

Mind your p's and q's, or the peregrinations of apostrophes in 17th Century English

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Outline

- **Introduction**
- **Brief historical review: Italy, France, Great Britain**
- **Apostrophes in 17th Century English**
 - **Analysis and transcription**
 - **Use of morphological and syntactical graphs**
 - **Discussion about the methodology**
- **Conclusion**

Introduction

- Appearance of apostrophes in printed texts
 - A brief historical review by Jacques André « Funeste destinée : l'apostrophe détournée » published in *Graphê* in March 2008
 - An internal punctuation mark for verbs or nouns
 - a guiding principle to introduce the main transformations of nouns and verbs

Italy 1501

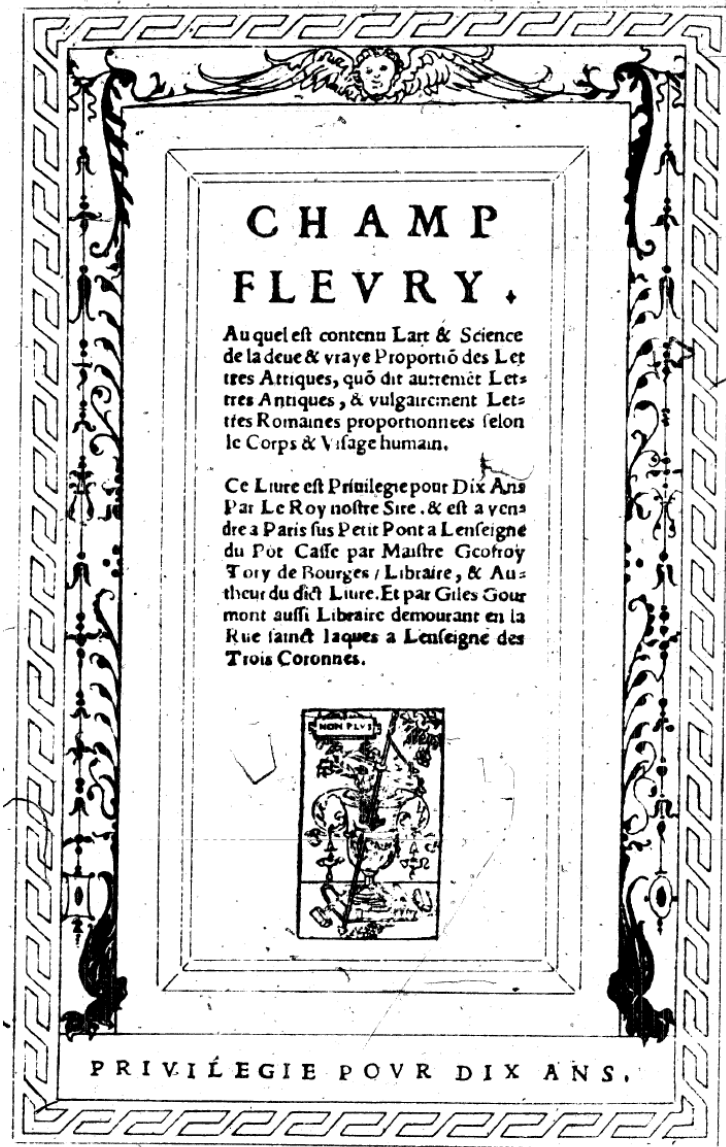


- A punctuation mark that used to be **handwritten**
- **Alde Manuce** (Venise) introduces it in the first published Italian grammar *Regole della lingua fiorentina*.
- In Italian it marks the elision of a letter

*IN uedra' Italia et l'honorata rina
Canzon; ch'a gliocchi miei celi et contende
Non mar, non poggio, o fiume;*

France 1529

- Geofroy Tory, in *Champ Fleury* (1529), a treatise about typography, was the first to use
« un point crochu qu'on appelle Apostrophus »



cōme iay dict, vng point crochu quon appelle Apostrophus. Cōme en disant Viden' Satin' Vin' pour & en Lieu de dire, Videscne, Satisne, & Visne.

