin or French terms associated with Christianity. Those include words like ***mercy***, ***paradise***, ***passion*** and ***sacrament***.

And as I noted earlier, the text includes the first known use of the word ***large*** in the English language – in that original sense of 'abundant or generous.' And that word ***large*** is important because King Henry's son, Young Henry, was very ***large*** – in the original sense of the word. He was generous and provided his supporters with a ***largess***. But there was one major problem with that. Young Henry had the title of King, but he didn't have the income and resources that typically flowed to the king. So he started to run out of money. And he couldn't maintain a largess with empty coffers.

By early 1173, Young Henry was in heavy debt. He became frustrated, and he started to demand some of his inheritance so that he could get access to the income and revenue. But his father refused to relinquish any control. Young Henry's frustrations were fed by his father-in-law – the French king Louis. Louis was trying sow the seeds of distrust and rebellion. He wanted Young Henry to stand up to his father. He hoped that in-fighting and rebellion would ultimately lead to the break-up of the Angevin Empire.

Young Henry's frustrations reached a fever pitch when his father tried to arrange a marriage for the youngest son John. The arrangement included a wedding gift of three castles lying between Anjou and Maine. John was to receive those castles, but Young Henry considered those castles to be part of his inheritance.

Young Henry was furious, and within a few days of the castles being granted, he slipped away from Henry's court and rode to Paris. He met with his father-in-law Louis. And together, they plotted a massive rebellion.

Young Henry then got the support of his mother Eleanor. And she encouraged her other sons, Richard and Geoffrey, to join the rebellion as well. The two brothers soon rode to Paris to join Young Henry. So all of that meant that King Henry's three eldest sons and his wife were now united against him. And they were allied with his arch-enemy, Louis VII, his wife's ex-husband.

As if that wasn't bad enough, many of Henry's other enemies along his borders soon joined in. That included the counts of Flanders, Boulogne, and Blois. It eventually included the King of the Scots as well. His name was William the Lion. And he was still upset that Scotland had been forced to return the northern English counties of Northumberland and Cumberland after the Anarchy. So he saw the rebellion as an opportunity to reclaim those lands for Scotland.

For King Henry, it probably looked like the entire world had allied against him. And his chances of victory looked slim. The war began when the rebels invaded Normandy in July of 1173. The conflict soon spread into Brittany and then to England. In November, a few months after the revolt began, Eleanor headed from Aquitaine to Paris to join her sons and her ex-husband. But along the way, she was intercepted and captured by Henry's men. She was immediately thrown in prison.

But Eleanor's confinement didn't stop the rebellion. Battles raged on both sides of the Channel. In England, most of the important nobles didn't join the rebellion. They had too much to lose in another Anarchy. So that allowed Henry to secure his position there. As I noted last time, Henry had settled his disputes with most of the Welsh nobles prior to his invasion of Ireland. So they never joined the rebellion either.

In 1174, the rebels tried to take control of England. William the Lion invaded from Scotland. And then the Count of Flanders announced his intention to invade from across the Channel. He sent an advance force into East Anglia, but Henry confronted the rebels and managed a decisive victory. Henry's supporters then defeated the Scots and captured their king – William the Lion. The other rebels in England soon surrendered. Henry then headed back across the channel to Normandy and defeated the remaining rebels there.

In October, after a year and a half of rebellion, Henry worked out peace agreements with his three sons and with Louis. Henry allowed his sons to have their lands and possessions back. But he wasn't as forgiving with his wife.

Henry felt that Eleanor had stirred the sons to rebellion and she had worked against him in alliance with her ex-husband. So Eleanor was kept under house arrest in various castles in southern England for the remainder of Henry's reign. Henry also dealt a harsh blow to William the Lion of Scotland. He forced William to sign a treaty that subjugated the Scottish nobles to the English Crown and the Scottish clergy to the English Church. William was also forced to surrender the strongest castles in Scotland. As a result of this treaty, Henry now had broad and sweeping rights over Scotland and its

Church. Before the failed rebellion, Scotland had been largely independent. Now it came under direct English control. It remained squarely under Henry's thumb for the rest of his reign.

No other ruler had ever had so much control over the British Isles. Scotland and most of Ireland had been added to his realm. And most of the Welsh princes had recognized Henry as their overlord. This period immediately afer Henry's victory over the rebels was the highpoint of his reign. None of his neighbors could challenge him. And Henry was widely viewed as the greatest ruler in Europe.

