

"... AND RIMMAIN YOOR OBEDDEEND OMBLE ZERVAND": THE
INVENTED SPELLING SYSTEM OF WILLIAM BAILLIE OF DUNAIN
(1789-1869)

By NIGEL FABB, *University of Strathclyde*
AND IAIN HUTCHISON, *University of Stirling*

ABSTRACT

William Baillie invented his own spelling system, which is used in six of his letters of the 1830s and 1840s. Among his practices are his use of 'voiced' consonant letters such as 'd' for both voiced and voiceless consonants such as [t] and [d], doubling of word-medial consonants, and respelling and addition of diacritics to vowels. A forced recluse considered to have a mental infirmity brought on by his residency in Bombay and Baghdad, Baillie's practice shows an intelligent attempt to understand the relation between spelling and sound, perhaps inspired by his knowledge of Persian and Arabic, and possibly showing a knowledge of the spelling system proposed by James Elphinston.

1. INTRODUCTION

Dunain, 14 Nov [18??]

Do Mizdrez Amned Baillae, Rezzidend ad Oozill, near Nairn

Donzinain November the 14th

My dear Annee

I thought you would keep your brommaez of returneng to Donzinnain, but onderstand yoo maegd haav movved do the neborod ov Nairn. Oozill iz a bridde Haaz. In kaiz id koold be agriable do yoo do ruturn do Donzinain; woold exbegd do zee you ween konvenneend. And rimmain mi dear Amne yoor obideind omble servand.

Willaaeam Baillae

HCAS: D456/A/31/63

Among the letters written by the Scottish recluse William Baillie (1789-1869) are six in which words are extensively re-spelled. These letters, for which this article offers the first analysis, are interesting marginalia in the history of spelling reform. Baillie's letters might usefully be read in the context of the work of eighteenth century spelling reformers. Abercrombie (1965, a reprint of Abercrombie 1948) and Beal (2002) describe the work of a number of 'forgotten' or 'leftfield' spelling reformers, most of whom seem to have operated in ignorance of each others' practices (Beal 2002: 9). On the basis of their descriptions and cited examples, we do not find any clear connection between Baillie's spelling reforms and most of the reformers described. However, we think there may be a connection with the work of his fellow Scot, James Elphinston,

James Elphinston (1721-1809) was the author of a number of books proposing a new system of spelling for English, including *English Orthography Epitomized* (1790) and *A Minniature ov English orthoggraphy* (1795); his work is extensively discussed in Müller (1914). A similarity between Elphinston and Baillie can be seen even in the titles of these books; Baillie also doubles word-internal consonants, and writes *of* as *ov*. When we look at the ways in which Baillie alters the spellings of words, we will refer as appropriate to Elphinston's work.

2. WILLIAM BAILLIE

2.1. *Baillie's early life and his employment by the English East India Company*

William Baillie (1789-1869) was the son of Isabella Baillie (née Campbell), and Colonel John Baillie who died in service in Ireland in 1797. He had two brothers, Alick and Archibald, and two sisters, Katherine and Anne. Alick died around 1805 and Katherine died around 1819. Archibald died in 1817 at which point William became the 14th laird of Dunain, a modest estate near Inverness. Both William's father, John, and his paternal uncle, Colonel William Baillie (1737-1782), had been career army officers in the service of the East India Company (Bulloch 1923: 9). Colonial William Baillie led a division of 3,000 men in defence of Madras in 1780 during the Second Mysore War (1780-1784) (Keay 1991: 412). He was captured by Haidar Ali and died in 1782 while still in captivity (webref 1).