France 1531 - 1533

- Jacques Dubois, in his grammar *Isagoge* recommends the use of the Greek apostrophe to mark the omission of a letter.

m'amiè vt, pro ma amiè.

tu n'es qu'un badin: pro tu nè es què vn badin.

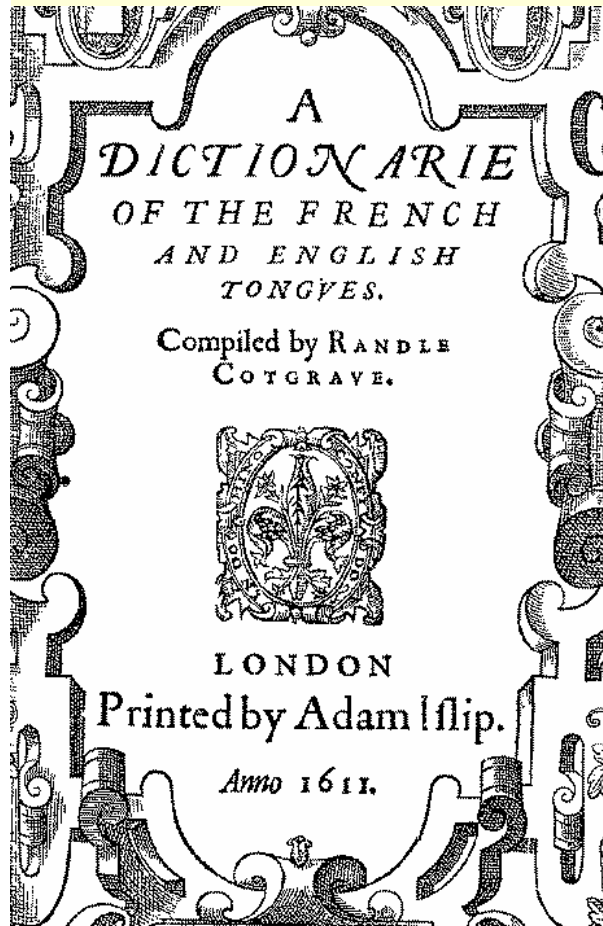
- 1533 first font made by Augereau
- In the meantime it appears in other books
- Its use becomes widespread, and in French its insertion becomes obligatory.

le ami becomes l'ami

Great Britain 1559



- It appears in *The Cosmographical Glasse* by **Williams Cunninghams**.
- It is used mainly in contractions
 - don't for do not
- and as a genitive
 - John's dog, is the contraction of the archaic genitive **Johnes dog**



Definition 1611

- *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongves*

Compiled by Randle Cotgrave

To apostrophise =

To cut off the last vowel of a word

Apostropher. To auert, wry, turne aside; also, to reuske, or call backe; also, to apostrophise; to cut off (by an Apostrophe) the last vowel of a word.

Comparison

Language	French	Italian	English	German	Spanish
Number of apostrophes	10 000	6 000	500	some	some
Number of sentences	9 000	9 000	9 000	9 000	9 000

Apostrophes and computers

- Several codes : 39 (not respected by Anglo-Saxons), then 169, Unicode U+2018 or U+2019
- NooJ 2018 and 2019 but impossible to type both with the keyboard

→ Be careful, you might lose some results

Apostrophes in our corpus

- **Corpus**

- Accounts of English travellers in Greece and the Ottoman Empire ([NooJ 2008](#))

- **Apostrophes in our corpus**

- **Poetry: not to be modified**

- **Verbs: forms in 't, 'd**

- **Nouns: recognise 's, introduce it --if possible**

- **Other cases : contraction, compounds, elision**

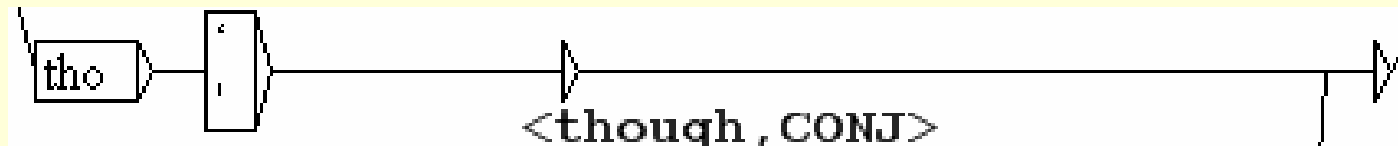
- **Adjectives like hair'd: not to be modified**