A couple of years later, in the year 1177, Henry decided to give his youngest son John some territory as well. John was the favorite son. He was also the son who did not join the earlier rebellion. So at a council of barons in Oxford, Henry named John as the Lord of Ireland. John was only 9 years old at the time, but he now had his own inheritance.

Henry's plans for succession may have seemed settled, but they were about to be upset by a series of deaths. First of all, in 1180, Louis VII died in France. He was succeeded by his son, Philip Augustus – known to history as Phillip II of France. The young king was a far more ruthless and skillful king than his father Louis. And it's really under Phillip's reign that the balance of power started to shift back to the French kings.

Three years later, in the year 1183, another major player in our story died. King Henry's son – Young Henry – died of dysentery. With Young Henry's death, all of his father's succession plans fell apart. Henry had to find a new successor, so he looked to his next oldest child, Richard. He called all three of his sons to a meeting and announced his new plans. All of Young Henry's lands would now go to Richard. That included England, Normandy and Anjou. But in exchange, Henry wanted Richard to give up Aquitaine in favor of the youngest son, John. It seemed like a good deal, but Richard balked at the idea of giving up his beloved Aquitaine. He had been raised there and fully expected to inherit the region when his father died. And on top of that, he didn't really trust his father. Richard knew that young John was the favorite son, and he suspected that Henry would ultimately name John as his heir. And he saw this demand to give up Aquitaine in favor of John as the first step in that ultimate outcome. So Richard stormed out of the meeting. And that left the matter unresolved.

This meeting was soon followed by another death. In the year 1186, Henry's middle son Geoffrey died in a jousting tournament. That left just two sons, Richard and John. Richard was the eldest child and the presumed heir to most of Henry's empire. But he had quarreled with his father for most of his life. John was clearly the favorite son. And Richard grew even more suspicious that John would eventually be designated as the heir. Increasingly, Richard made friends with the new young French king, Phillip. And Phillip fed Richard's suspicions that John was destined to take his rightful inheritance.

In the year 1188, conflict once again broke out between the Angevins and the French. Henry attacked Phillip's lands, and Phillip attacked Henry's lands in Normandy. In November, the parties held a peace conference to resolve the conflict. Henry, Phillip and Richard all attended the meeting. During the meeting, Phillip couldn't help but acknowledge the elephant in the room. He asked Henry

to confirm Richard as the lawful heir to Henry's empire. But Henry refused. And that was the ultimate breaking point between father and son.

Richard and Phillip then joined forces and attacked Henry in northern France. It was at this point that everything started to fall apart for Henry. He didn't have enough English troops with him in France at the time. So he was overwhelmed militarily. He had to rely on mercenaries, but he soon ran out of money to pay them, and they deserted him. And on top of that, Henry had become very ill.

In June of 1189, Henry's forces were defeated at Le Mans – in northwestern France. Henry then sent the bulk of his men to Normandy, but he was too sick to accompany them. So he retreated to a castle in Anjou. And he lay in bed for the next two weeks – sick and drained.

On July 3, Henry managed to get out of bed to meet the young French king Philip to discuss peace terms. At the meeting, Philip reeled off a long list of demands which amounted to Henry's complete surrender. Phillip also demanded that Henry recognize Richard as his heir on both sides of the Channel. During the meeting, Henry was so sick that had to be held upright on his horse by his attendants. Having been defeated on the battlefield, and being gravely ill at the time, Henry had little choice but to give in and agree to the demands.

Henry returned to the castle and was placed in bed. And he immediately sent for a list of all his supporters who had gone over to Richard's side. The first name on the list was his young son John. Henry's favorite son had abandoned him at his weakest and most vulnerable moment. The grief and shock was too much to bear. And Henry died three days later on July 6. He probably succumbed to his illness, but historians like to say that he died of a broken heart.

With Henry's death, the massive empire passed to Richard. He became the new Duke of Normandy. And then he headed straight to London to be crowned as the new King of England. As I noted earlier, Richard became known to history as Richard the Lionheart. And his arrival in England coincided with the gradual return of English as a written language. So we'll leave Richard's story there for now. And we'll turn our focus back to the history of English.

It was around this time, when Richard came to power, that we find the next major text composed in English. This document is known as the Ormulum, and it is one of the oldest surviving documents composed in Middle English.

