

PRAISING, FOLLOWING AND MELTING: THE REFLEXES OF PROTO-BRYTHONIC *ʝ IN CORNISH¹

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ABSTRACT

In most words, Proto-Brythonic *ʝ usually remained long as in Breton, and gave Primitive Cornish /œ/, which was unrounded to /ɛ/, first in final unstressed syllables, then when stressed in polysyllables, and finally in stressed monosyllables. In PrimC, /œ/ in words ending in a high front vowel was liable to *i*-affection to /y/, which was subsequently unrounded to /ɪ/. In some words, Pr-Bry *ʝ was shortened to *ɔ as in Welsh, giving PrimC /ɔ/; examples are *bora* ‘dawn’, *broder* ‘brother’, *gormola* ‘praise’ and the plural suffixes *-ogyon* and *-osow*. The implications for Revived Cornish are examined.

1) INTRODUCTION

1.1 The word *gormola*³ ‘praise’

After a two-year gap, this year⁴ I once more had the pleasure of conducting the Cornish Christmas carol service at St Ives Chapel. We sang the Cornish version of Charles Wesley’s *Hark the herald angels sing*⁵, probably translated by E.G. Retallick Hooper. The refrain is *Klew! Kannasow Nev a gan / gormola dhe’n Fleghek splann*. Singing this caused me to reflect on the noun *gormola* ‘praise’.

1.1.1 Attestation

In the traditional texts, this word appears only in Late Cornish (Table 1):

Table 1	Attestations of the noun <i>gormola</i> ‘praise’	
Textual spelling	Reference	Remarks
<i>Gormola</i>	J.Boson’s epitaph for J.Keigwin	translated by J.Boson as ‘Glory’
<i>gormola</i>	Gwavas’ letter to Tonkin	
<i>gormola</i>	Lhuyd’s notebook, p. 76	glossing W <i>gogoniant</i> , Lat. <i>Laus</i> .
<i>Gormola</i>	Lhuyd: AB077b ⁶	glossing Lat. <i>Laus</i> , W <i>maul</i>

¹ This paper, completed in 2026, amplifies part of a presentation to the 17th International Congress of Celtic Studies, University of Utrecht, 2023 July.

² The views expressed in this paper are those of the author rather than the corporate views of the Board.

³ Words in **bold italic** are spelled according to the principles of *Kernewek Kemmyn* (abbreviated KK) in *Gerlyver Meur* (2020).

⁴ This introduction was written in 2022, after a two-year gap because of Covid.

⁵ Wesley actually wrote *Hark how all the welkin rings*; the more familiar first line is due to an alteration by George Whitefield.

⁶ AB is short for *Archaeologia Britannica*

1.1.2 Etymology and morphology

The recorded form *gormola* is believed to come from an earlier **gormoleth*⁷ (*-eth* = [-eð]), in the same way as Middle Cornish *lowena* ‘joy’ comes from **loweneth* (cf. B *levenez*, W *llawenydd*)⁸. The word has three morphemes: *gor-* (intensive prefix) + **meul* ‘praise’ + *-eth* (abstract noun ending). Unlike B *meul* ‘flattery’ and W *mawl* ‘praise’, the root in Cornish (**meul*) is not recorded.

1.1.3 Stress

The word *gormola* bears the usual penultimate stress, and because the stressed vowel <o> is followed by a single consonant, it is half-long, according to the quantity rules. In the carol, the stress falls unnaturally on the final syllable, so that in the carol there is a case for replacing *gormola* with an expression whose stress fits the music, such as *gormol krev*.

The Welsh cognate of *gormola* is *gorfoledd*, and the verbal nouns B *kanmeuliñ* ‘to celebrate (trans.)’ and W *canmoli* ‘to praise’ have a similar stress pattern. In the paradigms of these verbs, Breton has *kanmeul-* throughout, and Welsh has *canmol-* everywhere.⁹ Breton preserves the quality of the vowel found in the root *meul*, but in Welsh, there is a clear difference between the diphthong in the stressed monosyllable *mawl* and the stressed vowel in the polysyllable *canmoli*. Although **meul* is not recorded in Cornish, one has to ask, on seeing the <o> in *gormola*, whether there was a similar vocalic alternation to that in Welsh; or alternatively, whether the <o> was a way of spelling [‘œ’]. In order to see where Cornish may lie, we turn to a verb which has no prefix.

1.2 The verb *holya* ‘to follow’

The Welsh verb *holi* ‘to ask’ behaves just like its minimal pair *moli* ‘to praise’. All 40+ parts of its paradigm are formed with *hol-*, so that a Welsh speaker might imagine that the root of the verb is *hol-*. The important exception is the 3rd sg. pres. ind., which is *hawl*¹⁰. The Breton verb *heuliañ* ‘to follow’ has *heul-* throughout its paradigm.

The attested parts of the Cornish verb *holya* ‘to follow’ are given in Table 2. It appears to follow the Welsh pattern of *hol-*. Surprisingly, however, in the 3rd sg. pres. ind., where one would expect **heul-*, we find *hoyl* (a *hapax legomenon*). <oy> in *Bewnans Ke* usually denotes [‘o:’], as in *bys woyl Myhal* (BK18.35¹¹) ‘until Michaelmas’. Has the reflex of Proto-Brythonic **5* here become mixed up with that of Old Cornish /ui/? To answer this and other questions, we embark on a more systematic investigation.

⁷ As noted by Nance in his 1938 dictionary.

⁸ A less likely explanation is that it is reduced from **gormolow*, a supposed pl. of *gormel*.

⁹ From these, Nance devised a Cornish verbal noun *canmēl* ‘to laud’, in which the lengths of vowels are questionable.

¹⁰ There is also a form *hola*, which regularizes the entire paradigm. The same form *hola* is also found as the 2nd sg. impv. ‘ask!’, where one might expect *hawl*.

¹¹ BK stands for *Bewnans Ke*. The other usual abbreviations used for the Middle Cornish texts are: PA *Pascon agan Arluth*; PC *Passio Christi*, RD *Resurrexio Domini*, OM *Origo Mundi*; BM *Bewnans Meryasek*, TH Tregear Homilies, SA *Sacrament an Alter*, CW *Creacon of the World*.

Table 2		Attested parts of the verb ‘to follow’	
Part of speech	Textual spelling	Reference	Remarks
Verbal noun	<i>holye</i>	PA.050	Copied by Lhuyd and Pryce
	<i>holya</i>	PV123 ¹²	Pryce gives the expected later form of <i>holye</i>
	<i>hovly</i>	BK28.37	In view of the rhyme with <i>dowla</i> ‘throw’, this appears to be an error for <i>hovlya</i> ; the author of BK apparently knew Welsh, and may have been influenced by W <i>holi</i> .
3rd sg. preterite	<i>holyas</i>	PA.077	
		PA.168	
2nd pl. imperative	<i>holyough</i>	PA.053	This spelling reflects the speech of the scribe; the original was probably <i>*holyeugh</i> .
		PA.063	
3rd sg. pres. ind.	<i>hoyl</i>	BK22.37	In the phrase <i>Arluthesow ath hoyl pupprys</i> ‘ladies follow thee always’.

2) THE REFLEXES OF PROTO-BRYTHONIC **ǵ* IN WELSH AND BRETON

2.1 Overview

This subject is examined in detail by Peter Schrijver (1995: 197-209). The principal source of the sound now written *eu* in Cornish is Proto-Celtic **ā* > Proto-Brythonic **ǵ*. Proto-Celtic **au* and Latin *ā* also gave Proto-Brythonic **ǵ*¹³. The conventional view is that in SW Proto-Brythonic, the dialect which led to Breton and Cornish, **ǵ* remained, except in the forerunner of B *moereb*, OldC *modereb* ‘aunt’ (and possibly a few other words), where it was shortened (Schrijver 1995: 213). In the dialect which led to Welsh, this shortening to **ɔ* (written <o>) was general.

2.2 The development in Welsh

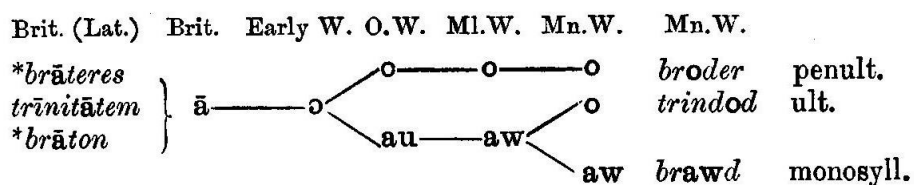
The development of **ɔ* in Welsh depended upon the stress, i.e. the stress after the introduction of the new quantity system *c.*600 and before the stress-shift *c.*1050.

- (a) In stressed syllables, **ɔ* became OldW *au* > MidW *aw*; *aw* remained in stressed monosyllables, but in polysyllables, where *aw* had become unstressed as a result of the stress-shift, *aw* > *o*.
- (b) In pre-tonic syllables, **ɔ* fell together with the reflex of Proto-Brythonic short **o*.

The vocalic alternation in Welsh between *aw* in stressed monosyllables (e.g. *mawl*) and *o* in stressed polysyllables (e.g. *moli*) is thus old, dating from *c.*750. The three developments are shown in the following diagram, taken from Morris-Jones (1913: 94):

¹² PV stands for Pryce’s Vocabulary.

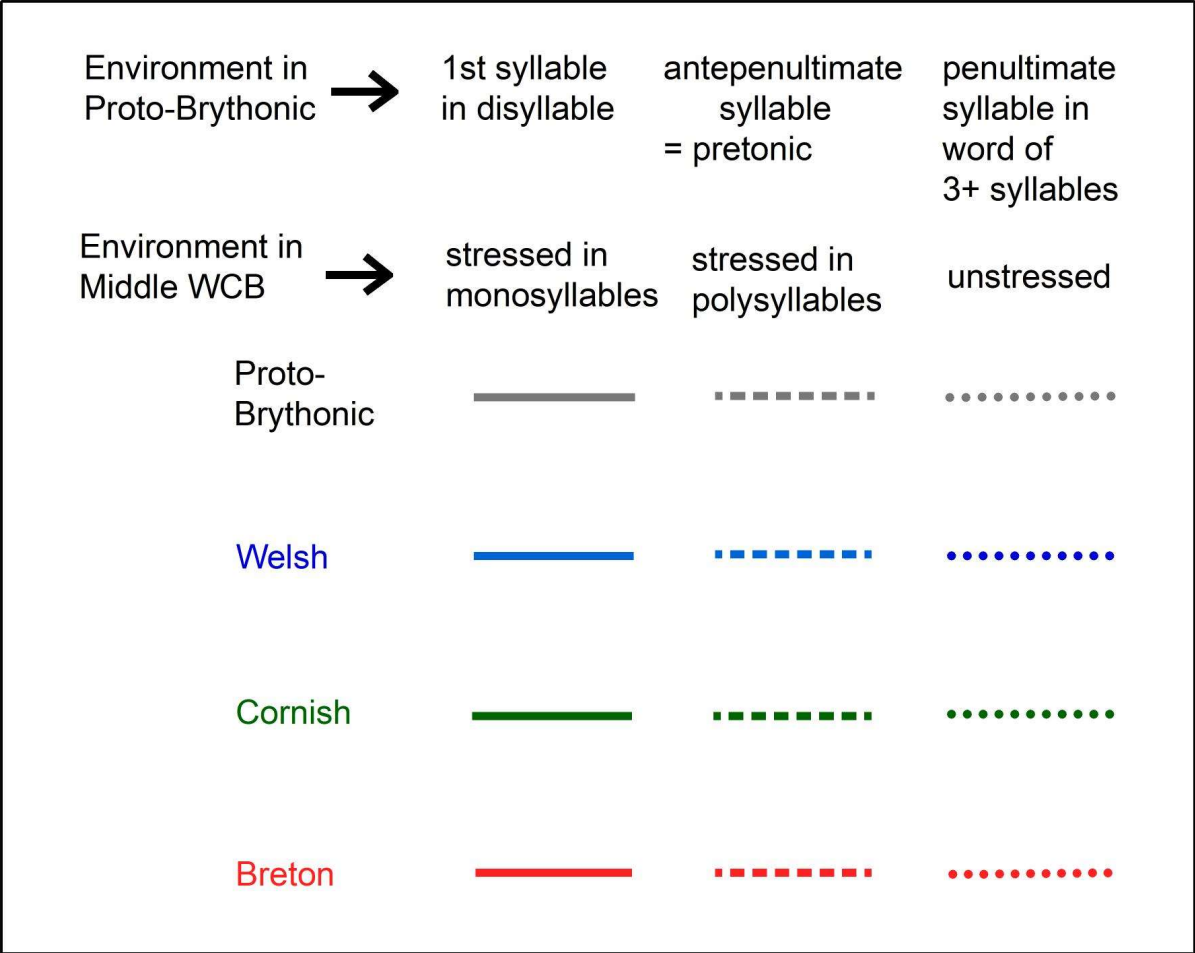
¹³ For this sound, thought to be [ɔ:], Jackson uses *ǝ* in Jackson (1953) and *ω* in Jackson (1967).