It was as second surviving son, a background of recent family misfortune, and previous legacy of family adventure in India, that William Baillie optimistically looked forward to setting sail for Bombay in February 1811. Writing to his mother, Isabella Baillie, on 4 February 1811, at her residence at Budgate, near Nairn, he requested items that he wished to take with him, a list that included a selection of music. Expressing his enthusiasm for departure, he wrote: '...there are ships to sail for Bombay about the end of February and as any further

delay can answer no purpose I should think it best to embrace that opportunity if possible.' (HCAS. D456/A/31/11.) William, however, did not arrive in Bombay until 6 September 1811. His stay was a short one as he revealed in a letter to his mother dated 22 October 1811. He had been advised, he wrote, 'to go up to Bagdad [sic] to study the Arabic and Persian languages with a view to the ultimate succession to the Residency there.' 'I have taken a passage in the Hon Co's Ship, the *Tarnate*, for the Persian Gulph which is to sail in a few days', he continued, concluding with, 'the *Tarnate* sails on the 7th of next month.' (HCAS D456/A/31/17)

The English East India Company was founded by royal charter as the 'Company of Merchants of London, Trading into the East Indies...' in 1600. This marked the beginning of what Philip Lawson describes as, 'the phenomenon of a trading company becoming an imperial power of the span of 250 years or so' (Lawson 1993: 5-6). It was not however until 1626 that the English made their first visit to Bombay and that was as raiders in pursuit of the Portuguese who remained bitter rivals until a peace was signed in 1635 (Keay 1991: 107-108). Links with Persia began in 1611 when the Persian ambassador presented himself to King James at Hampton Court in an endeavour to contract for the export of raw silk to Europe, but Keay notes that 'the Company, scarcely able to finance its existing trade, felt obliged to decline' (1991: 103).

The East India Company was contentedly vague about the geography of territorial possessions that were to stretch from Baghdad to Penang (Lawson: 126) and Keay writes that the diplomat Sir Thomas Roe 'in 1618 ... would rightly see the Persian silk trade as "the best of all in India"' (1991: 104). The Persian silk trade went into a slump during Cromwell's Commonwealth when austere dress was the fashion. When it revived, it was 'met increasingly from Bengal' (Keay: 127). Persia nonetheless remained important to the activities and sphere of influence of the East India Company, a point highlighted by Martha McLaren in her study of three prominent Scots in the fields of military service, administration and diplomacy between 1780 and 1830, Sir Thomas Munro (1761-1827), Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833), and Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859):

Language skills were indispensable to a career in the political service. A knowledge of Persian, as Munro, Malcolm, and Elphinstone all discovered, was as necessary for ambitious company servants in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as it had been for Hindu officials under Mughal rule (McLaren 2001: 42).

Acquisition of language skills was also important to the company as a whole in conducting its affairs and exercising control in its spheres of interest, a point conveyed in a letter from David Scott (1746-1805), chairman of the East India Company in London, to Lord Castlereagh in 1805 when he highlighted Lewis Corkran (on leave from Bombay) and Harford Jones (the Company's Resident in Baghdad) as 'supposed good Persian scholars' (Philips 1951: 415). In

undertaking to learn Persian (and Arabic) William Baillie was therefore following established conventions in the pursuit of his ambition to secure the East India Company's residency in Baghdad.

Philip Lawson argues that in the 1780s and 1790s 'patriotic excess' in the East was a compensatory reaction to the loss of the Americas (Lawson: 127), but he also writes that 'at some juncture in the 1790s, the East India Company had ceased to be accepted as the power over Indian affairs' (141). With the loss of its monopoly privileges, continues Lawson, the Company was 'left with the least glamorous function of all, providing bureaucrats as agents of royal power in India' (137) so that 'from 1805, the Company had to face the simple fact that it was no longer a viable profit-making entity' (140). This was the uncertain status of the East India Company when William Baillie arrived in Bombay in 1811 and immediately set his sights on appointment as Resident in Baghdad. Baghdad as a Residency occupied an uncertain status in its juxtaposition with that at Basra (Tuson 1979: 175/6), while the role of a Residency had by the late eighteenth century changed from its original economic function of overseeing Factories, to a political function (Tuson: xiii).

2.2. *The onset of Baillie's mental infirmity*

Two years after Baillie set sail for the Persian Gulf, a letter was penned by James Calder in Bombay to an unknown recipient. In it Calder wrote:

Your friend poor William Baillie Esq is now in the most deplorable of all situations suffering from a disordered mind – and he must go home by the first opportunity... He has lived with me mostly ever since the appearance of the disorder and is now alas become greatly deranged indeed...