contraction, compounds, elisions

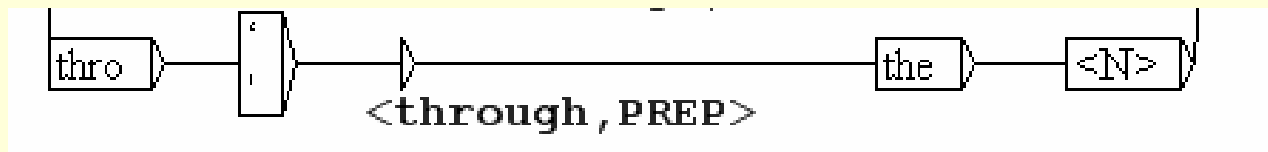
- **Contracted forms**
 - ‘tis for “it is” or it’s (13)
 - Annotate the word form as a sequence of annotations:
 - tis → <it,PRO+3+s> <is,be,V+PR+3+s>
- **Archaic forms as in monyworth for "money's worth"**
 - include them in the dictionary
- **Elisions**
 - though is spelt tho’
 - through is spelt thro’

Graphs or entries in the dictionary

Conjunction: **Though is spelt **tho'**
tho', though, CONJ**



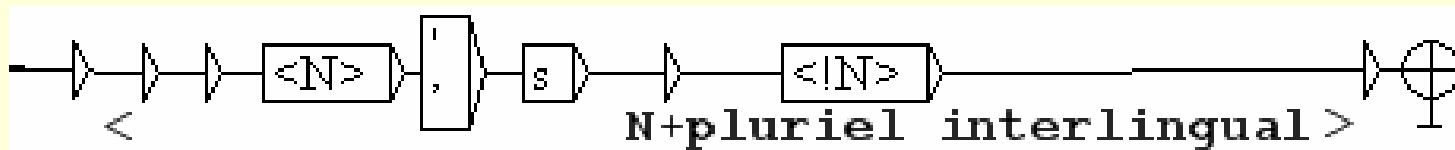
Prepositions: **thro' for **through**
thro', through, PREP**



→ BUT problem with different apostrophes

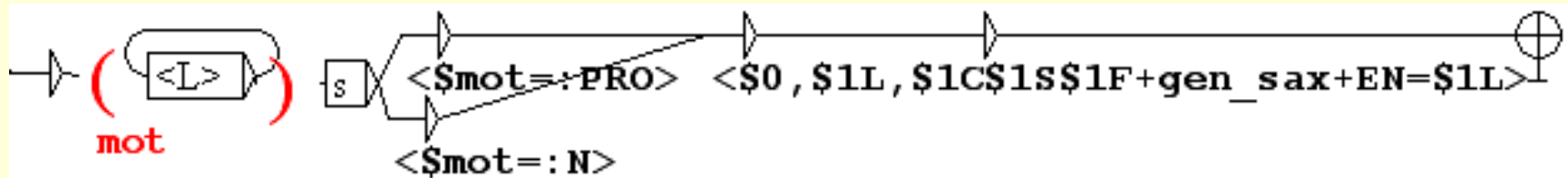
Nouns: 's = genitive or interlingual plural?

- Genitive: formerly without an apostrophe as in
 - “from the *womens* apartment”;
 - “out of their *wives and childrens* mouths”
- But interlingual plural of foreign nouns too:
 - *Egoumeno's*,
 - *Bassa's* (Pashas),
 - *piazza's*
- Spotted thanks to a NooJ grammar



Nouns : genitive how to add 's ?