2.3 Presentation of material

The same format is used to show the developments of **ʃ* in the three Brythonic languages.

Fig. 1 Key to diagrams of vocalic development



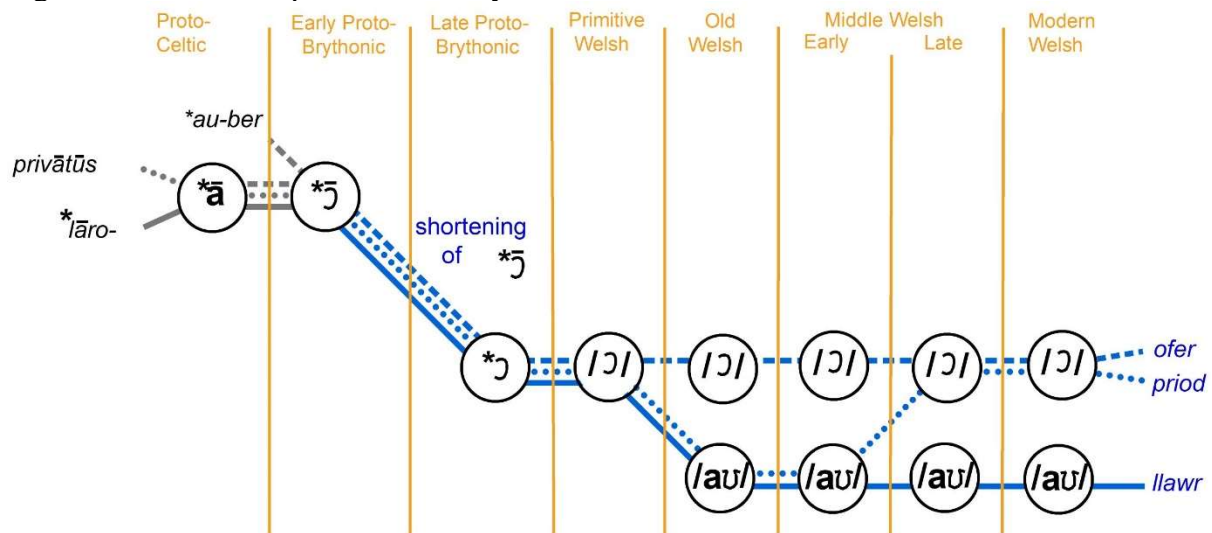
The key words used to illustrate the developments are given in Table 3.

Table 3	Development of key words in Welsh, Breton and Cornish					
Proto-Brythonic	Etymology	English meaning	Brythonic			
				Welsh	Breton	Cornish
stressed * <i>ʃ</i> < * <i>ā</i>	Proto-Celtic * <i>lāro-</i>	floor	Stressed in monosyllable	<i>llawr</i>	<i>leur</i>	<i>leur</i>
stressed * <i>ʃ</i> < <i>ā</i>	Lat. <i>prīvātus</i>	spouse	Unstressed in final syllable	<i>priod</i>	<i>pried</i>	<i>pries</i>
pretonic * <i>ʃ</i> < * <i>au-</i>	Proto-Celtic * <i>au-beros</i>	futile	Stressed in polysyllable	<i>ofer</i>	<i>euver</i>	<i>euver</i>

Fig. 2 shows the developments of these key words in Welsh; it is a redesign of Morris-Jones' diagram. Eight steps in the development are labelled in Fig. 2. Their self-evident abbreviations used in other figures and in the text are:

Pr-Clt	EPr-Bry	LPr-Bry	PrimW	OldW	EMidW	LMidW	ModW
			PrimC	OldC	EMidC	LMidC	LateC
			PrimB	OldB	EMidB	LMidB	ModB

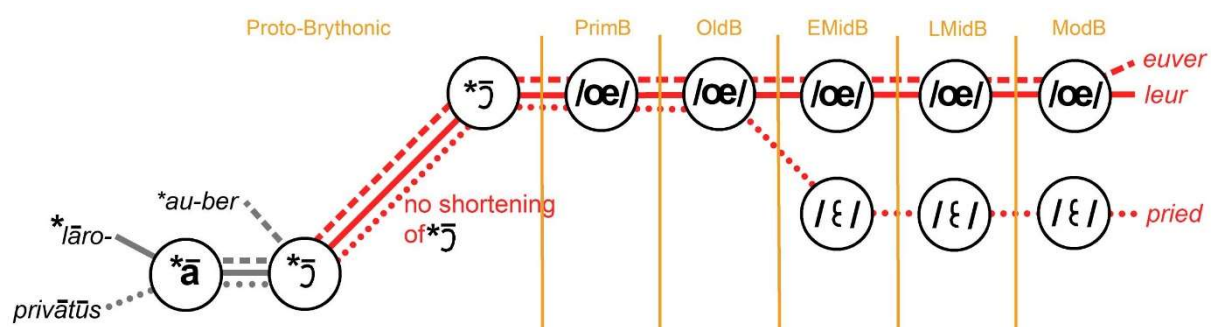
Fig. 2 Development of the key words in Welsh



2.4 Developments in Breton

In Old Breton, Late British * $\bar{j}$ was fronted to a sound which will be written phonemically as /œ/. In the KLT¹⁴ dialects of Breton, this sound, when stressed, remained stable in most environments, and is written <eu>¹⁵. When unstressed, it became [ɛ]. For the details, see Jackson (1967: 127-140).

Fig. 3 Development of the key words in Breton



¹⁴ Kerneveg, Leoneg and Tregerieg.

¹⁵ According to the *Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne*, the sound over much of the KLT dialectal areas (at least in stressed monosyllables) is a true mid rounded front vowel, between [ø] and [œ], written as [ö] by Jackson (1967: 11). Favereau (1992) writes it as [ø].

3) THE REFLEXES OF PROTO-BRYTHONIC *ǵ IN CORNISH

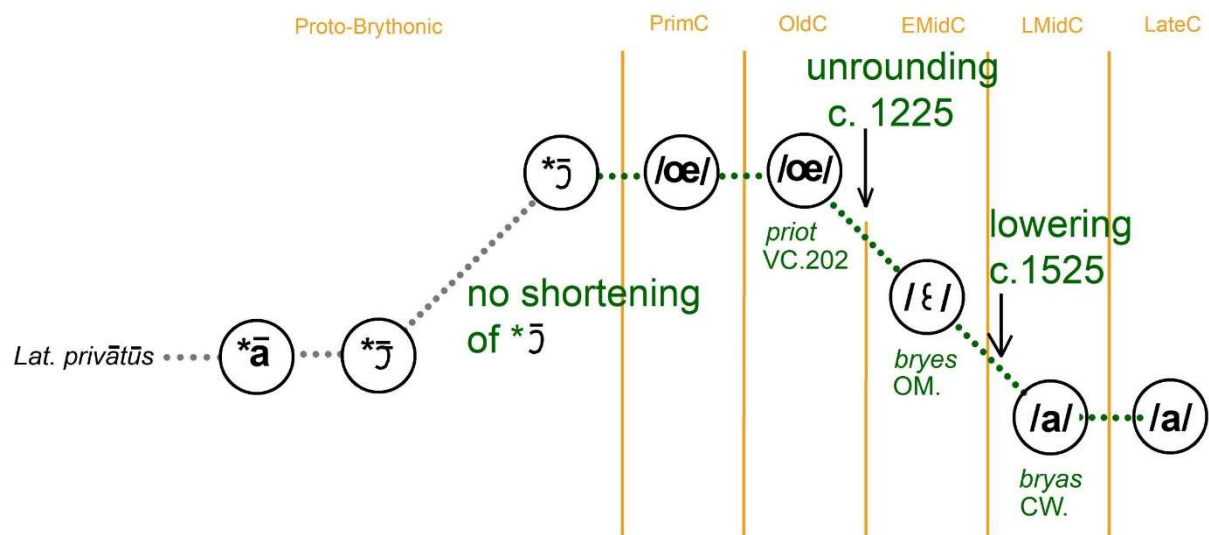
These are treated in more detail, separately for each phonetic environment.

3.1 /œ/ unstressed in final closed syllables

Unrounding to [ɛ] took place earliest in unstressed final closed syllables, c.1225 according to the change *-uc, -oc > -ek* in place-names. A further change *-ek > -ack* occurred c.1525. Examples are shown in Table 4, and the development of the key word in Fig. 4.

Table 4	Examples of historical /œ/ when unstressed in final closed syllables					
Kernewek Kemmyn	English meaning	Old Cornish	Middle Cornish		Vernacular Late Cornish	Lhuyd
		<o>	<e>	<a>	<a>	<a>
<i>boghosek</i>	poor	<i>bochodoc</i>	<i>bohosek</i>	<i>bohosak</i>	<i>broadjack</i>	<i>Bohodzhak</i>
<i>diek</i>	lazy	<i>dioc</i>	<i>thyek</i>	<i>dyag, dyack</i>		
<i>diwes</i>	drink	<i>diot</i>	<i>dewes</i>	<i>dewas</i>	<i>dewas</i>	<i>Deūaz</i>
<i>ebel</i>	colt	<i>ebol</i>	<i>ebel</i>	<i>eball</i>	<i>ebal</i>	<i>Ebal</i>
<i>gallosek</i>	powerful	<i>galluidoc</i>	<i>gallosek</i>	<i>gallosak</i>	<i>gallosack</i>	
<i>gowek</i>	liar	<i>gouhoc</i>	<i>gowek</i>	<i>gowak, goacke</i>	<i>gooack</i>	<i>Gûak</i>
<i>kroenek</i>	toad	<i>crounoc</i>	<i>cronek</i>	<i>cronak</i>		<i>Kranag</i>
<i>kulyek</i>	cock	<i>chelioc</i>	<i>colyek</i>			<i>Kūliag</i>
<i>lavrek</i>	breeches	<i>lafroc</i>			<i>lavrak</i>	<i>Lavrak</i>
<i>pries</i>	spouse	<i>priot</i>	<i>bryes</i>	<i>pryas</i>		
<i>taves</i>	tongue	<i>tauot</i>	<i>taves</i>	<i>tavas</i>	<i>tavaz</i>	<i>Tavaz</i>

Fig. 4 Development of vowel in key word *pries* ‘spouse’ in Cornish



3.2 /œ/ in stressed monosyllables

3.2.1 /œ/ in stressed closed monosyllables

Table 5 lists a number of stressed closed monosyllables which have the regular development of /au/ in Welsh, and /œ/ in Breton and Cornish.