(HCAS. D456/A/31/22)

When William Baillie was repatriated to London in 1814, he was admitted to the care of Dr George Rees of 50 Finsbury Square who ran a private asylum in Mare Street, Hackney. Rees's business card, which was headed up 'INSANITY,' described him as a Member of the Royal College of Physicians, and late Senior Physician to the London Dispensary. His madhouse in Hackney was portrayed as being 'spacious and commodious; the Gardens are well adapted for recreation, retirement and security; the accommodations for the two sexes are perfectly distinct; and the Nurses and Attendants persons of the most approved character for tenderness and attention.' (HCAS. D456/A/8/132), Rees attested to William's mental condition on 29 September 1815 when he wrote: 'I do hereby certify from the most careful and satisfactory examination that Mr William Baillie is a lunatic, incapable of managing his own affairs, and that he has been for some months a resident in my house for the reception of Insane persons at Mare Street, Hackney.' (HCAS D456/A/8/16.)

In 1817 Baillie returned to Scotland, where he lived in Edinburgh; in that year he became the 14th Laird of Dunain. He was moved to Dunain in 1826, where he seems to have remained for the rest of his life. William's sister Anne took over legal management of his affairs in 1830; at Dunain he was in effect under the supervision of his servants. Her comments on his situation at Dunain are relevant to an understanding of the circumstances in which he wrote the letters.

....I think his being made to consider himself as Master of his own house, which might be done with proper restrictions, would tend to strengthen his mind, and it might lead him to reflect and think; if he felt he had a part to act, and a place in society, which he seems too much deprived of at present. I cannot think my Brother's mind so weak as to render it hopeless. He might be tempted from so simple a plan as this, exercising the mind strengthens it, leaving it totally inactive must consequently weaken it. I am aware that overstretching the mind is equally bad, but if in place of sitting in his one [sic] twisting card and cutting [sic] paper, he could be influenced to occupy himself with more rational employments ... such as gardening, playing at games of different kinds, Backgammon, Bagatelle, cards, etc., from that he might be got to take an interest in Mineralogy, Botany, etc, which I have understood he had a taste for. His taste for music he still retains. He reads new music readily, if not intricate, and is much pleased with a change; in this he has not hitherto been indulged.

(HCAS. D456/A/24/1)

Anne added that 'to deeper studies or business, I do not think his mind will ever come to,' but she argued for more stimulating attendants and 'good moral management.'

Dr Richard Poole visited William in 1834, and reported on his medical condition. While confiding that William's 'particular aberrations of intellect are not readily discovered', Poole wrote that 'he has undoubtedly erroneous judgments, absurd fancies, likings as well as aversions totally unreasonable, and, with the exception of music, a puerility of taste and disposition from which neither usefulness nor self-command can be extracted.' Poole felt that it would be dishonest, presumptuous and unkind 'to predict the smallest likelihood of recovery.' (HCAS. D456/A/8/128)

No clear diagnosis of William Baillie's 'mental infirmity' can now be made, in part because we can no longer be clear about the contemporary evidence for his insanity. In the initial years of his 'mental troubles', physicians made much of his professed conversion to Islam, and linked his related refusal to cut his beard or to take any tonics containing alcohol to his mental condition. His situation is deeply embedded into the development of ideas about the effects of service in the Empire on the sanity of Europeans (Ernst 2001), and George Rees, who had William under his care, was building a particular expertise in this area. In 1834 Poole thought that 'the fits of excitement, to which he is subject, partake of the

character of epilepsy, imperfectly formed, and ill-defined.’ Earlier anonymous diagnosis suggested that his infirmity ‘has probably been occasioned by a coup de soleil as the gentleman has been in the earlier part of his life in the Persian Gulf and has what is commonly denominated a Brain fever from which that organ never recovered the full exercise of its powers.’ (HCAS. D456/A/8/128) When William died in 1869, the belief that his condition was due to ‘a sunstroke’ prevailed in his obituary in the *Inverness Advertiser* (6 April 1869) which stated that ‘for nigh 60 years ... [he] was, as everyone knows, lost to society.’ However the obituary also noted that ‘he lived in his own house, ... knew that he was laird, was most carefully attended to, and in his own way enjoyed life’.