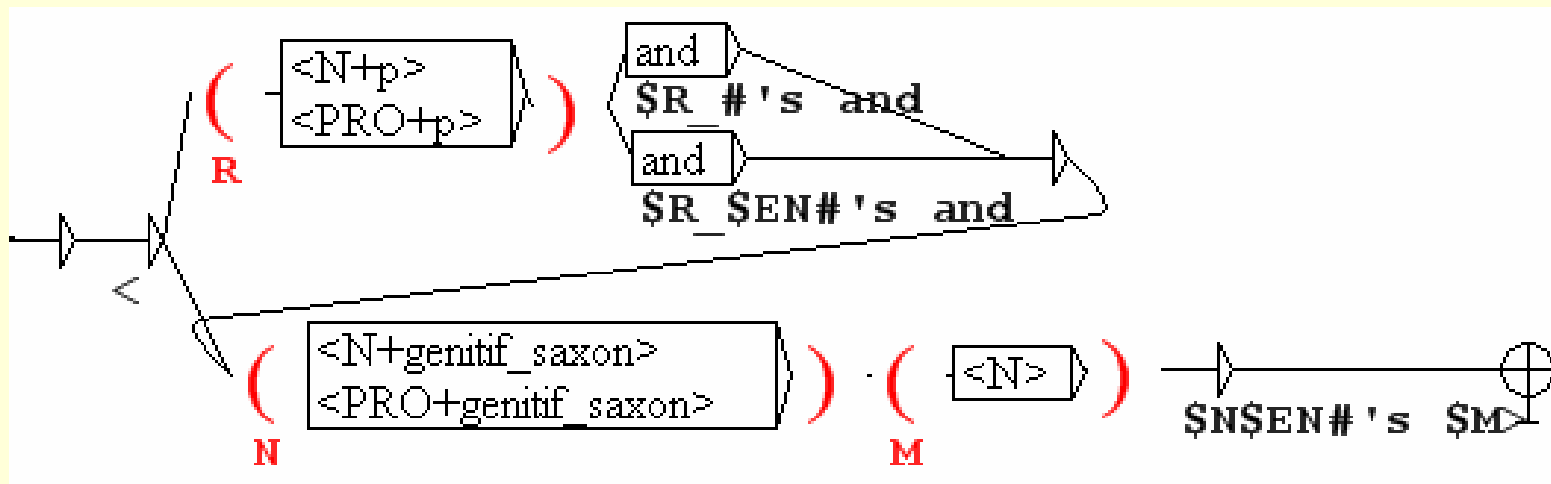
- Unknown words ending in s,
 - anothers : “one **anothers** company”
 - childrens : “their wives and **childrens** mouths”
- Morphological graph



- But **wives** is also a genitive !!!
 - the conjunction will help to recognise it with a syntactical graph
 - but **we cannot automatise other cases**
- *N.B. wives' (GB) or (wives's) US*

Nouns: morphological + syntactical graphs

- This graph can recognise
 - either noun + noun : $\langle N+gen_sax \rangle \langle N \rangle$
 - or pronoun + noun: $\langle PRO+gen_sax \rangle \langle N \rangle$



- **wives** and **childrens** mouths \rightarrow \langle **wives's** and **children's** mouths \rangle
- **another's** company \rightarrow \langle **another's** company \rangle

Nouns : Problems

- We may recognise unknown words, but what about known words????
- mans in « *no other mans errors could draw* »

« mans » is not identified as a genitive, because it is wrongly «recognised » as the **verb to man**.

transitive verb = tenir (switchboard, desk);
armer [qch] en hommes (ship).

Verbs : preterite and PP

- **verbs ending in p, k, x, ss, sh**

→ had two forms: normal form in ed

shortened form in t or 't

For regular forms and for shortened forms in t, we have a morphological graph

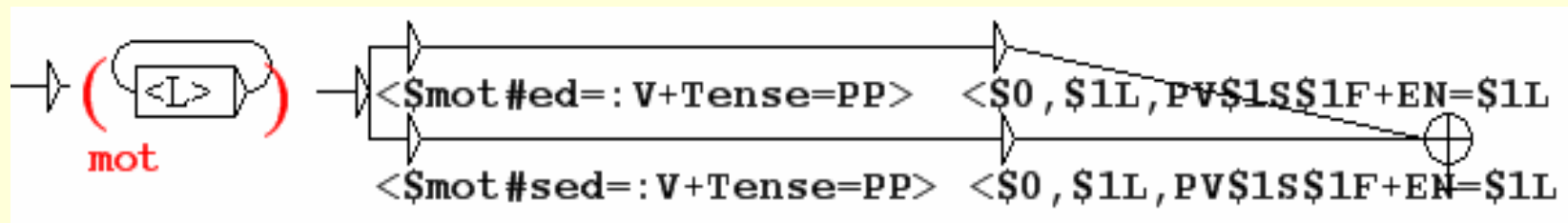
→ we use a morphological graph and then a syntactical one