Table 5	Stressed monosyllables with Cornish /œ/ and their cognates		
English	Welsh	Breton	Cornish
	<aw> /au/	<eu> /œ/	<eu> /œ/
judgment	<i>brawd</i>	<i>breud</i>	<i>breus</i>
son-in-law	<i>dawf</i>	<i>deuñv</i>	<i>deuv</i>
hour	<i>awr</i>	<i>eur</i>	<i>eur</i>
grief	<i>cawdd</i>	<i>keuz</i>	<i>keudh</i>
full	<i>llawn</i>	<i>leun</i>	<i>leun</i>
floor	<i>llawr</i>	<i>leur</i>	<i>leur</i>
great	<i>mawr</i>	<i>meur</i>	<i>meur</i>
coarse hair	<i>rhawn</i>	<i>reun</i>	<i>reun</i>
whoever	<i>sawl</i>	<i>seul</i>	<i>seul</i>
across	<i>traws</i>	<i>treuz</i>	<i>treus</i>

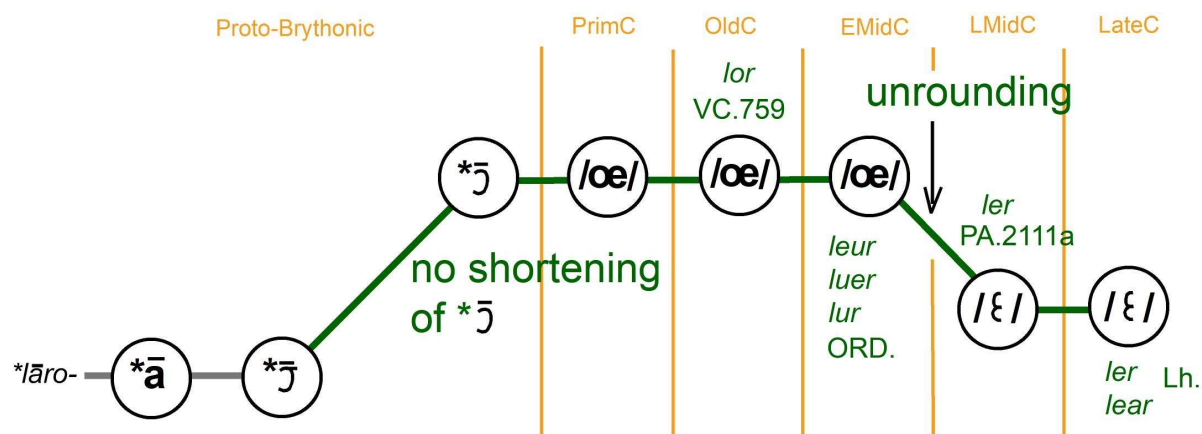
Table 6 shows the development of nine words in OldC containing /œ/, and Fig. 5 the development of the key word *leur* ‘floor’.

Table 6	Development of stressed closed monosyllables containing /œ/							
Kernewek Kemmyn	English meaning	Old Cornish	Middle Cornish			Late Cornish		
			/œ/ ['œ:]			/ɛ/ ['ɛ:]		
		<o>	{eu}	<ue>	{u}	<e>	<ê>	<ea> <e>
<i>breus</i>	judgment			<i>brues</i>	<i>brus</i>	<i>bres</i>	<i>brêz</i>	<i>brez</i>
<i>deuv</i>	son-in-law	<i>dof</i>			<i>duf</i>	<i>def</i>		
<i>eur</i>	hour				<i>vr</i>	<i>er</i>	<i>ear</i>	
<i>leun</i>	full		<i>leun</i>	<i>luen</i>	<i>lyn</i>	<i>len</i>	<i>lên</i>	<i>lean</i>
<i>leur</i>	floor	<i>lor</i>	<i>leur</i>	<i>luer</i>	<i>lur</i>	<i>ler</i>	<i>lêr</i>	<i>lear</i>
<i>leuv</i>	hand	<i>lof</i>	<i>leuf</i>	<i>luef</i>	<i>luf</i>	<i>lef</i>	<i>lêv</i>	
<i>meur</i>	great	<i>mor</i>	<i>mevr</i>	<i>muer</i>	<i>mur</i>	<i>mer</i>	<i>mêr</i>	<i>mear</i> <i>mer</i>
<i>skeus</i>	shadow	<i>scod</i>			<i>schus</i>	<i>skesse</i>	<i>skêz</i>	<i>skez</i>
<i>treus</i>	across		<i>treus</i>	<i>drues</i>	<i>trus</i>			

In MidC, they are spelled variously with {eu}, <ue> and {u}; cases of <e> are also found. In LateC, <ea> and <ê> indicate that ['œ:] has been unrounded to ['ɛ:].

In OldC, <o> is ambiguous; *mor* ‘sea’ (VC.014) and *mor* ‘great’ (in *Portmor* 1201, now Porthmear in St Eval, SW848716) are homographs but not homophones. In MidC, <u> is ambiguous; *sul* ['sœ:l] ‘whoever’ (RD.0136) and *sul* ['sy:l] ‘Sunday’ (RD.1833) are homographs but not homophones.

Fig. 5

Development of vowel in key word *leur* ‘floor’ in Cornish

The orthographic profile of closed monosyllables containing /œ/ is given in Table 7. The rhyming cases have been omitted, because their spelling may be overly influenced by the rhymes. Ambiguous spellings (<o> in VC and <u,v> in MidC) are highlighted in yellow, and markers of /œ/ are highlighted in green.

	VC	PC	RD	OM	PA	BMa	BMb	BK	TH	SA	CW	Lh	VLC ¹⁶
{o}	12					3		3			2	2	1
{u}		130	128	106	64	229	11	41	76	4	6	9	2
{ue}		33	55	30	6	29	4	21	1			12	
{e}		9	4	18	45		3	87	123	7	143	83	100
{eu}		3	3	1	28		1	2	1		1		
{ey}					6	1					4		
{y}		1	1			1		5		1	1	10	
Other		1						1	2		4	8	2
{e}		4%		12%	30%	0%	16%	54%	61%	58%	89%	67%	96%

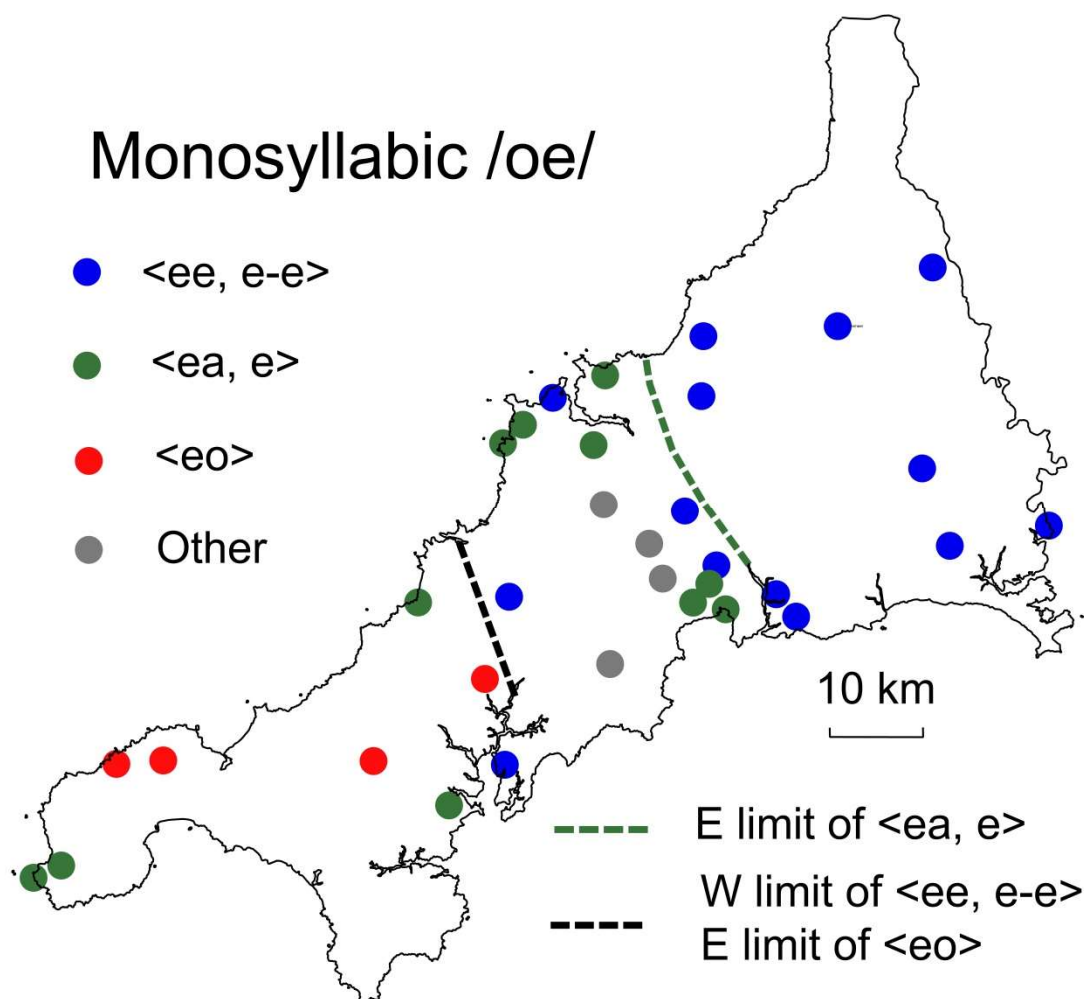
A change from {u} to {e} as the commonest spelling may be perceived, interpreted as /œ/ falling together with /ɛ/, and taken to represent unrounding from [œ:] to [ɛ:]. The change is not clear-cut, however; there are cases of <e> in the earliest MidC texts; the percentages suggest a mid-point for the change of c.1525. Table 8 shows the principal spelling-types for five groups of monosyllables.

		PC	RD	OM	PA	BM	BK	TH	SA	CW	Lh	VLC
<i>beus</i>	‘has’	u	u	u	u	u	u	u	u			
<i>eus</i>	‘is’	ue	ue	e	e		e	e		e	e	e
<i>dheudh</i>	‘thou comest’		u			u						
<i>dheuth</i>	‘I came’		ue		e		ue	e		e	e	e
	‘he/she/it/came’											
<i>eur</i>	‘hour’	u	u	u	u	u	u	u			u	
					e					e		
<i>fredh</i>	‘passion(ate)’	e	e		e	e	e				ô	
<i>meur</i>	‘great’	u	u	u	u	u						
		e					e	e	e	e	e	e

This supports the idea that the unrounding of /œ/ took place by lexical diffusion, similarly to the change /ɪ/ to /ɛ/ in stressed monosyllables (George 2018).

Fig. 6 shows the reflex of historical /œ/ in stressed monosyllables, as found on the modern map. The commonest word in the list is *meur* ‘great’, and taking this as an example, *meer* and *mere* are plotted in blue, *mear* and *mer* in green and *meor* in red.

Fig. 6 Map showing location of place-names containing /œ/ in closed monosyllables



It is rare that a plot of a feature in Cornish place-names produces such a clear result. The *meer*-type lies east of a line from the Fal to the Gannel, and the *meor*-type to the west of this line. The *mear*-type lies to the west of a line from Fowey to Port Isaac.¹⁷

The map says little about possible dialectal divisions in Cornish, however. Rather it indicates how stressed monosyllables with historical /œ/ were taken into English. The *meer*-type was borrowed before the Great Vowel Shift, when <ee> meant [e:] in English; this implies that the vowel in *meer* may have been [ø:]; [e:] would have been the nearest sound to this in English.

¹⁷ This isogloss features frequently in similar maps, e.g. the eastern limit of <-ack>.

3.2.2 /œ/ finally in stressed open monosyllables

This occurs in only three words: *beu* ‘was’, *deu* ‘comes’ and *deu* ‘ended’; their profile in non-rhyming cases is given in Table 9.

Table 9		Stressed /-œ/ in non-rhyming cases											
		PA	PC	RD	OM	BMa	BMb	BK	TH	SA	CW	Lh	VLC
Spelling -types ¹⁸	<u>					1							
	{ue}		37	39	15	55	1	3			1	1	
	{e}	74	3	4	7		1	28	111	22	18	12	32
	<o>												23
	{i}											3	
	Other							1				1	1

The table shows that /œ/ remained largely unrounded in the Ordinalia and in BM, but in all other texts it was unrounded to /ɛ/. The fact that PA (composed c.1375) had {e} and BM (written down in 1504, and probably composed then) had {eu} suggests that for over a hundred years the rounded and the unrounded pronunciations co-existed, perhaps as part of different dialects. The 23 cases of <o> in Late Cornish are all from John Boson’s writings; they are all spelled *vo*, supposedly for *veu* ‘was’, but may be rather a Late Cornish variant based on *o* ‘was’.

The limited selection of rhyming words meant that the unrounded forms were usually used in verse, as shown in Table 10.