2.3. *Baillie's letters*

A selection of letters from and otherwise relating to William Baillie are kept in the Highland Council Archives, Inverness. There are letters in the archive from 1811, written just prior to Baillie's departure to India, and the letters with invented spellings are among the last letters in the archive (which peters out in the early 1840s, almost thirty years before his death). Most of his letters are to his mother (Isabella) and his sister (Anne) (the invented-spelling letters suggest that he called her 'Annette'). They describe his health, domestic matters and exchanges about planned visits from his mother or sister. His letters tend to be brief and to the point. The bulk of the correspondence in the collection tends to be *about* William Baillie (mother, sister, doctors, attendants) rather than his own writing; he does not appear to have been a great letter-writer. Of the six letters with invented spelling, listed below and indicating the Highland Council Archives archival references, five are to Anne and, intriguingly, the sixth letter is to a local tradesman (John Black, the plumber) about repairs to the house.

D456/A/31/61, undated, to (his sister) Anne Baillie

D456/A/31/62, February 1 [no year], to Anne Baillie, Moray Place
Edinburgh

D456/A/31/63, November 14 [no year], to Anne Baillie, Oozill by Nairn

D456/A/31/64, March 2 1839, to Anne Baillie, Budgate by Nairn

D456/A/31/65, 1839, to an unknown recipient

D456/A/31/66, December 20 1843, to the plumber, John Black, New
Street, Inverness

3. BAILLIE'S RESPELLINGS

The six letters in which we have found respellings have 657 words in total, of which 209 have an unconventional spelling. These 209 word tokens involve 123 different word types. Grammatical words such as *yoo*, *ov*, and *do* ('to') are the most frequently re-spelled words. Some words are respelled in more than one way; *obedeent obideind* and *obidiend* are three ways of spelling 'obedient' (a word which appears at the end of every letter and is never spelled conventionally). These respellings should probably be treated as alternative experiments rather than inconsistencies.

2.1. *The replacement of voiceless by voiced consonants*

Baillie respelled 'prospect' as *brozbezd*, and this is one illustration of his most remarkable practice, which is that letters which represent voiced consonants are used also for equivalent voiceless consonants. 66 of the 123 words in the letters exemplify this practice, which is illustrated for different consonants by the examples in (1).

(1)

p > b	place > blaic, plumber > blumber, promise > brommaez
t > d	temperate > demberaid, letter > ledder, mistress > mizdrez
k > g	(no examples)
c [k] > g	expect > expezd, prospect > brozbezd
s > z	is > iz, first > firzd, seasonable > zeazonable, desire > dizzeer
c [s] > z	place > blaiz (but also blaic)
f > v	of > ov, different > divverend
ch > dz	changed > dzainzed, such > zodz
t > dz	tune > dzun

The consonant [k] is not easily handled by Baillie, who never respells 'k' as 'g', respells 'c' as 'g' only in the two words listed in (1), and more frequently respells 'c' as 'k' as in *konvenneend* 'convenient' or *mozzek* 'music'. Baillie's spellings of the affricates in *dzun* 'tune' and *dzainzed* 'changed' show that he was aware of complex one-to-many relations between graphemes and sounds, but the letter 'x' (which could have been respelled 'gz') and the digraphs 'th' and 'sh' are left unchanged; there are no instances of words with 'q'.

