Chapter 8: The Early Modern English Period, 1500-1800

Part 2: Forms, Syntax, and Usage: The Lead-up to ENGL 530



Grammatical Changes

PVRCHAS

HIS

PILGRIMES.

FN FIVE BOOKES.

The first, Contayning the Voyages and Peregrinations made by ancient Kings, Patriarkes, Apostles, Philosophers, and others, to and thorow the remoter parts of the knowne World:

Enquiries also of Languages and Religions, especially of the moderne discripted Protestions of

The second, A Description of all the Circum-Nauigations of the GLOBE.

The third, Nauigations and Voyages of Englishmen, alongst the Coasts of Africa, to the Cape of Good Hope, and from thence to the Red Sea, the Abashine, Arabim, Persian, Indian, Shoares, Comments, and Ilanda.

The fourth, English Voyages beyond the East Indies, to the Hands of Iapan, China, Genchinehina, the Philippine with others, and the Indian Nauigations further professed: Their fail Commerce, nobly vindenced against Tarking Tracheries; victoriously defended against Parmyal Hoshinie; glaringly advanted against Moorilh and Ethinske Paffate; hopefully reconsting from Danh Malaginie; intly maintyned against floware and assistant columns.

The fifth, Nanigations, Voyages, Traffiques, Discoueries, of the English Nation in the English Indian occurrents, and consysting the English Indian occurrents, and consysting the English Affairs with the Great Sameries, in the Perfect and Actains College, and inches places of the Contineer, and Maist of and beyond the India: the Persagal Accompes, and Tourish Districts, diarri See figure with both and many other remarkable.

If I a a X I i o N S.

The First Part.

Unus Deus, Una Veritas.

METATERAL MARCHANTE METATOR OF THE PARTY OF

LONDON
Printed by William Stansby for Henrie Fetherstone, and are to be fold at his shop in
Pauls Church-yard at the signe of the Rose.

- All plurals for new words are regular (-s or -es)
- A few irregular plurals survive
- The his-genitive develops to spell out the -s in the genitive singular.
 By analogy a her-genitive and a their-genitive develop.
 - Especially seen with proper names and especially after proper names ending in sibilants: "characters as red as Mars his heart;" "Margery Brewys her mark;" "the House of Lords their proceedings"

- Group genitive: 's is added to the last word in the word group, not to the word it actually inflects [the King of England's army= the (King + genitive) of England army, not "the King's army of England"]
 - 's is an enclitic ending—attached to the closest word, not to the word it morphologically modifies.
- Uninflected genitives: Ladychapel, chrissake (the elision and loss of the dental in "christ" leading to the loss of the genitive 's before the sibilant in 'sake'). Especially happens with nouns that originally were feminine in Anglo-Saxon grammar or nouns ending in —s sounds ("for conscience sake")

Adjectives and Adverbs

- Loss of strong/weak distinction but sometimes the survival of a silent –e on the end ("quite")
- The only adjectives that still have to agree in number with the nouns they modify are this/these and that/those
- Increased use of analytical forms for comparatives and superlatives (more/most rather than -er/-est); sometimes double comparison exists in EModE

Pronouns

- Grammatically, the part of speech that changes most in the EModE period
- I is almost always capitalized
- My/mine and thy/thine (with mine/thine being used before vowel SOUNDS)
- Loss of second person singular pronouns (thou, thee, thy, thine); second person plural pronouns extend to cover the declension
 - No distinction like French tu/vous or German Du/Sie
 - Translators of KJV deliberately retained archaic pronouns thee, thou, thine
- Neuter nominative singular loses its initial [h]: now it instead of hit
- Second person singular agreement (you was, not you were) until the schoolmastering grammarians got hold of it in the late 18th century

as not beloved. h Hos, 1, 10. come to pass, where it was Ye are not my hall they be IML 5. 17. n of the living so crieth con-"Though the # Lev. 18. 5. children of Isind of the sea, be saved: 3 Or, the nish 3the work, t in righteousp Isa. 28, 22. short work will ipon the earth. '-as said before, r Jn. 3. 13. d of Să-bā'-oth d, 'we had been nd been made r'-rhă. we say then? " Deu. 30. s, which followteousness, have v ch. 1, 17 eousness, veven as which is of which followed righteousness ed to the law of Because they faith, but as works of the y stumbled at : Isa, 8.14

tten, Behold, I

stumblingstone | d. 9. 33.

about to catability const righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That "the man which doeth those things shall live by them, when bus garaged

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, "to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach:

o That if thou shalt wconfess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man

believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

II For the scripture saith, aWhosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Relative and Interrogative Pronouns

- Who (OE hwā) comes to be the relative 'who,' referring to humans only in the 16th century
- That (restrictive relative) and which (nonrestrictive relative) appear in almost equal frequencies in speech
- The that/which rule comes from Fowler's English Usage (1905); a late example of schoolmastering

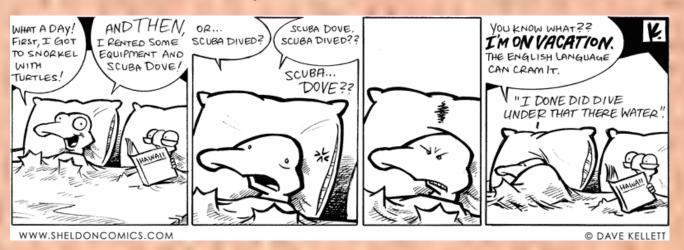
Cases of Pronouns

- Example of linguistic anxiety
- Attempts to regularize usage in 17th and 18th centuries
- Hypercorrection often applied ("They invited Mary and me" becomes "They invited Mary and I"
 - I/me often shaky after forms of the verb "to be"
 - Who/Whom started worrying people in the late 15th century—still a great deal of variation today



Verbs

- Virtually all new verbs borrowed in as weak verbs with 3 principal parts
- Most strong verbs disappeared or developed alternate (weak) forms (dove/dived)
- Confusion over related forms such as lie/lay and sit/set (look these up in the OED)



The Progressive Aspect of Verbs

- Largely due to loss of *on* as a preposition before the participle used as gerund; caused by phonological leveling (no longer "They are a-dancing")
- Starts to happen in 16th c.
- Extension of be- forms with present participles: I am working; they are dancing
- By 18th c. has extended to passive voice: *The house is being built*. Earliest example of this is 1762; makes it into grammar books by 1802, though still being attacked as "careless" usage into late 19th c.



More about verbs

- The inflectional endings largely disappear (though the silent –e spelling may be retained)
- Second- and third-person singular forms start to collapse
- Concord with the 2nd person plural of "to be" is very irregular
- "Do-support" ('The lady doth protest too much') is frequent

Contractions

- Don't is the mystery contraction
- Ain't (for am not—possibly with a scribal variation on minims)—originally may have been a high-class status form
- 'twill'= 'it will' gradually replaced with "it'll"
- 've enclitic for "have" is an 18th century phenomenon: "He could've done it"
- Phonological spelling "he would of done it"--an example of eye dialect

Prepositions

- Elision and leveling of unstressed prepositions leads to a- forms and some others: "aboard"=on board; "abed" = in bed; "once a day" = once in a day
- More fuss about ending sentences with prepositions, which you can't do in Latin but can do nicely in English—it just drives the prescriptive grammarians crazy. Another example of schoolmastering!