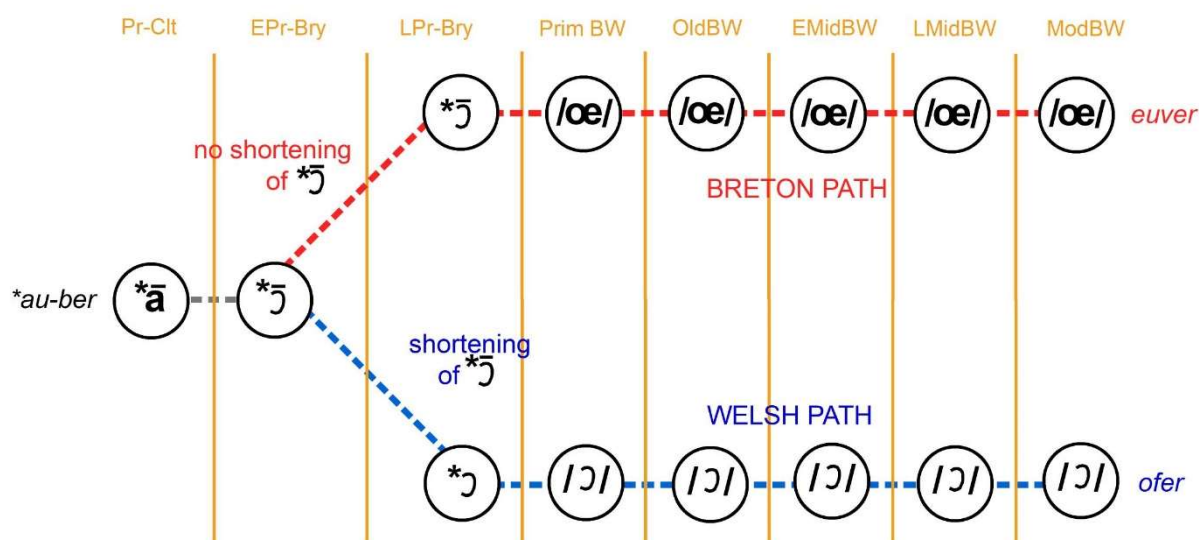
Table 10		Stressed /-œ/ in rhyming cases							
		PA	PC	RD	OM	BM	BK	CW	
Spelling -types	<ue>		4	13	4	5			
	<e>	7	1	1	1		6	1	
	{a}					3			
Rhyming sounds	['œ:]			6					
	['ɛ:]	7	5	8	5	5	6	1	
	forced					3			

¹⁸ Spelling-types are placed within curly brackets {}.

3.3 The reflex of Pr-Bry * $\bar{5}$ in the penultimate syllable of polysyllables

This is the most difficult of the three phonetic environments in Table 3. The situation in Breton and Welsh is reprised in Fig. 7:

Fig.7 Development of Pr-Bry * $\bar{5}$ in stressed polysyllables in Breton and Welsh



For Cornish, a spreadsheet was constructed of all cases in the traditional corpus having the spelling <eu> in KK, 229 in all. The <eu> means that the word is considered to contain historical /œ/. However, Schrijver (1995: 215) avoids cases which “could in principle have been remodelled on paradigmatically related forms”. 216 of the 229 cases (94%) come into this category; e.g.

- *brusy* (BM.4054) ‘to judge’ could have come from *brus* [‘brœ:z] ‘judgment’;
- *cuthys* (RD.0766) ‘grieved’ could have arisen from *cuth* [‘kœ:ð] ‘grief’
- *anfusyk* (RD.1520) ‘unfortunate’ from *an-* + *fves* [‘fœ:z] ‘ill-luck’ + *-yk*.

These cases are therefore not independent.

3.3.1 Spelling of the reflex

In Breton and Welsh, it is straightforward (Fig.7), the reflex being spelled <eu> and <o> respectively, but in Cornish there are five principal spelling-types (Table 11); pale blue shading implies shortening of Pr-Bry * $\bar{5}$ and pink shading no such shortening.

Table 11 Spelling and ambiguity of the reflex					
Spelling -type	Graphs	No. of cases	Ambiguous as to origin	1st possible meaning	2nd possible meaning
{e}	<e, ɛ>	53	yes	/ɛ/ < /œ/	/ɛ/ remodelled from stressed monosyllable
{eu}	<ev, ue>	5	no	/œ/ < PrimC /œ/ < Pr-Bry * $\bar{5}$	
{i}	<i, y, ei>	23	no	/i/ < /y/ < /œ/ – see §3.3.7	
{o}	<o>	12	yes (but see §3.3.5)	/œ/ < PrimC /œ/ < Pr-Bry * $\bar{5}$	/ɔ/ < PrimC /ɔ/ < Pr-Bry * $\bar{5}$ < * $\bar{5}$
{u}	<u, ɹ, v, w>	134	yes	/œ/ < PrimC /œ/ < Pr-Bry * $\bar{5}$	/y/ < /œ/ – see §3.3.7
Other	<a>	2			

It is remarkable that there are only five cases (2% of the total) which are spelled with {eu}.¹⁹ These are:

<i>teufe</i> (PC.3052)	= <i>deuth</i> ‘came’ + <i>va</i> (enclitic)
<i>theute</i> (OM.0149)	= <i>deuth</i> ‘came’ + <i>-ta</i> (enclitic)
<i>uesta</i> (BK04.39)	= <i>eus</i> ‘is’ + <i>ta</i> (enclitic)
<i>yevnys</i> (PC.1701)	= <i>yeunis</i> ‘I yearned’ (1 s pret.)
<i>evver</i> (BK35.66)	= <i>euver</i> ‘in vain’

The first three are reduced monosyllables plus enclitics, unlike other polysyllables. This leaves just two examples with <ev>.

3.3.2 Independent words following the Breton path

There are only thirteen cases in the spreadsheet which are independent, i.e. not theoretically related to a stressed monosyllable, and these cases apply to only two words: *vfer* ‘futile’, which is also identified by Schrijver, and *cunys* ‘firewood’, which is not.

Schrijver notes *vfer* (BM.3001) as a hapax legomenon, which indeed it was when his book was published (1995). But in 1999 *Bewnans Ke* was discovered, and it contains the same word, spelled *evver* (BK35.66). This spelling with <ev> unambiguously confirms that this key word contained MidC /œ/ < PrimC /œ/ < Pr-Bry **ǝ*, without shortening.

The Breton cognate of *cunys* is *keuneud*, which according to Jackson (1967 §561) had PrimB /ω/. The Welsh cognate, however, is *cynnud* < Pr-Clt **kom-danuto-*, which implies that the word never contained Pr-Bry **ǝ* and is not relevant to the discussion.

3.3.3 Independent words following the Welsh path

These do not feature in the spreadsheet of 229 cases, because they are not spelled with <eu> in KK. They are spelled with <o>. A Cornish learner who was unfamiliar with Welsh and Breton would find it surprising that the <o> has the same origin as the vowel <eu>. The words are:

- *bora* ‘dawn’, found in OldC *boreles* (VC.639) ‘daisy’ and possibly in MidC *vurluan* (TH18r), LateC *býrlúan* (AB171b) ‘Venus as a morning “star”’. This is cognate with B *beure* and W *bore*, and comes from Pr-Clt **bārego*.
- *a-vorow* ‘tomorrow’ in principle includes the same root, though it has probably been affected by English *morrow*. Its attestations are listed in Table 12. The Welsh equivalent is *yfory*.
- OldC *modereb* (VC.151) ‘aunt’ < Pr-Bry **mātripī*, corresponding to W *modryb*; exceptionally ModB *moereb* < MidB *mozreb* has also followed the Welsh path. Schrijver (1995: 198) dismisses this word because OldC <o> can represent both /ɔ/ < Pr-Bry **ɔ* and /œ/ < Pr-Bry **ǝ*. However, LateC *modrap* (AB021a), with a < e, appears to contain [ɔ] < Pr-Bry **ɔ*, as do the W and B cognates.

¹⁹ Compare words with half-long /o/, which are usually spelled <o>, and rarely <oy>.

Table 12	Spellings of <i>a-vorow</i> ‘tomorrow’		
Spellings mainly in <o>		Spellings in {u}	
auorou	VC.468	Y vŵrw	LV150
avorow	OM.2299, 2417.2432; PC.0722, 3240; Keigwin	ÿvuru	AB052a
a vorow	OM.2843; PV103	avuru	AB249a
an vorov	BM.3606	vuru	PV183
a vorowe	CW.2542	y vuru	PV183
a vorou	LV002		
avorou	LV014, Pryce, PV071		
avoru	AB249a		
vorow, ovorow, ovarow	Gwavas		

3.3.4 The words for ‘brother, brothers’

The commonest spelling of the word for ‘brother’ is *broder* and that for ‘brothers’ is *breder*. These forms are problematic, to the extent that Schrijver (1995: 204) wrote: “the historical interpretation of the pair *broder* / *breder* – if it exists – leads to insurmountable difficulties”. They are dealt with in a separate paper (George 2026), where it is shown that the spellings are explicable if *broder* followed the Welsh path and *breder* the Breton path.

3.3.5 Compounds following the Welsh path

The following compounds all have **-āVo-* or **-āVjo-* in Proto-Brythonic; the *o* may have caused them to follow the Welsh path.

- (a) **-āk-ion-* > *-ogyon* (pl. of **-ākos* > *-ek*)
e.g. *boghosogion* (PA.037) ‘paupers’ pl. of *boghosek* (BM)
(but *bohosugion* in PC)
- (b) **-āt-oues* > *-osow* (plurals in *-ow*)
e.g. *pehosow* (OM.2259b) ‘sins’ pl. of *peghes* (OM.1796)
(but *peghusow* in PC)
- (c) **-ār-ion-* > *-oryon* (pl. of Latin *-ārius*)
e.g. *progothorryan* (TH42r) ‘preachers’ pl. of *pregowther* (TH25r)
guykoryon (PV116) ‘traders’ pl. of *gwicker* (CW.1141)

These are the only two sure examples of sg. and pl. in this category. Other examples of *-oryon* have sg. in *-or*, or *-er* < Lat *-ārius* via OldF.

In addition to the words in §3.3.2 and §3.3.3, Schrijver (1995: 201) examined compounds in (a) and (b) above, and the word *peghosow* ‘sins’. In Table 13, Schrijver’s words are highlighted in yellow, and other examples have been added.

Table 13	Spellings of derivatives of words in <i>-ek</i> and <i>-es</i> , where <i>e</i> < Pr-Bry * <i>ā</i>									
	PA	PC	RD	OM	BM	BK	TH	SA	CW	LateC
<i>boghosogyon</i> ‘paupers’	o 2	u 2 e 1			o 8					
<i>boghosogneth</i> ‘poverty’					o 1					
<i>edhommogyon</i> ‘needy persons’	o 1	e 1			o 2					
<i>marghogyon</i> ‘knights’	o 3	e 2	e 3	ou 1	o 6	o 4				a 1
<i>marghogeth</i> ‘to ride’	o 1			o 3		o 2				
<i>peghosow</i> ‘sins’		u 1		o 2			o 42	o 1	o 1 a 1	o 1 a 2
TOTALS	o 7	u 3 e 4	e 3	o 5 ou 1	o 17					
<i>diwosow</i> ‘drinks’					o 1					
<i>gowegneth</i> ‘falsehood’			e 1							
<i>gowygyon</i> ‘liars’			y 2							
<i>guykcoryon</i> ‘traders’										o 1
<i>kentrevoogyon</i> ‘neighbours’					o 1		o 1			o 1 a 3
<i>kentrevoiges</i> ‘female neighbour’					o 1					
<i>kenoges</i> ‘ring-worms’										ou 1
<i>kroenoges</i> ‘toads’										ou 1
<i>kulyoges</i> ‘cockerels’										o 1
<i>progothorryan</i> ‘preachers’							o 1			
<i>tavosow</i> ‘tongues’							o 5			o 1 a 1
GRAND TOTALS	o 7	u 3 e 4	y 2 e 4	o 5 ou 1	o 20	o 6	o 49	o 1	o 1 a 1	o 5 a 7 ou 2

Schrijver (1995: 205) noted that there is a clear difference between PC/RD, which use <u, e>, and the other texts, all of which use <o>. This result is confirmed by the additional data in the table. Nevertheless, he regards <u, e, v, o> as allographs representing the same phoneme /*ö*/, i.e. the reflex of Pr-Bry **ā* without shortening.

Here a different interpretation is proposed, taking *marghogyon* ‘knights’ as a template. If the difference between PC/RD is not orthographic, then it must be phonetic, which leads to the explanation of dialectal difference eschewed by Schrijver (1995: 203). In PC/RD, <u> and <e> at first sight appear to fit the Breton path PrimC /*oe*/ > *u* [œ] > *e* [ɛ] by unrounding. The graph <e> is thereby a relatively new spelling. This gives a contrast between “new” <e> in PC/RD and “old” <o> in the other texts. This is incompatible with the chronology; because PC/RD are the oldest major manuscripts²⁰.