Baillie's practice can be compared with that of Elphinston. Elphinston (1790:3) recognized the difference between voiceless and voiced consonants, which he called direct and depressive consonants. He suggests that in some cases a direct (voiceless) consonant is used where the sound calls for a depressive (voiced) consonant; in his terminology the 'honest' letter in this case is the voiced letter. Thus he has *iz* and *az* and *ov* just as Baillie does. However, Elphinston explicitly rules out replacing all of one class of consonant with the other: "Near and interchaingeabel az ar direct and depressive; won, for dhat verry reson, cannot prezent dhe oddher" (1790:19). If Baillie was influenced by Elphinston in replacing voiceless by voiced consonants, he goes against Elphinston's advice in replacing *all* voiceless by voiced consonants. (As we will see, there is an analogy between what Baillie does here and what he does with doubled letters.) There are some specific differences: Baillie replaces standard 'ch' with 'dz' (substituting voiced consonants even though the sound is voiceless) while Elphinston recognizes that it is [tsh] but spells it as 'ch' (1790: 19). In contrast, Elphinston replaces 'th' by 'dh' as in 'dhe' for 'the', while Baillie leaves this digraph untouched.

Baillie's voicing of voiceless consonants tells us nothing about contemporary pronunciation. It seems to be a systematic reduction of the inventory of consonant symbols, perhaps inspired by Elphinston.

2.2. *Special cases of respellings*

We next consider some special cases of respellings. 'c' [k] is often spelled as 'k', as in *rekkonzeleble* 'reconcilable' or *makkintosh* 'mackintosh'. As a voiced affricate, 'g' is spelled 'j' in *arranj* 'arrange'. Final -ing is sometimes rewritten as -en as in *advanzzen* 'advancing'. 'h' is often deleted, whether 'spoken' or 'silent', as illustrated in (2), which lists all the examples of h-deletion.

(2)

happiness > abbennaez, health > ealth, hill > ill, humble > omble, how > ouw
 perhaps > berabz, neighbourhood > neborod
 brightening > braiddeneng, might > maegd or maigd, when > ween
 edinburgh > eddenborrow

None of the 'special cases of respellings' reflect suggestions made by Elphinston. The rewriting of final -ing as -en and the omission of 'h' possibly tell us something about Baillie's pronunciation.

2.3 *Doubling of consonants*

The changes discussed so far can all be seen as ways of simplifying the inventory of consonants. The other major kind of respelling of consonants is a doubling of a word-medial letter as in *favvorable* or *conducciv*, or the remarkable respelling of *weathther*. 47 of the 123 respelled words involve doubling of this kind. Already-doubled letters are often left as is, as in *happinness*; given that Baillie never doubles a final consonant, we might have expected that for consistency he might have rewritten final 'ss' as 's' but he leaves it untouched. We list all the doublings in (3).

(3)

t	sattorday
d	eddenborrow, obeddeend, obeddiend, obeddient, reddorned, remiddy, rezzeddend
d (from t)	braiddeneng, rezdorraiddev
p	reppair
b (from p)	imbbrov
ck > kk	makkenzee, makkintosh
c	deccayed, konducciv
k	rekkonzeleble
g	aggreable
v	favvorable, movved
th	weathther
z (from c or s)	advanzzen, dizbozzeezeon, dizzeer, mozzek, rezzeddend, rezzidend, zeazzon
m	ammozed, ammuzez, brommaez, prommaez, remmemberred, rimmain
n	donnain, donzinnain, ennough, happinness, konvenneend, abbennaез
r	churring, febroarre, orraie, rezdorraiddev, serrene
l	mallady, mellancholley, zallebredee

Baillie's practice is regular rather than random because he doubles only word-medial consonants. While in about half the cases the doubled consonant comes after a stressed vowel we do not think this is sufficiently systematic to explain the practice. We think the most likely possibility is that he simply respells to ensure

that all word-medial consonants are in a pair, either a pair of identical consonants or a pair of two different consonants. This is not true in all cases - indeed we have the pair *rezzeddend* and *rezzidend* where it is true of the former and not the latter, but this pair shows that full consistency cannot be expected of Baillie's spelling. If this is the right solution to the problem, we might ask whether Baillie respelled 'improve' as *imbbrov* rather than as **imbrov* in order to ensure that word-medial consonants are in even-numbered sequences.