→ different cases: KNOWN words and UNKNOWN words need different transformations

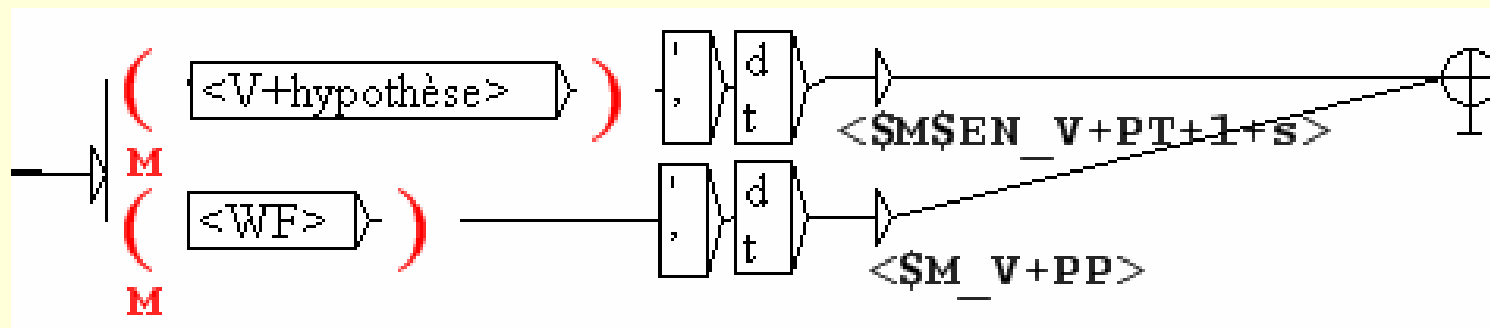
Verbs: two steps

- morphological graph

- Recognises an unknown word by adding ed, ted or sed



- syntactical graph



Verbs: a KNOWN word like establish

establish can have 3 forms :

- “and *establish*'d the same number”,
- “the *establish*'t doctrine”,
- “and for ever *established* the adoration”.

- FIRST STEP *the dictionary* recognises **establish** as the bare infinitive or the simple present of the verb to establish
- So the syntactical graph must modify the result of the dictionaries
 - **SECOND STEP** *the syntactical graph* builds **established**

Verbs: an UNKNOWN word like judg

- judg'd: “this being *judg'd*”
 - the form « judg » is NOT recognised
 - FIRST STEP: the morphological graph tests some hypotheses
 - “judg” + ed → judged = the PP of judge
 - judg,judge,PV+Tense=PP+ EN=judge.
 - At that point we don't know if judg is followed by 'd in the text
 - SECOND STEP the syntactical graph will confirm it and we get:
 - judg,judge,V+Tense=PP+ EN=judge

Verbs : UNKNOWN word as profes

- *profes'd , profest, professed*

– « profes » is UNKNOWN

– **FIRST STEP** a graph deletes a mute e and suggests

profes,prof,N+Nb=p+Distribution=Hum+EN=prof

another graph adds /sed/,

profes,profess,PV+Tense=PP+EN=profess

(the full graph « recognises » a preterite and an adjective).

– **SECOND STEP** the syntactical graph invalidates the noun , and validates the verb

– *profes,profess,V+Tense=PP+EN=profess*

Verbs: case of an UNKNOWN word, e.g. imbrac

- To be able to recognise *imbrac'd* we must combine two transformations
 - **imbrac'd → embrac'd → embraced.**several morphological graphs with different levels of priority
- Our corpus has 90 occurrences of 'd or 't.

Conclusion

- **Verbs**
- **It is sometimes difficult to process verbs**
- **The order of application of the graphs is important**
- **Nouns**
- **We failed to process some genitives**
- **We must improve the grammar of the syntagm**