The words in Table 13 are not independent, as is shown by the cases with <a> in CW and LateC. They are subject to the remodelling which Schrijver tries to avoid. For example, *maragyon* (PV179) is formed by tacking the plural suffix *-yon* to the singular *marrack* [‘mar:ak] (N. Boson), with [-k] changed to [-g-]. The same process may be invoked to explain the forms in PC/RD, viz. *bohosugyon* (PC.0543) = **bohosuc* + *-yon*, and *marregyon* (PC.1613) = *marrek* + *yon*.

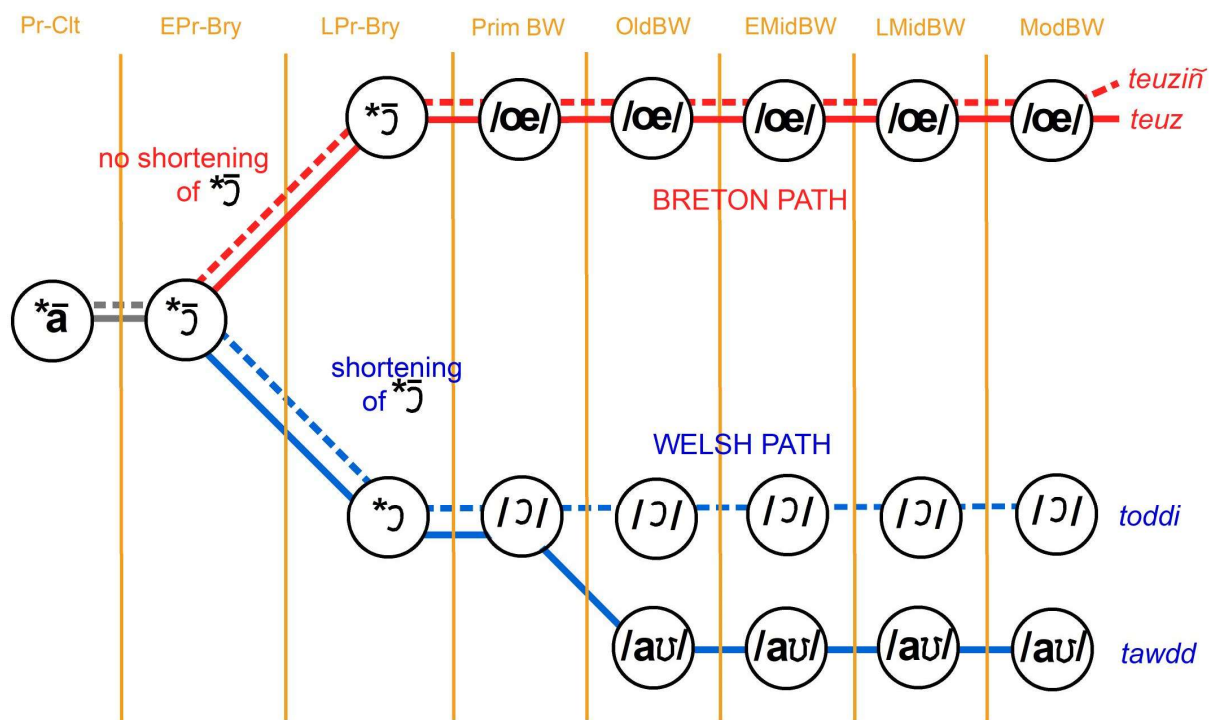
The sounds of the stressed vowel in these two words, [œ] and [ɛ], are the same as if the evolution had followed the Breton path, but it is not necessary to invoke that path to explain them. Rather than a separate dialect, they reflect the way in which the scribe perceived these words, as a singular root plus a plural suffix.

As for the majority of spellings in <o>, in order to explain them as [œ] < PrimC /œ/, one would have to assume that the OldC graph <o> had persisted even into the LateC phase. If the sound had followed the Breton path, then the stressed [œ] would have been unrounded to [ɛ], and be spelled <e>. We do not find that in this set of words. The straightforward explanation is that the stressed vowel followed the Welsh path Pr-Bry*ɔ̄ > *ɔ̄ > PrimC /ɔ̄/, and thereafter remained stable.

3.3.6 Interaction between stressed vowels in polysyllables and in monosyllables

Fig. 7 is now expanded to include stressed vowels in monosyllables.

Fig. 8 B and W paths for stressed vowels in polysyllables and monosyllables



The key etymon in Fig. 8 is Pr-Bry *tōd- ‘melt’. In Breton, the verbal noun *teuziñ* and the 3 sg. pres ind. *teuz* have the same vowel, but in Welsh, *toddī* and *tawdd* have /ɔ̄/ and /au/ respectively.

Table 14 includes this verb with others having similar characteristics in Breton and Welsh, together with the Cornish evidence. We note ModW *mawl* / *moli* and *hawl* / *holi* among them, already mentioned in the Introduction.

Table 14	Reflexes of Pr-Bry *ǝ in verbal endings			
English	Breton	Welsh	traditional Cornish	
	3 sg. pres. ind. / Verbal noun		3 sg. pres. ind.	Verbal noun
drown	<i>beuz</i> / <i>beuziñ</i>	<i>bawd</i> / <i>boddi</i>	<i>buth</i> ['bœ:ð]	<i>buthy</i> > <i>bethy</i>
judge	<i>breuz</i> / <i>breuziñ</i>		* <i>brus</i>	<i>brusy</i>
grieve	<i>keuz</i> / <i>keuziñ</i>	<i>cawdd</i> / <i>coddi</i>	* <i>cuth</i>	<i>cuthy</i>
shadow	<i>skeud</i> / <i>skeudin</i>		* <i>scus</i>	<i>skvsy</i> > <i>skesy</i>
melt	<i>teuz</i> / <i>teuziñ</i>	<i>tawdd</i> / <i>toddi</i>	* <i>tuth</i>	* <i>tuthy</i> > <i>tetha</i>
follow	<i>heul</i> / <i>heuliañ</i>	<i>hawl</i> / <i>holi</i>	<i>hoyl</i>	<i>holya</i>
praise	<i>meul</i> / <i>meuliñ</i>	<i>mawl</i> / <i>moli</i>	(* <i>gormel</i> > <i>gornvall</i>)	(* <i>gormel</i> > <i>gormall</i>)

In the table, it appears that most Cornish verbs follow the Breton path, but *holya* ‘to follow’ does not. The evidence is scanty, however; the only attested example of a 3 sg. pres. ind ending is *buth*. The verb *gormel* ‘to praise’ is included in the table because it inspired the author to conduct the research, but it does not really fit, having an extra syllable. The apparent misfit, *holya*, has the verbal noun ending in *-ya*, while the other verbs are in *-y*; The verbal noun suffixes in Breton are similar.

3.3.7 /æ/ followed by a consonant and a high front vowel: the third path in Cornish

It is evident that in many cases where /æ/ is followed by a consonant and a high front vowel, the stressed vowel is spelled <u>. This may well mean ['æ·], but it could equally well mean ['y·]. On observing that in certain words in later Cornish, the vowel was spelled <i> or <y>, one may surmise that the earlier <u> meant ['y·] rather than ['æ·]. Examples are found both in the texts (Table 15) and in place-names (Table 16). In these tables, and in Tables 22a and 22b, the stressed vowel is printed in red (implying < PrimC /æ/), and where it is /i/ it is highlighted in yellow.

Table 15	Words in texts with historical half-long /æ/ appearing as <i, y>			
Kernewek Kemmyn	English meaning	MidC with <u>	Later forms in <i, y>	Forms in <e>
<i>beudhys</i>	drowned	<i>buthys</i>	<i>bidhyz</i> (AB248b), <i>bdhis</i> (AB250a)	<i>bethys</i> (CW.2416)
<i>breusi</i>	to judge	<i>brusy</i>	<i>vrysy</i> (LV150)	
<i>difeudhi</i>	to douse	* <i>dyfuthy</i>	<i>difythi</i> (PV091)	
<i>difeudhys</i>	doused	<i>dvvuthys</i>	<i>devydhys</i> (AB248b)	
<i>euthyk</i>	dreadful	<i>vthyk</i>	<i>ithik</i> (Lh.)	<i>ethek</i> (PV100)
<i>keunys</i>	firewood	<i>kunys</i>	<i>kinnis</i> (AB019a), J.Jenkin	
<i>kreuni</i>	to dam	* <i>cruny</i>	<i>crynni</i> (LV040)	
<i>yeuni</i>	to yearn	<i>vny</i>	<i>yny</i> (TH22v)	

Table 16	Place-names with historical half-long /æ/ appearing as <i, y>				
Name on map	Historic parish	Grid ref.²¹	Kernewek Kemmyn	Meaning of name	Selected historical forms
Bosistow	St Levan	366234	<i>Boseustow</i>	Eustow's house	<i>Bodestou</i> 1293
Kingey	Grade	718169	<i>Keunji</i>	kennel	<i>Kuncy</i> 1340
Leskinnick	Madron		<i>Lyskeunek</i>	reedy court	
(Newquay)	St Columb Minor	803620	<i>Tewynn Pleustri</i>	sand-dunes (for) exercise	<i>Tewynplustri</i> 1308 <i>Towenplustre</i> 1530
Nanphysick	St Mewan	983516	<i>Nansfeusik</i>	happy valley	<i>Nansfusik</i> 1359
Talskiddy	St Columb Major	912653	<i>Talskeusi</i>	in front of Shadow River	<i>Talskedy</i> 1296 <i>Talskithy</i> 1332
Tiddy	river in SE Cornwall		<i>Teudhi</i>	melting (i.e. turbulent) river	<i>Tudi</i> 1018 <i>aqua de Todi</i> 1260
Tideford ²²	St Germans	348597	<i>Rysteudhi</i>	ford on the Tiddy	<i>Todiford</i> 1284

The raising of [æ] to [y] apparently took place early, for its effect is seen in the name Tiddy, a river in the south-east of Cornwall; in this case and that of Talskiddy in mid-Cornwall, the unrounding of [y] to [ɪ] took place in English. The unrounding to [ɪ] is recorded in Cornish from the mid-sixteenth century onwards (Tables 15 and 16).

Table 17 is an orthographic profile of all cases in the texts.

Table 17	Words in texts with historical half-long /æ/ appearing as <i, y>											
	VC	PC	RD	OM	PA	BM	BK	TH	SA	CW	Lh	VLC
<o>	2						1					
{u}		11	11	15	4	9	32	2		6	2	1
<ev>		1										
<e>		1		1	1		1	1		3	3	2
{y}								1			18	3
Other											1	

- In Middle Cornish, {u} is dominant, but there are several cases of <e>.
- There is just one case of {eu}: *yevnys* (PC.1701).
- The one case of <o> in BK is considered below (para. 2.5.5).
- In Late Cornish, {y} has the greatest number of cases, showing unrounding of /y/.

Support for this comes from double rhymes in which words with a penultimate vowel from PrimC /æ/ are rhymed with words having a penultimate vowel from PrimC /y/. All but one come from BK, and they are listed in Table 18. At BK28.25, *anfugy* (with historical /æ/) is rhymed with the hapax legomenon *trefugy*: this word appears to be the plural of **trevyas* ‘citizen’ (Thomas & Williams 2007: 392); the usual plural of words in *-yas* is *-ysy* [ˈɪːzi], so that the <u> in *trefugy* is a reversed spelling caused by the unrounding of /y/ to /ɪ/. All of this evidence adds weight to the assertion that /æ/ became /y/ before a high front vowel.