In addition to these systematic respellings, there are some one-off respellings which do not seem to be motivated. One is *amne*, *amned* and *amneed* for the name of his sister Anne (Annette); the other is his reference to his home of Dunain not only as *Donnain* but as *Donzinain* and *Donzinnain* (perhaps an allusion to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*?).

Again, it is worth comparing Baillie to Elphinston. Elphinston doubles word-medial consonants, specifically to indicate that the preceding vowel is short ('shut' as opposed to long/'open'), and in fact also always stressed. Thus he has 'cellebrate' and 'celebrity' (1790: 15). Like Baillie, he does not appear to double word-final consonants. It is possible that Baillie acquired the principle of consonant doubling from Elphinston, but then generalized it to all word-internal consonants, and not just those following a short stressed vowel. There is another difference between Elphinston and Baillie, involving digraphs. Baillie doubles the whole digraph as in 'weathther', but Elphinston recommends just doubling the first part of the digraph, as in 'neddher'. ("An aspirate, in compound form, iz dubbelled by prefixing dhe simpel.") While Elphinston's respellings tell us something about pronunciation, Baillie's almost certainly do not, both because they are not sufficiently rigorously applied, and also because he generalized respelling to all word-medial consonants, irrespective of pronunciation.

2.4. Vowels

Baillie changes the spelling of vowels in 60 words. For some words there are variant spellings; thus 'would' is *wold* and *woold*, 'agreeable' is *agreable* and *agriable* and 'might' is *maegd* and *maigd*. The letter 'u' almost disappears, displaced by 'o'. With e and i (and sometimes a) this respelling is complicated by the fact that Baillie adds diacritics - a single bar or double bar - over a vowel. Both respelling and diacritics can be seen in the way he signs off one of his letters as *yoor obeddeend omble zervand Willaeam Baillae* (we use a double underline for the double overbar and a single underline for the single overbar). We list respellings and vowels with diacritics in (4), representing the single and double overbars here with single and double underlining.

(4)

aa aav & haav 'have', haaz 'house'.

ae	abbenna <u>e</u> z 'happiness', Bailla <u>e</u> 'Baillie', brommaez & prommaez 'promise', ma <u>e</u> gd 'might', miizdraez 'mistress', Willa <u>a</u> gam 'William',
ai	blaic & blaiz 'place', braiddeneng 'brightening', demberaid 'temperate', kaiz 'case', maig <u>d</u> 'might', rezdorraiddev 'restorative', za <u>i</u> e 'say', ba <u>i</u> ning 'paining'
e	eddenborrow 'Edinburgh', mozzek 'music', neborod 'neighbourhood', rekkonze <u>le</u> ble 'reconcilable', rezz <u>e</u> d <u>e</u> nd 'resident', z <u>e</u> rvand
ee	amneed 'annette', abbe <u>e</u> 'happy', sallubred <u>e</u> e 'sallubrity', obedeent & obedde <u>e</u> nd 'obedient', dizbozz <u>e</u> z <u>i</u> on 'disposition', doble <u>e</u> z 'doubly as', Makkenz <u>e</u> e 'Mackenzie', dizzeer 'desire', konvenneend 'convenient', rezz <u>e</u> evved 'received', ween 'when', we <u>e</u> r 'were'
ea	admozphear 'atmosphere', aggre <u>a</u> ble 'agreeable'
i	bridde 'pretty', demberamind 'temperament', mi 'my', remiddy 'remedy', rimmain 'remain', m <u>i</u> ld 'mild'
ii	miizdraez 'mistress'
ia	agriable 'agreeable'
ie	wier 'were', Morra <u>i</u> e 'Moray'
o	ammozed 'amused', bodgate 'budgate', doblee 'doubly', dzon 'tune', favorable 'favourable', mozzek 'music', neborod 'neighbourhood', omble 'humble', onderstand, 'understand', reddorned 'returned', sattorday 'saturday', wold 'would', zodz 'such'
oo	koold 'could', woold 'would', yoo 'you', yoor 'your'
oa	febroarre 'february'
oe	bo <u>e</u> ble 'people', endoezmind 'endorsement'
ou	ouw 'how'
u	churring 'cheering'