Many scholars consider the final entries of the Peterborough Chronicle to be the oldest Middle English document. Now, about 30 or 40 years later, we have the next text. The exact date of the text is unknown, but it is generally dated to the last couple of decades of the 1100s.

Since this is one of the few surviving documents from that transitional period between Old and Middle English, it is extremely important to English scholars because it is one of the few documents to capture the changes that were taking place at the time.

The Ormulum is ultimately a religious document composed by a monk in the East Midlands of England. It is a collection of homilies – or sermons – in some respects similar to the Lambeth Homilies that I mentioned earlier in the episode. But this particular collection is not a copy of earlier homilies. It is the unique creation of the author named Orm.

You may be wondering how we know the name of the writer – and the name of the text. Well, the author tells us. He says that his name is Orm and the book is called Ormulum: He writes:

This book is named Ormulum because Orm it wrought . . .
þiss boc iss nemmned Orrmulum forrþi þat Orrm itt wrohhte . . .

Now, the text isn't really considered to be a great work of literature. It's written in verse, but Orm didn't use conventional poetic styles. He didn't use rhyming or alliteration. And the text tends to be very repetitive in parts. But the Ormulum isn't important as a work of poetry or literature. It's important because it captures many of the changes that were taking place in English in the late 1100s.

Orm begins the book with a dedication to his brother. I thought it might be interesting to go through th opening lines of that dedication to get a feel for the language. In the dedication, Orm tells us that he has a brother named Walter. And Walter is his brother in three ways. They have the same parents so they are natural brothers. They are also Christian brothers in faith. And third, they are both monks, so they're brothers in the monastery where they have taken vows to follow the monastic rule. Orm then says that Walter asked him to translate part of the Gospels into English so that the common people of England could better understand them. Orm says that he has attempted to translate those teachings as best he could with the little wit and intelligence that the Lord has granted him.

As we go through these lines, I'm going to give you a literal translation first so you can get a sense of the grammar and syntax. And then I'll give you the original Middle English version as Orm wrote it.

Now brother Walter, my brother after the fleshly kind (which meant 'my brother in flesh')
Nu broþerr Wallterr, broþerr min affterr þe flæshess kinde,

and my brother in Christendom through baptism, and through truth (which meant 'thru faith')
annd broþerr min i Crisstenndom þurrh fulluhht, annd þurrh trowwþe,

and my brother in God's house yet in the third way
annd broþerr min i Godess hus ȝet o þe þridde wise,

through that with which we have taken both a rule-book to follow
þurrh þatt witt hafenn takenn ba an reȝhell-boc to follȝhenn

under the canons' order and life, just as Saint Augustine sette
unnderr kanunn-kess had annd lif, swa summ Sannt Awwstin sette

I have done as you asked and performed your will)
Icc hafe don swa-summ þu badd, annd forþedd te þin wille

I have wound (or turned) into English the Gospel's holy lore
Icc hafe wennd inntill Ennglissh goddspelless hallȝhe lare

After that little wit that me my Lord has lent
affterr þatt little witt þatt me min Drihhtin hafeþþ lenedd

So from those passages, we can hear a much more familiar form of English. The majority of the words have survived into Modern English even though the meanings may have changed over time. The word order is also closer to Modern English. It is still evolving, but it is getting closer to a structure we can recognize.

There are also other signs of a language in transition. Orm uses the modern pronoun ***I***, but he mixes it in with the older form ***icc***. His verb forms are also variable. Take the past participle of the verb ***show*** – as in "I have shown." Orm uses both ***shæwenn*** and ***shæwedd*** – literally ***shown*** and ***showed***. So that shows that some of the verb forms weren't completely settled at the time.

Orm also shows some brand new English constructions. He added the word ***over*** to words like ***lord*** and ***king***. And that produced the first known usage of the terms ***overlord*** and ***overking***.

He is also gives us a preview of another compound word which you may not have even realized was a compound word. That's the word ***alone***. At first glance, ***alone*** looks like a variation of the word ***lone*** or ***lonely*** – but it's not. Words like ***lone*** and ***lonely*** and ***lonesome*** all came later – as a variation of the word ***alone***.