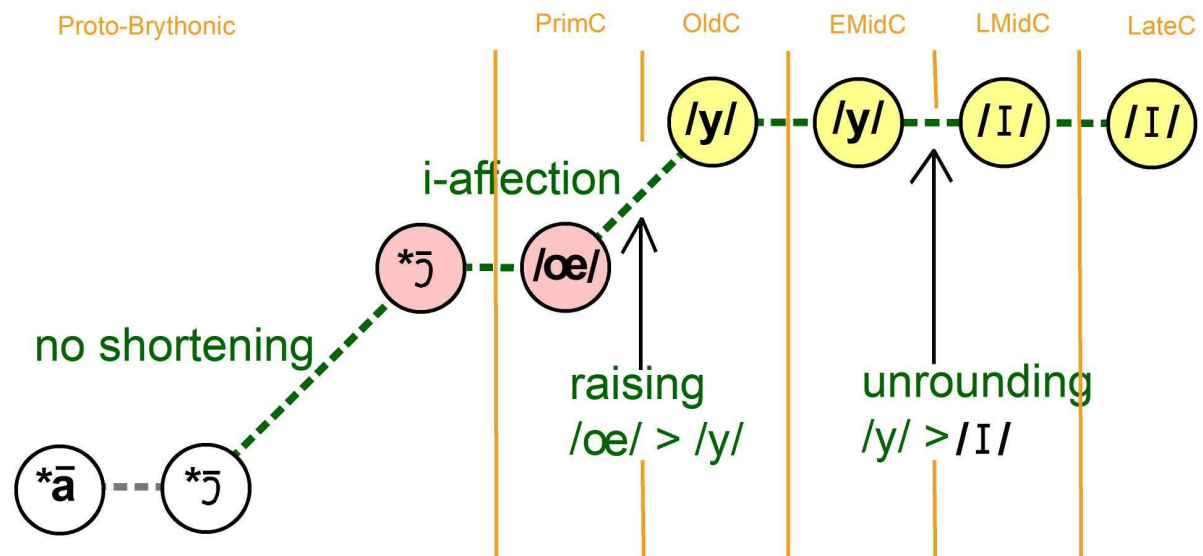
²¹ There is no need to give the preceding letters, since all Cornwall and Scilly can be fitted, jigsaw-fashion, into a single 100 km × 100 km square.

²² Apparently pronounced [ˈtɪdɪfɔrd] before 1910, and occasionally today.

Table 18a Double rhymes supporting /y/					
Kernewek Kemyn	Middle Cornish	English meaning	Double rhymes	English meaning	Reference
1st rhyme < PrimC /œ/			2nd rhyme < Prim /y/		
<eu>	ambiguous <u,v>		<u,v> = /y/		
<i>anfeusi</i>	<i>anfugy</i>	disaster	<i>trefugy (trevysi)</i>	citizens	BK28.25
<i>degleudhi</i>	<i>doglvthy</i>	excavate	<i>ruthy</i> ²³	appease	BK35.80
<i>diskeudhi</i>	<i>dyskvthy</i>	relieve	<i>ruthy</i>	appease	BK13.43
<i>keudhi</i>	<i>cvthy</i>	grieve	<i>guthy</i>	hide	BK02.61
	<i>cuthy</i>	grieve	<i>ruthy</i>	appease	BK21.60
<i>skeusi</i>	<i>skvsy</i>	escape	<i>barfusy</i>	codfish	OM.0138
<i>yeuni</i>	<i>vny</i>	yearn	<i>huny, hvny</i>	one	BK22.22, 31.27, 32.30

A third developmental path in Cornish is therefore propounded, whereby PrimC /œ/ was raised by *i*-affection to /y/, and this was subsequently unrounded to /ɪ/ (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9 A third path in Cornish



3.3.8 Further evidence from double rhymes

Double rhymes allow one to get at the heart of synoptic phonemics. One set of double rhymes has been given in Table 18a. In Table 18b are listed all other double rhymes where the stressed vowel in at least one of the rhyming words is historically /œ/. The four types of such rhymes are numbered in the rightmost column.

Table 18b Further double rhymes where at least one of the words has stressed historical /æ/									
First rhyming word					Second rhyming word				
Reference	Kernewek Kemmyn	English meaning	Textual spelling	Nominal phoneme	Kernewek Kemmyn	English meaning	Textual spelling	Nominal phoneme	
BK10.39	<i>medhek</i>	doctor	<i>vethak</i>	/ɛ/	<i>euthek</i>	horrifies	<i>ethek</i>	/œ/	2
BK13.46	<i>degleudhys</i>	undermined	<i>dogluthys</i>	/œ/	<i>keudhys</i>	distressed	<i>cvthys</i>	/œ/	1
BK19.06	<i>desteudhi</i>	get rid of	<i>thustuthy</i>	/œ/	<i>keudhi</i>	distress	<i>cvthy</i>	/œ/	1
BK23.05	<i>folla</i>	crazier	<i>folha</i>	/ɔ/	<i>gormeullo</i>	may laud	<i>wormolha</i>	/ɔ/	3
BK27.12	<i>keudhys</i>	distressed	<i>cvthis</i>	/œ/	<i>difeudhys</i>	doused	<i>dvvuthys</i>	/œ/	1
BK30.29	<i>body</i>	body	<i>body</i>	/ɔ/	<i>desteudhi</i>	get rid of	<i>dystody</i>	/œ/	4
BK35.80	<i>keudhi</i>	distress	<i>cvthy</i>	/œ/	<i>degleudhi</i>	undermine	<i>doglvthy</i>	/œ/	1
					<i>diskeudhi</i>	relieve	<i>dyskvthy</i>	/œ/	1
									1
Pryce	<i>fordhow</i>	roads	<i>furu</i>	/ɔ/	<i>a-vorow</i>	tomorrow	<i>avorou</i>	/ɔ/	5

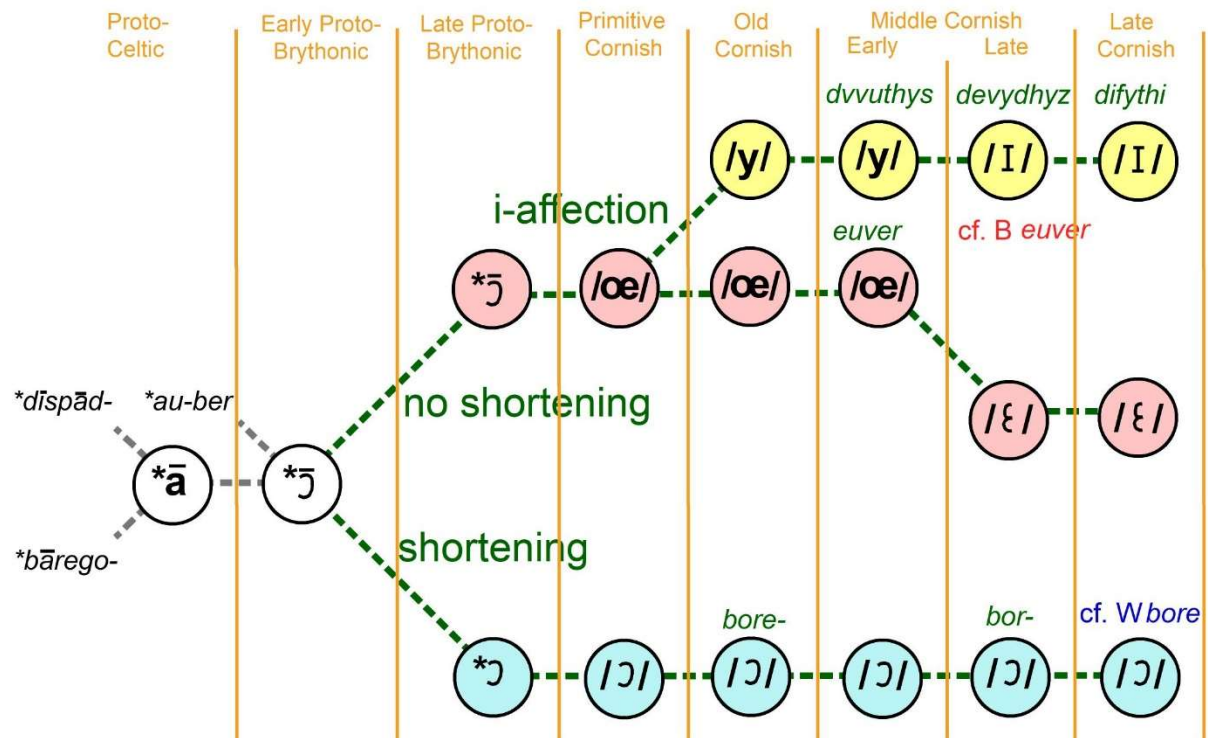
- 1 The double rhymes are perfect; the stressed vowel is presented as /œ/, but since it is spelled <u, v>, it could be /y/.
- 2 The adjective *euthyk* ‘dreadful’ belongs in the class of /œ/ being followed by a high front vowel (Table 15). Here *ethek* is not the adjective, but the 3rd sg. pres. ind. of a verb *euthega* ‘to terrify’. Not being followed by a high front vowel, here historical /œ/ has been unrounded to [‘ɛ’], giving a near-perfect rhyme with *vethak*. CLat *medicus* ‘doctor’ gave PrimWCB /mɛðɪg/²⁴. In north Wales, [ɪ] > [i], but in Cornish, [ɪ] was already lowered to [ɛ] in OldC *medhec* (VC.283). The formula sg. *-ek* / pl. *-ogyon* was applied by analogy to this noun which did not come from **-ākos*; viz. sg. MidC *methek* / pl. *vethogyan* (BK10.29).
- 3 For this rhyme to work, the sound-change [-ɔ] > [-a] must have taken place.
- 4 This is the most interesting case of all: although the other case of *desteudhi* is spelled *thustuthy*, <u> as the stressed vowel (probably meaning [‘y’]), here it is spelled <o>. The author of BK seems to be aware of, and made use of, two features:
 - (a) /d/ and /ð/ are quite close, being linked by lenition;
 - (b) paradigms which normally have /œ/ sometimes have /ɔ/.
- 5 The rhyming words show raising of /ɔ/, common in LateC.

3.3.9 The three paths in Cornish

Words with pretonic Pr-Bry **ǝ* show three different paths in Cornish (Fig.10):

- (i) no shortening of **ǝ*, as in Breton;
- (ii) shortening of **ǝ*, as in Welsh;
- (iii) no shortening of **ǝ*, but with *i*-affection.

Fig. 10 The three paths for pretonic Pr-Bry * $\bar{a}$ in Cornish



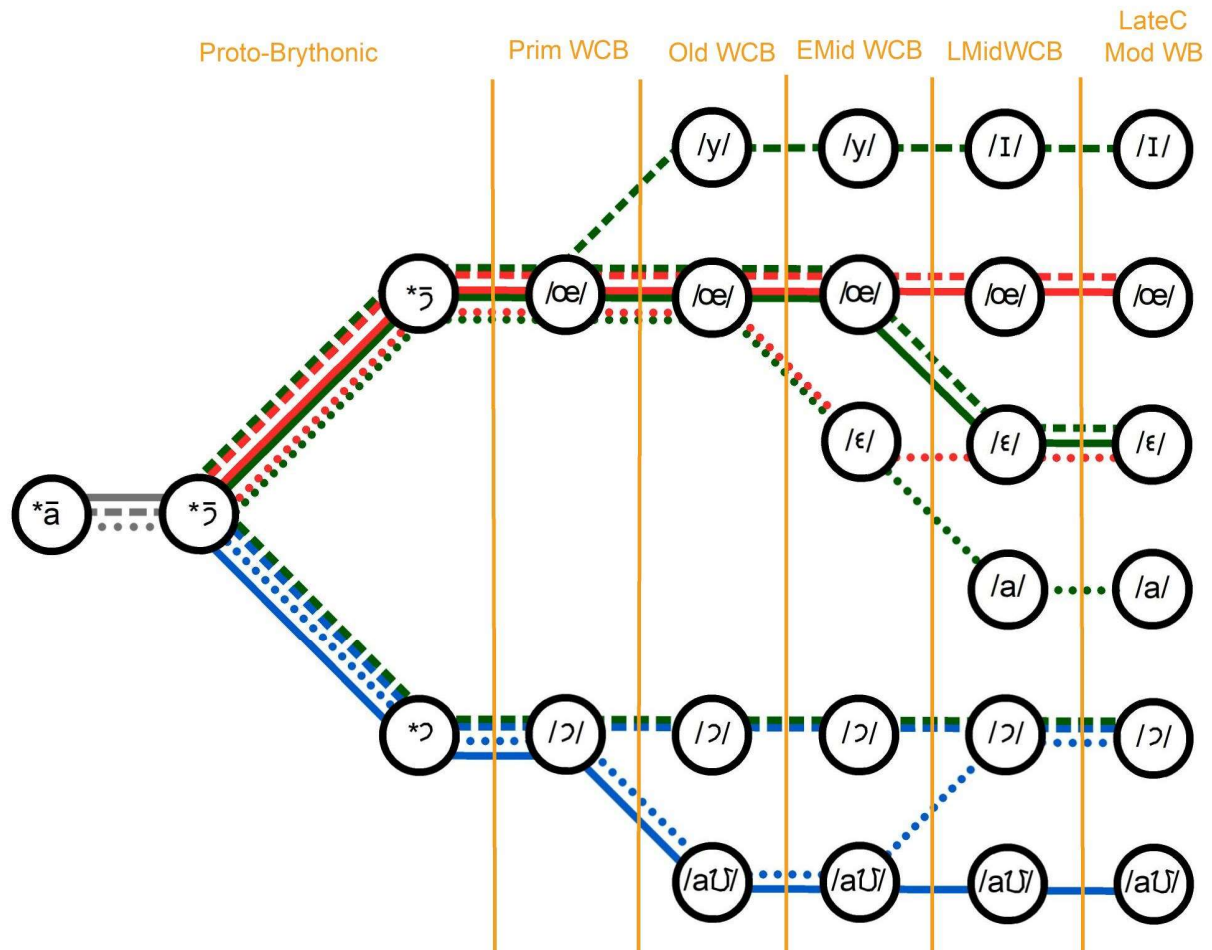
3.3.10 Classification of examples in section 3.3 and some in Chapter 4