In some cases, Baillie's spellings do seem to seek a closer match between spelling and sound. The respelling of 'pretty' as 'bridde' or of 'remedy' as 'remiddy' suggests an attempt to keep the letter i for the short high front vowel; but on the other hand this cannot be the vowel in 'mi' (my). And does Baillie not have the same short high front vowel as the final vowel in 'mozzek' (music) where he substitutes e for i? We believe that there is too little data, and Baillie's practices are too inconsistent for us to be able to find a systematic match between spelling and pronunciation. Elphinston respells some vowels for phonetic reasons and

there are some similarities; thus for example Elphinston has 'cood' for 'could' (Baillie has 'koold'), and 'wood' for 'would' (Baillie has 'woold').

The double overbar (here written as a double underline) correlates often with an otherwise unrepresented front glide (in some cases replacing a deleted 'y'), as in Willaeam, zaie, baining, mild, dobleez ('doubly as'), obeddeend, etc. The single overbar is rarer, and in two cases is found with a mid vowel followed by a rhotic as in zervand and weer (but also wier, both 'were'). Elphinston does not use diacritics at all. An anonymous eighteenth-century pamphlet, 'The Needful Attempt to make Language and Divinity Plain and Easie' uses an acute accent or circumflex to indicate vowel length (cited by Abercrombie 1965: 57); but Baillie's diacritics do not seem to do mark stress.

2.5. *Other changes involving vowels*

Baillie makes some other changes involving vowels. One is the replacement of final -ing by -eng or -en as in *advanzzen* or *braiddeneng*. Another is the replacement of final -y by -e or -ee or -ey as in *febroarre*, *mellancholley* or *abbee* 'happy'. Finally Baillie deletes (usually 'silent') final -e as in *brommaez* 'promise' or *kaiz* 'case'. Of these three kinds of change, only the third (deletion of 'fallacious e') is made by Elphinston (1790: 43).

3. BAILLIE AS A 'FORGOTTEN PHONETICIAN'

Abercrombie (1945, 1965) first drew attention to a cluster of 'forgotten phoneticians' operating before the mid-nineteenth century. Baillie's letters put him into this cluster, though he never made public his attempts to respell English. He possibly treated it as a private game, played mainly with his sister as addressee. Though Baillie may have had a 'mental infirmity', there is no reason to think that Baillie's respellings are the outcome of some pathology. One possible explanation for his experiments in spelling could be in the tension between his intelligence and his enforced lack of occupation. Whether or not Baillie achieved his goal of learning Arabic or Persian, we can assume that at least he would have discovered that writing systems can vary, and furthermore we think there is some reason to think that he may have had access to the published work of Elphinston. If Baillie did know Elphinston's work, it is worth asking whether there was a connection through Mountstuart Elphinstone, who worked for the East India Company at the same time as Baillie. One of the subscriber's to *English Orthography Epitomized* was 'The right onnorabel Lord Elphinstone'.

When we compare their practices, we find that Baillie often has an interestingly different agenda from Elphinston. Baillie sometimes attempts to match spelling to pronunciation, which was Elphinston's primary goal, and the

goal of other spelling reformers. But Baillie also does something which starts from this goal but then becomes incompatible with it. He takes ideas such as replacing voiceless with voiced consonants, or doubling consonants, and then systematizes them across the orthography irrespective of pronunciation. The result is to fundamentally alter the organization of the spelling system in ways which carry their own logic but work against the principle of matching spelling to sound.

ADDRESSES

Nigel Fabb

Department of English Studies

University of Strathclyde

Glasgow G1 1XH

email: N.Fabb@strath.ac.uk

Iain Hutchison

Department of History

University of Stirling

Stirling FK9 4LA

email: iain@keapub.fsnet.co.uk

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