Alone itself is actually a compound word. It combines the words ***all*** and ***one***. So it meant 'all by oneself.' Orm is the first known English writer to use the phrase ***all one*** with that meaning. He does it in a translation of part of the Book of Matthew – the part where it says "man shall not live by bread alone." He writes that man shall not 'Bi bræd all ane libbenn' – literally 'by bread all one live.' So he still uses two distinct words – ***all*** and ***ane*** (which was ***all*** and ***one***). He probably didn't invent that construction, but this appears to be the first usage in an English document. And ***all one*** was eventually shortened into a single word ***alone***. But over time, the pronunciation of that 'L' in the middle shifted from the first syllable to the second syllable, and it went from /all-own/ to /a-lone/. And from there, ***alone*** was shortened to just ***lone***. And based on that new root, we got words like ***lonely*** and ***lonesome***.

Orm was also the first English writer to use the word ***right*** as an adverb to mean 'very' – as in "He's a right good man." Orm talks of leading a life "rihht wel wiþþ Godess hellpe" – "right well with God's help." This usage still survives today, but it tends to be very colloquial and is usually associated with an old-fashioned style of speech.

So I said that the Ormulum was composed in the East Midlands – in the east central part of England. But many scholars have analyzed the text to narrow it down to a more specific location. Based on

a variety of factors, including Orms' spellings, his vocabulary and some of his unique dialect forms, most modern scholars think he lived somewhere in southern Lincolnshire. And that location is interesting because it is just north of Peterborough. So the Peterborough Chronicle and the Ormulum both appear to have been composed in the same vicinity within a few years of each other. And given that close proximity, you might expect the language of the Ormulum to be very similar to that of the Peterborough Chronicle. But it isn't. The language of the Ormulum is actually quite different.

For one thing, it has a lot of spelling innovations. And that was probably because Orm intended for the text to be read aloud. So he wanted to make sure that the words were pronounced properly. And in fact, he specifically says that in the document. I'm going to focus on Orm's spelling innovations in the next episode, because they reveal a lot about the evolving pronunciation of English at the time – at least in the East Midlands. But for the remainder of this episode, I want to focus on the words that he chose to use.

I said that the language of the Ormulum was very different from the Peterborough Chronicle. And that is partly because the Ormulum shows a lot more Norse influence than the Peterborough Chronicle. In fact, many Norse words are recorded in English for the first time in the Ormulum.

It shouldn't really be surprising that the document contains a lot of Norse words – because Orm himself was probably of Scandinavian descent. Remember that the East Midlands had once been part of the Danelaw where Viking settlement was extensive. And ***Orm*** is a Norse name. It meant 'serpent' or 'snake' in Old Norse. In fact, ***Orm*** and ***worm*** are cognate. ***Orm*** is the Norse word and ***worm*** is the Old English word. Old Norse tended to drop the 'w' sound before a vowel. That's why the Scandinavians had the god ***Odin*** where the Anglo-Saxons had ***Wodan***. And they had ***Orm*** where the Anglo-Saxons had ***worm***.

Anyway, Orm may have been a descendant of those earlier Viking settlers, not only because of his name, but also because his English is heavily peppered with Norse words. Most notably, Orm is the first English writer to use the Norse pronoun forms ***they*** and ***their***. And he was one of the first to use the word ***them*** as well. As we know from prior episodes of the podcast, the 'TH' pronoun forms – ***they***, ***them*** and ***their*** – came from the Vikings. The Anglo-Saxons used ***hey***, ***hem*** and ***here***, respectively.

Over time the Norse 'TH' forms pushed out the Old English 'H' forms. And that shows how great the Norse influence was – especially in the Old Danelaw region like the East Midlands. And Modern English evolved out of those East Midland diaelcts. So some of that Norse influence seeped into Modern English. And that included some of those Norse pronouns.

Again, Orm uses all three of those pronoun forms – ***they***, ***them*** and ***their***. And with the exception of a late Old English document that uses a form of the word ***them***, the Ormulum is oldest surviving document to use those modern Norse pronouns.

I should also note that the text sometimes used the Old English forms as well. Orm sometimes uses both forms in the same phrase –like ***þe33 hemm self*** – which is literally "they themselves."

So that suggests that both pronoun forms were mixed together at the time in the East Midlands. People must have used them somewhat interchangeably. But over time, the 'TH' forms won out. The 'TH' forms gradually spread southward, and the Old English 'H' forms were essentially gone by the late 1400s.

So Orm gives us some new pronouns from Old Norse. But he also gives us a lot of other new words from Scandinavia. And some of those words survived into Modern English, and in fact are very common words today. For example, Orm is the first English writer to use the words ***same*** and ***seem*** – both of those words coming from Old Norse. And believe it or not, ***same*** and ***seem*** are cognate. They come from the same Indo-European root word. And the Old English word ***some*** also comes from that root. So ***same***, ***seem*** and ***some*** are all related. So let's see how those words are connected.