Table 19 Classification of examples in section 3.3					
No shortening of Pr-Bry * $\bar{a}$				Shortening of Pr-Bry * $\bar{a}$	
Breton path		Third path		Welsh path	
{eu}	{u}	{e}	{y}	{o}	
/œ/	/œ/ OR /y/	/ɛ/ < /œ/	/ɪ/ < /y/ < /œ/	/ɔ/	
	no unrounding recorded			before * <i>o</i> and * <i>io</i> in Pr-Bry	otherwise
<i>evver</i> <i>yevnys</i>	<i>anfusyk</i> <i>doglvthy</i> <i>parusy</i>	<i>bethys</i> <i>bledzhan</i> <i>blejyow</i> <i>breder</i> <i>ethek</i> <i>tetha</i>	<i>bidhyz</i> <i>vrysy</i> <i>difythi</i> <i>devydhyz</i> <i>ithyk</i> <i>crynni</i> <i>plystre</i> <i>yny</i>	<i>avorow</i> <i>-ogyon</i> <i>-oryon</i> <i>-osow</i> <i>sodhow</i>	<i>broder</i> <i>gormol-</i> <i>hol-</i> <i>-oges</i> <i>-ogneth</i>

3.4 The full developments of Proto-Brythonic *-ā

All of the path diagrams are brought together in Fig. 11.

Fig. 11 The complete development of Pr-Bry *-ā

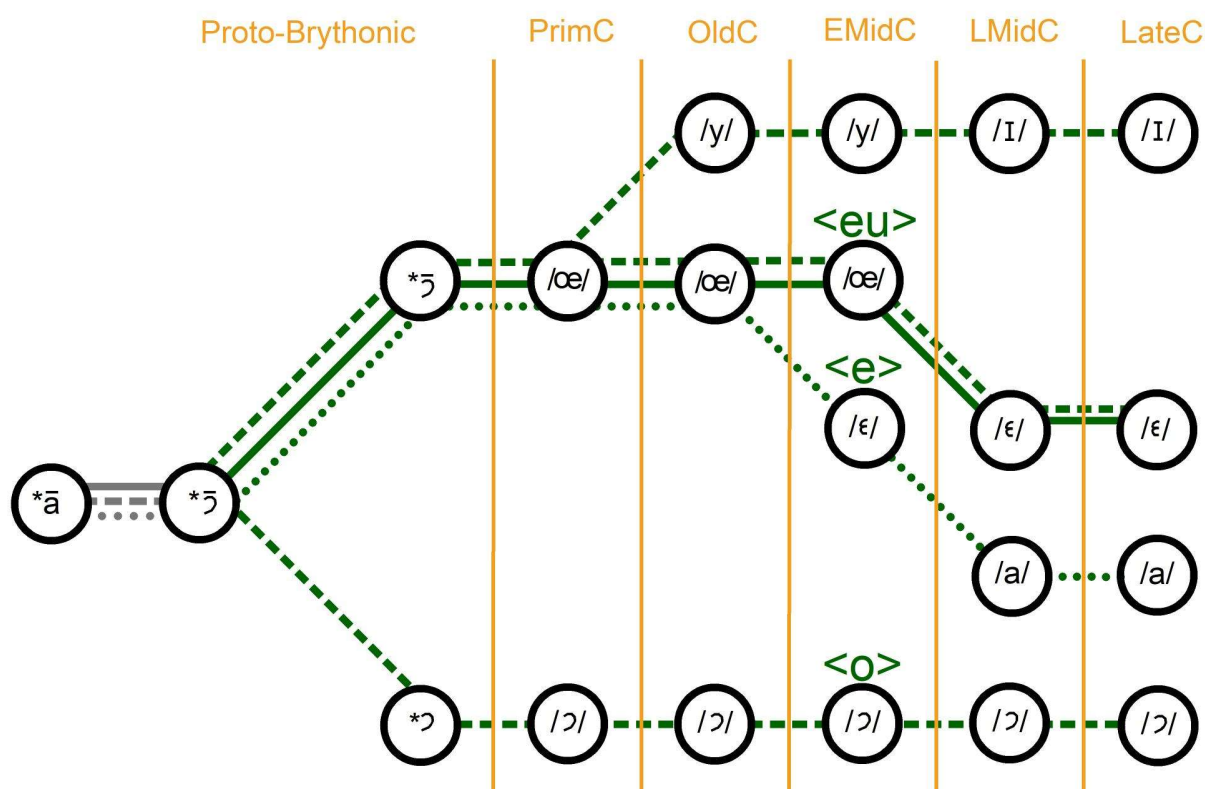


4) IMPLICATIONS FOR REVIVED CORNISH

One of the objectives in researching the phonological history of Cornish (George 1984) was to identify the phonemes in MidC. Among these was /œ/, which was clearly related to /œ/ in Breton. In applying the results of the research to Revived Cornish, there was a tendency to use Neogrammarian principles, so all words whose root came from PrimC /œ/ were spelled with <eu>, whatever the part of speech, provided that the vowel was stressed. Thus in CE93²⁵, the word for ‘praise’ given in section 1.1 was spelled *gormeula*, in spite of the attested *gormola*.

The further research described in this paper has taken the phonological history of /œ/ back from PrimC into Pr-Bry. Some etyma which, on the basis of Breton, would be expected to have /œ/, have /ɔ/ as in Welsh. Having carefully separated the two historical phonemes /y/ and /œ/ (George 1986: 25) where Nance had identified only one, albeit on an etymological basis, it is disconcerting to find that several verbs with /œ/ diverged from the Breton path, becoming /y/ by *i*-affection, and later /ɪ/. The full picture for Cornish is given in Fig. 12.

Fig. 12 Paths and spellings for Cornish



When framing the revived language, one is using a limited quantity of evidence to construct principles which will dictate the form of a far greater amount of material. For example, the correspondence sg. *-er* / pl. *-oryon* (§3.3.5(c)) has only two clear examples, yet in *GM20* there are 223 nouns with this pattern. The attestation of parts of verbs is scanty, yet the revived language requires complete paradigms. One must therefore take great care to get the principles correct.

4.1. Individual words

4.1.1 The etymon *bleus-* ‘flour, flower’

This is a clear case. Table 20 shows that the attestations are entirely consistent with the Breton path, viz. /œ/ as the stressed vowel.

Table 20	Attestations of <i>bleus</i> ‘flour’ and its compounds						
Environment	English	Breton	Welsh	OldC	MidC	Lhuyd	VLC
stressed monosyllable	flour	<i>bleud</i>	<i>blawd</i>	<i>blot</i>		<i>blêz</i>	<i>blease</i>
		[ˈblœ:d]	[ˈblaʊd]	[ˈblœ:d]	[ˈblœ:z]	[ˈblɛ:z]	
stressed polysyllables	flower	<i>bleunienn</i>	<i>blodyn</i>	<i>blodon</i>		<i>bledzhan</i>	
		[ˈblœnjen]	/blɔdin/	[ˈblœ:dɛn]	[ˈblœ:dʒɛn] > [ˈblɛ:dʒɛn]	[ˈblɛ:dʒɛn]	
	flowers	<i>bleunioù</i>	<i>blodau</i>		<i>blegyow</i>		
		[ˈblœnju]	/blɔdai/	[ˈblœdʒɔʊ]	[ˈblœdʒɔʊ] > [ˈblɛdʒɔʊ]	[ˈblɛdʒɔʊ]	

4.1.2 The word *fredh* ‘passion, passionate’

This word is attested over twenty times, usually spelled *freth* and used adjectivally. Formerly it was misidentified within the revival movement as the cognate of B *fraezh*, W *ffraeth* ‘fluent, eloquent’, which is not attested; it is rather the cognate of W *ffrawdd* ‘passion, passionate’.²⁶ Because of this, it was spelled in CE93 and GM09 as *freudh*. No <eu>-spelling is attested, however; even in the oldest Middle Cornish text (the Charter Endorsement), the word is spelled *freȝ* (<ȝ> = [ð]).

The noun *frôth* (Lhuyd’s version of *Jowann Chi an Hordh*) in the singular, and *frvthow* (BK09.07) in the plural may be cognate with B *freuz* ‘havoc’; this B word comes from OldF *frois*.

4.2 Verbal paradigms

4.2.1 Spelling in *Kernewek Kemmyn*

In *GM20*, the reflex of PrimC /œ/ is almost always written as <eu>. The unrounded form /ɛ/, sometimes used in poetry, is written <e’>; e.g. *a dhe’t’h* ‘came’ from *a dheuth*.²⁷ The third path is not recognized in *GM20*. The application to verbal paradigms is shown in Table 21.

²⁶ B *freuz* ‘havoc’ appears not to be cognate; it comes from OldF *frois*.

²⁷ The orthography known as SWF is similar, but its proponents wish to expunge apostrophes and hyphens. This is a short-sighted precept, since both can help with illuminating points of grammar and stress.

Table 21 Phonemics and orthography in <i>GM20</i>									
No. of syllables in stem	3 sg. pres. ind. and 2 sg. impv.					All other parts			
		stress	phoneme	spelling (KK)	example	stress	phoneme	spelling (KK)	example (VN)
1	early	yes	/œ/	eu	keudh	yes	/œ/	eu	keudhi
	late		/ɛ/	e'	ke'dh		/ɛ/	e'	ke'dhi
> 1	early	no	/œ/	eu	diskeudh	yes	/œ/	eu	diskeudhi
	late		/ɛ/	e'	diske'dh		/ɛ/	e'	diske'dhi

4.2.2 Verbs in *-eudhi*

We might reasonably expect all verbs with their verbal noun in *-eudhi* to behave similarly. The attested ones are listed in Table 22a. In addition, *GM20* has the new compounds *kesteudhi* ‘to coalesce’ and *testeudhi* ‘to weld’.

Table 22a	Verbal forms in MidC and LateC				
Kernewek Kemmyn	English meaning	Verbal noun	Past ptcpl.	3 sg. pres. ind. 2 sg. impv.	Related items
<i>beudhi</i>	to drown	<i>buthy</i> <i>bethy</i> [beuzi ²⁸]	<i>buthys</i> <i>bethys</i> <i>bidhis</i>	<i>buth</i>	
<i>degleudhi</i>	to undermine	<i>doglvthy</i>	<i>dogluthys</i>		
<i>desteudhi</i>	to liquidate	<i>dystvthy</i> <i>thustuthy</i> <i>dystody</i>			
<i>difeudhi</i>	to extinguish	<i>dyfjthy</i>	<i>dvvuthys</i>	<i>dyfuth</i>	
<i>diskeudhi</i>	to cheer	<i>dyskvthy</i>			
<i>heudhi</i>	to comfort	<i>huthy</i>	<i>huthys</i>		
<i>keudhi</i>	to grieve	<i>cuthy</i>	<i>cuthys</i>		<i>cuth</i> , <i>kueth</i> ‘grief’
<i>kleudhi</i>	to bury	<i>clethy</i>	<i>clethyys</i>		<i>cleath</i> , <i>klêdh</i> ‘ditch’
<i>sedhi</i>	to submerge		<i>sethys</i>		<i>Houlzedhas</i> ‘sunset’ <i>Zethar</i> ‘a sea mew’ <i>dansotha</i> ‘deep depressions’
<i>teudhi</i> ²⁹	to melt	<i>tedha</i>		<i>tuth</i> , <i>theth</i>	

The stressed vowel is variously expressed by <ue, u, v>, <ê, ea, e>, <i> and <o>, representing /œ/, /ɛ/, /ɪ/ and /ɔ/ respectively. To relate these graphs to the historic development, the material is rearranged in Table 22b.

²⁸ It looks as if B *beuziñ* ‘to drown’ has found its way into Pryce’s dictionary here.
²⁹ See §4.2.8.

Table 22b	Verbal forms in MidC and LateC (rearranged)		
Kernewek Kemmyn	Early Middle Cornish	Late MidC	LateC
Verbal noun	<i>buthy</i> <i>doglvthy</i> <i>dystvthy</i> , <i>thustuthy</i> , <i>dystody</i> (BK) <i>dyskvthy</i> <i>cuthy</i>	<i>bethy</i>	[<i>beuzi</i>] <i>clethy</i> <i>dyfthy</i> [<i>huthy</i> (PV124)] <i>tetha</i> (AB054a)
Past participle	<i>buthys</i> <i>doglvthy[s]</i> <i>dvvuthys</i> (BK27.14) <i>huthys</i> (RD.0483) <i>cuthys</i> <i>sethys</i>	<i>bethys</i>	<i>bidhis</i> (AB250a) <i>clethyys</i>
3 sg. pres. ind. 2 sg. impv.	<i>buth</i> <i>dyfuth</i> (OM.2637) <i>tuth</i>	<i>theth</i>	
Related items	<i>cuth</i> , <i>kueth</i> ‘grief’ <i>dansotha</i> ‘deep depressions’	<i>cleath</i> ‘ditch’	<i>klêdh</i> ‘ditch’ <i>Houlzedhas</i> ‘sunset’ <i>Zethar</i> ‘a sea mew’

Notes

- Pryce’s VN *huthy*, with the wrong meaning ‘to exalt’ is probably made up from *huthys* (RD.0483) ‘comforted’.
- The only items which fit the Third Path are *bidhis* and *dyfthy*.
- The stressed vowel in the verb ‘to submerge’ does not appear as <u>, only as <e>. This explains why it is written *sedhi* in *GM20*, but there is a good case for writing it as *seudhi*.
- The only item with the stressed vowel written <o> is *dansotha* (RD.0377), a place-name. The <o> is more likely to be an archaism for [‘œ’], e.g. the place-name copied from an old document, than an example of the Welsh path.

4.2.3 MidC *parusy* ‘to prepare’

W *parodi* shows early shortening of **ǝ*; ModB *parediñ* < MidB *parediff* shows unrounding of [‘œ’]. The attested parts of the Cornish verb are given in Table 23.

Table 23	Attested parts of the verb ‘to prepare’		
Part of speech	Textual spelling	Reference	Kernewek Kemmyn
Verbal noun	<i>parusy</i>	PC.0675	<i>pareusi</i>
	<i>parugy</i>	BK01.26	
Past participle	<i>parusys</i>	PC.0458	<i>pareusys</i>
	<i>parusys</i>	PC.0690	
2nd pl. imperative	<i>parusugh</i>	BM.0221	<i>pareusewgh</i>
	<i>parusugh</i>	BM.3164	
	<i>parusugh</i>	BM.3216	
	<i>parusugh</i>	BM.4510	

The stressed vowel in every case is spelled <u>, which suggests [y], but could also mean [œ]. Unfortunately there is no spelling with <i> or <y> from Late Cornish which would confirm [y], but the well-attested adjective *parys* ‘ready, prepared’ supports it.

Table 24	Orthographic profile of <i>parys</i> ‘ready’ (omitting copies by Lhuyd and Pryce)											
	VC	PC	RD	OM	PA	BM	BK	TH	SA	CW	Lh	VLC
<i>parot</i>	1											
<i>parys, paris, barys</i>		25	3	8	13	28	13	2	1	14		
<i>parrys</i>					1							
<i>paryz, parez</i>											2	
<i>parrez</i>												4

One would expect OldC *parot* to give MidC **pares*, but <-ys> is found throughout. This may be connected with (Late Cornish *parez, parrez* shows the well-known late lowering of y to e). The form *parys* was interpreted in Late Cornish as the past participle of a verb *parra* ‘to prepare’ in the following line from the Pilchard Poem (Gwavas’ version):

The’u hemma vor guir an Hern tha parra ‘This is the correct way to prepare pilchards’

Also of interest is the comparative *parusse* ‘readier’ (BM.3122).

The paradigms in Welsh and Breton are regular, based on *parod-* and *pared-* respectively, but in Cornish matters are not so clear. Should the stem be *parus-*, as is found in the texts, but with the pronunciation [pa’ry’z-]; or should it be *pareus-*, as in **GM20**, with the pronunciation [pa’rœ’z-]?

4.2.4. The word *gormel* revisited

All of the attestations are given in Tables 25a and 25b.

Table 25a	Disyllabic parts of <i>gormel</i> ‘to praise’		
Part of speech	Textual spelling	Reference	Remarks
Verbal noun	<i>gormel</i>	BM.1420 BM.2241	Rhymes with <i>gasel</i> ‘armpit’. Rhymes with <i>leferel</i> ‘to say’
	<i>gormol</i>	BK28.66	Rhymes with <i>tol</i> ‘hole’ and <i>ol</i> ‘all’
	<i>gormall</i>	T.Boson	Could be development of either <i>gormel</i> or <i>gormol</i>
3 sg. pres. ind.	<i>gormol</i>	BK24.73	Not a rhyming word.
	<i>gornvall</i>	CW.0710, LV076, PV110	Appears to be a miscopying by Jordan of <i>*gormall</i> ; copied by Lhuyd and Pryce

Table 25b	Words of more than two syllables containing <i>gormel</i> ‘praise’		
Part of speech	Textual spelling	Reference	Remarks
Singular noun ‘praise’	<i>gormola</i>	J. Boson, Gwavas, LV076, AB077b, PV110,	From <i>*gormoleth</i> ; see Table 1
Plural noun	<i>gormolys</i>	BK30.89, 32.39, 32.69	Eng.pl. suffix -ys
Past participle	<i>gormolas</i>	TH08r	-as is unexpected for a past participle, but the word definitely means ‘praised’
3 sg. pres. subj.	<i>wormolha</i>	BK23.07	
2 pl. impv.	<i>gormollow</i>	T. Boson	For earlier <i>*gormolewgh</i>
Adjective	<i>wormoladow</i>	BK11.04 BK21.36	Rhymes with <i>caradow</i> ‘lovable’. Rhymes with <i>plegadow</i> ‘pleasing’

All of these attested cases are consistent with the Welsh path, except for two of *gormel* in BM; these could be eye-rhymes.

4.2.5 *kleudh* ‘trench’ and its compounds

This word comes from Pr-Clt **klādo-* and has cognates B *kleuz* and W *clawdd*. This and its compound are listed in Table 26.

Table 26	Representative forms of <i>kleudh</i> and the verb <i>ynkleudhyas</i> ³⁰ ‘to bury’		
Kernewek Kemmyn	EMidC	Late MidC	LateC
Singular noun		<i>cleath</i> (CW.1138)	<i>klêdh</i> (Lhuyd)
Plural noun			<i>kle dhioṽ</i> (AB242b)
Verbal noun	{ancle ^h dhyas}	<i>ancly^hthyas</i> (CW.2080)	<i>anclo^htha</i> (Bod.068) <i>ancle^hthy</i> (PV068) <i>cle^hthy</i> (PV082)
Past participle	{ancle ^h thyys}	<i>incl^hi^hhis</i> (SA61v) <i>ancly^hthys</i> (CW.1851)	<i>ynkly^hthys</i> (Keigwin) <i>ymcl^hi^hthes</i> (T. Boson) <i>enkled^hhyz</i> (Lhuyd)
2 sg. impv.	<i>anclath</i> (PC.3131)		

The imperative *anclath* is taken to come from **ancleth* < **ancleuth*, showing precocious lowering of [-εC] > [-aC].

Also of note is *an clathva* (PC.1545) ‘burial-place’, which may contain the related root PrimC /klað/, cf. B *klaz*, W *cladd*.

4.2.6 *neuvya* ‘to swim’

This is an example of a neologism with /œ/. The MidC word *nyge* primarily meant ‘to fly’, cf. B *nijal* and W *neidio*; but it also meant ‘to swim’³¹ and ‘to float’. Nance reconstructed the historical word for ‘to swim’ as **nūvya*; this is now spelled *neuvya*. Pr-Clt **snām-* gave B *neuñv*, W *nawf* ‘swimming’. In the paradigm of B *neuial*³² ‘to swim’, the <eu> is kept, but the <ñv> is lost, so that the stem is *neu-* in all parts. The Welsh paradigm is based on the stem *nof-*, but the (literary) 3 sg. pres. ind. is *nawf*.

³⁰ The MidC forms suggest that *ankleudhyas* would be a better spelling.

³¹ To make the distinction, *nija yn dowr* lit. ‘to fly in water’ was used for ‘to swim’.

³² There are several variants of the infinitive in Breton: *neuial*; *neuñ*; *neuñv*; *neuñvial*; *neuñviñ*, even *neu*. The author uses *neuial*.

4.2.7 *yeuni* ‘to yearn’

Table 27 Attested parts of the paradigm of <i>yeuni</i> ‘to yearn’		
Part of speech	Textual spelling	Reference
Verbal noun	<i>vny</i>	BK14.31, 22.24, 31.30, 32.33; TH30r
	<i>yny</i>	TH22v
3rd sg. preterite	<i>yevnys</i>	PC.1701, miscopied twice by Pryce
1st sg. cond.	<i>yensen</i>	PC.3167
	<i>zensen</i>	OM.2358
3rd sg. cond.	<i>vnsa</i>	PA.021

The following differences are evident between the texts:

- PA, BK and TH use a form without [j-], and the stressed vowel is <v> = [‘y’], even in the case of *vnsa*, which is not followed by a high front vowel.
- PC and OM use a form with [j-], and the stressed vowel is <ev> = [‘eː’] when half-long and <e> = [‘ɛ’] when short.

4.2.8 The verb *teudhi* ‘to melt’ revisited

Having begun with a line from a Christmas carol, I now end with my translation of one. In the fourth verse of *Good King Wenceslas*, we find the verbal noun ‘to melt’.

English

Mark my footsteps, good my page;
tread thou in them boldly;
thou shalt find the winter’s rage
freeze thy blood less coldly.

1978 translation in Unified Cornish

Merk ow olow, da ow gwas,
hol an ergh ow **tedha**;
ty a gyf an yeynder bras
na vyth orth dha **fetha**.

For this verb, Nance’s Unified Cornish used *tedh-* as the verbal root, following Lhuyd’s VN *tedha*, even though *ü* was used in other verbs which evolved from PrimC /æ/. Not knowing any better at the time, I used *tedha*, forming an imperfect rhyme with *fetha* ‘to overcome’.

Back-translation of the Cornish

Mark my footmarks, good my servant
follow the melting snow;
thou shalt find the great cold
will not drown thee.

Translation c.2000 in Kemmyn

Merk ow olow, da ow gwas,
hol an ergh ow ***teudhi***;
ty a gyv an yeynder bras
*na vydh orth dha **veudhi**.*

Years later, when it was appreciated that the verb ‘to melt’ was one of a group having a VN in *-eudhi* (§4.2.2), the translation was altered. Such is the nature of Revived Cornish. New discoveries are still being made, and minor alterations introduced into the language in consequence.³³

³³

This was why when the orthography known as SWF was introduced in 2008, provision was made for a revision every five years. In the event, only the revision of 2013 was made, since when no structural changes have been permitted. This is a great shame, because there are features in SWF which should be improved.

5) CONCLUSIONS

- Whereas in Breton shortening of Proto-Brythonic * $\bar{y}$ is extremely rare, in Cornish there are a number of cases of shortening, some of which reflect the sequences Pr-Bry *- $\bar{y}Vo$ - and *- $\bar{y}V\dot{i}o$ -.
- No shortening of Pr-Bry * $\bar{y}$ gave PrimC /œ/ > OldC /œ/.
- /œ/ was unrounded to /ɛ/, c. 1225 in final unstressed syllables, later when stressed in polysyllables. In stressed monosyllables the mid-point of this sound-change was c.1525, but it took place by lexical diffusion.
- Cornish also has cases of /œ/ being raised to /y/, a path which is not found in Breton nor in Welsh.

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