The ultimate Indo-European root was ****sem***, and it meant 'one' or 'as one.' That root produced a lot of words in English. Via Latin, it gave us words like ***single***, ***simple*** and ***similar***. So from those words, we can see a direct connection to the Norse word ***same***. I think we instinctively assume that the words ***similar*** and ***same*** are related – and they are – but it is actually a very distant relationship. ***Similar*** comes in via Latin and ***same*** comes in via Scandinavia.

As I noted, Orm uses the word ***same*** for the first time in the English language. Old English used ***gelic*** which was an early form of the word ***alike***. But now the word ***same*** came in.

So it may not be surprising that words like ***same***, ***similar*** and ***single*** are related. But how are those words related to the Norse word ***seem***? Well, the connection is kind of hard to follow. We have to go back to the original sense of the word ***seem*** in Old Norse. Remember that the Indo-European root word meant 'one' or 'as one.' And in Old Norse, it produced an early version of the word ***seem*** which meant to fit together as one. So if you imagine a puzzle, you put together a lot of individual pieces to make one complete puzzle. So those pieces fit together. They're compatible and suitable. So if we extend that concept to a set of ideas – specifically two or more ideas that fit together – we start to get the original sense of the word ***seem***. If I have an idea that fits into some larger world view, it may appear – or ***seem*** – to be true. So if my boss drives a fancy car and lives in a huge mansion, his lifestyle is the ***same*** as other rich men. So he ***seems*** to be rich too. So that's the ultimate connection between ***same*** and ***seem***. But anyway, both words come from Old Norse and both words were first used in the Ormulum.

I noted earlier that the Norse words ***same*** and ***seem*** are also cognate with the Old English word ***some***. Again, that word ***some*** has also undergone some changes over the centuries.

The original sense of the word ***some*** was 'one part of a larger whole.' So earlier, I gave the analogy of the puzzle. Well in Old English, one piece of that puzzle might be called ***some***. And we still have that sense when we refer to ***something***. ***Something*** is one thing selected out of a larger collection. Well over time, that sense of 'one part of a larger whole' was extended to apply to 'several small pieces out of larger group.' And that is the more modern sense of the word ***some***.

Now I mention the word ***some*** because of its connection to ***same*** and ***seem***. And I also mention it because Orm gives us the first known uses of two compound words using the word ***some***. Orm is

the first English writer to use the terms ***somewhere*** (which he renders as ***summwhær***) and ***somewhat*** (whish he renders as ***summwhatt***). Old English actually used a similar construction as ***somewhat***. It used ***hwæt litles*** which was literally 'little what.' But now, Orm gives us ***somewhat***.

So we've seen that Orm used Norse words like ***they***, ***them***, ***their***, ***same*** and ***seem***. Here are a few other Norse words that appear for the first time in the Ormulum. Orm gives us the first use of the words ***want***, ***anger***, ***scare***, ***thrive***, ***raise***, ***meek*** and ***bloom***. Again, all Norse words.

He also gives us the first known use of the Norse word ***skin***. He uses it in the term ***shepess skinn*** (/shay-pess skin/) – which was 'sheep's skin.' Old English used the word ***hide***.

Orm also gives us the first use of the Norse word ***ill***. He uses it in the sense of 'wicked or depraved.' So he speaks of ***ill will*** and someone whose heart is ***ill***. It was used in place of the Old English word ***evil***. By the way, ***ill*** and ***evil*** do not appear to be related.

Orm also gives us the first known use of the Norse word ***blunt***. The Old English word was ***unscearp*** – or ***unsharp***.

Orm is the first English writer to use the Norse word ***clip*** to mean 'cut,' and he is the first to use the Norse word ***bait*** to meant harrass or attack. So if you bait me into doing something I don't really want to do, I'm using the word ***bait*** like Orm first used it.

Orm also gives us the Norse word ***aloft***. Old English used ***up-heah*** – which was literally 'up high.'

He gives us the Norse word ***sly*** for Old English ***cræftig***. And he gives us the Norse word ***wand*** – as in a magic wand. Old English used the word ***rod***.

Orm also was the first English writer to use the Norse word ***scold***, but he didn't use it in quite the way we use it today. A ***skald*** was a poet in Old Norse. And Orm refers to ***scaldess*** – which he apparently used to mean minstrels. Norse ***skalds*** or minstrels were known for their rough speech, and the word ***skald*** – or ***scold*** – came to mean a person who used abusive language. So it was originally a noun. But about a century later, it started to be used as a verb – to mean 'to verbally abuse or chide.' And that gave us the modern sense of the word ***scold***.

Orm was also the first English writer to use the Norse word ***bound***. It was used in the sense of 'ready or prepared.' This initial usage has largely died out. You might hear someone say that they are 'ready and bound to go.' This led to a sense of the word as the place of destination, as in ***homeward bound***, ***outward bound*** or ***upward bound***.

In one part of the Ormulum, Orm discusses the well-known passage from the Book of Matthew where Jesus goes into the temple and overthrows the tables of the money changes. Referring to this passage, Orm writes, "For that they turned God's house into a huckster's booth" – "Forr þatt te33 turrndenn Godess hus Inntill hucc̄steress boþe."

Now this passage is interesting because Orm uses the phrase "huckster's booth," and this is first known use of both of those two words in the English language.

Huckster appears to be a borrowing from Dutch, and that would make it one of the first Dutch loanwords borrowed into English. And ***booth*** is another Norse word. Those words eventually replaced native English terms. The word ***ceap*** was an Old English word for a market. And a ***huckster*** was a ***ceapman*** in Old English. It was literally a 'market man, ' and ***ceapman*** actually gave us the surname ***Chapman***. And a ***booth*** was originally a ***ceapsetl*** which was literally a 'cheap seat' or a 'market seat.' In an earlier episode of the podcast, we saw that the word ***ceap*** came to mean a bargain, and that gave us the modern sense of the word ***cheap*** to mean low cost or low in price. But thanks to Orm, we know that by the 1200s a ***ceapman*** was sometimes called a ***huckster***, and ***ceapsetl*** was sometimes called a ***booth***.

I should note that Orm also used a lot of other Norse words, but many of them never really passed into standard English. However, some did pass into Northern English dialects where they still survive today. For example, Orm is the first known English writer to use the word ***addle*** to mean 'earn or produce.' And that word still lives on in parts of the north of England. So in the Yorkshire dialect, if you "earn some money," you might "addle some money" – or in the local vernacular, you might "addle some brass."

I noted in earlier episodes that Norse words had probably been around for quite a while in the old Danelaw region. They were probably there in the late Old English period, but those words aren't generally found in Old English documents because those documents tended to be written in the standard dialect of Wessex. But now, with the loss of that written dialect, scribes tended to write as they spoke. And that's why a writer like Orm – who was writing in the old Danelaw region – tended to use a lot of Norse words.

So we know that Orm used Norse words, but what about French words? Well, there are very few French loanwords in the Ormulum despite the pervasive influence of French at the time. The text itself is nearly 20,000 lines long, but it has less than a dozen loanwords from French, and most of those never entered standard English.

We do find the first use of the French word ***scorn*** in an English text. And it is a good example of why it can be hard to identify the ultimate source of some of these words. The word ***scorn*** is ultimately a Germanic word. That 'SK' sound at the beginning is a giveaway. The word eventually passed into Late Latin and early French. And Orm picked up the word for the first time in English as ***skarn*** and ***skarnedd*** – literally ***scorn*** and ***scorned***.

Given the overall influence of French at the time, it is surprising that the Ormulum contains so few French words. Some scholars think that the omission was intentional – that Orm had an aversion to French words. He specifically says that he wants the text to be used as a preaching took and read out loud to congregations. So maybe he felt that they were unfamiliar with those French words. But as we'll see in upcoming episodes, some of the other Middle English documents composed just a few years later were filled with French words. So the lack of French influence in the Ormulum is a bit of a mystery.

It's even more of a mystery because Orm seems to be familiar with French. His writing style actually shows a lot of French influences. For example, he used a lot of French spellings. So he appears to have been trained in French spelling and writing.

But Orm did more than replace Anglo-Saxon letters with French letters. He actually created his own unique spelling conventions. He devised a technique to distinguish short vowels from long vowels. And that is important because it confirms that the pronunciation of English words was changing during the early Middle English period.

Next time, we'll look at how Orm and other Middle English scribes dealt with the changing sounds of English. Some of their innovations survived and some didn't. But they greatly influenced the way we spell words today. So next time, we'll explore the sound of Middle English and the application of the alphabet to those sounds.

Until then, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.