

To: UTC

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Subject: Glyph Corrections for U+AD70 LATIN CAPITAL LETTER CLOSED INSULAR G and U+AD71 LATIN SMALL LETTER CLOSED INSULAR G

I was very pleased to see the additions for Orm and his 12th-c. Ormulum in 14.0—the text is horrible poetry but a great linguistic resource, and Orm's peculiar characters are needed to do it justice. As you might expect, I've been busy adding these characters to Junicode.

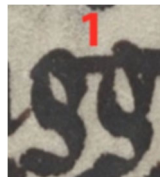
The interpretation of U+A7D0 and 1 ("closed insular g") in Latin Extended D struck me as odd.

Arthur Napier ([History of the Holy Rood Tree, 1894](#), pp. 71-2 [figure 4]) described Orm's peculiar g, used for plosive /g/, as: "a kind of compromise" between the insular g (U+1D79 ꝥ LATIN SMALL LETTER INSULAR G) used in Old English texts and the Carolingian g (like either the two-loop g or U+0261 g) used in writing Latin from about the mid-10th c. onwards.

As to structure, you can see in the attached example 3 (taken from the same page of the online facsimile as in the Everson/West proposal for these characters) that Orm's U+A7D1



is nothing more than the Carolingian g of example 1 [below] (perhaps with the horizontal stroke at upper right drawn a little higher)



with an additional horizontal stroke added at upper left. (The two strokes are not continuous, though they appear intended to be understood as a single top stroke.) The top of the Carolingian loop is usually plainly visible, rising slightly above this two-part horizontal stroke.

The insular g (example 2, below), by contrast, has a single horizontal stroke at the top and an s-like shape descending from it.



This lower shape is structurally quite different from the bottoms of numbers 1 and 3, which are the same. (I'll spare you the details.)

In short, I wouldn't call number 3 a "closed insular g" at all, but rather "g with top horizontal bar" or the like.

The result of this misinterpretation of the MS letter is that the Unicode reference character is slightly absurd:



The Junicode interpretation is (far from pretty, but), I would say, more true to the MS letter-shape:



The Unicode reference character is important, I think, since most font makers seem to copy these exotic characters from the code charts without ever consulting the MSS they're based on.

I'm not sure this matter is worth such a long exposition as this (sorry!), but I thought I'd mention it anyway. Font makers are soon going to start putting U+A7D0 and U+A7D1 in their fonts, and the results are going to be unfortunate.

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Figure 1: Original example images provided by Peter Baker

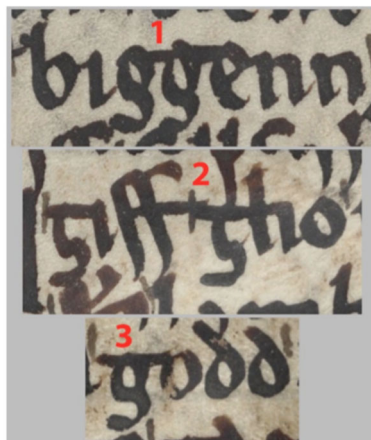


Figure 2: Discussion of g's used by Orm from Everson/West proposal [L2/20-268](#) (page 3)

3. INSULAR G, CLOSED INSULAR G, and CAROLINGIAN G. Orm's orthography is remarkable in that it indicates three different reflexes of original /g/. Orm uses INSULAR G (ȝ) for /j/ (this is the ancestor of yogh ȝ), as in *ȝiff* 'if' [jɪf]; a unique CLOSED INSULAR G of his own invention for /g/, as in *ȝoddspell* 'gospel' ['gɔdspɛl]; and Carolingian G for /dʒ/, as in *seggen* (Old English *secgen*) 'to say' ['sɛdʒən]. The second of these has not been encoded. See Figures 6 and 7.

ȝ ȝ ȝ ȝ G g

Figure 3: Examples from Everson/West proposal [L2/20-268](#) of CLOSED INSULAR G (figure 7, page 10)

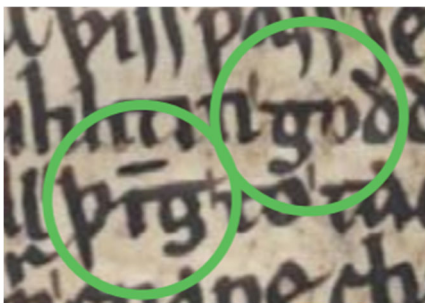
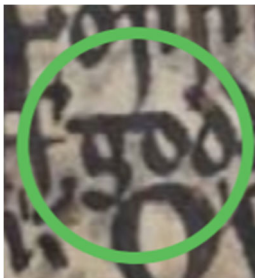


Figure 4. From: Arthur Napier ([History of the Holy Rood Tree, 1894](#), pp. 71-2 (repeated, in part, as figure 6 of [L2/20-268](#))

NOTES

ON

THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF THE ORMULUM¹.

FOR the guttural and palatal spirants Orm retains the Old English γ (in the former case adding an *h*), while for the guttural stopped consonant, as in *god*, he employs a sign which is represented in the printed editions by *g*. But in the printed editions the sign *g* is not restricted to the guttural stopped consonant: it is used also in words like *egge* (=Modern English 'edge'), where the *gg* had the *dzh* sound. In other words, the printed editions of the Ormulum make no difference between *egge* (= 'edge') and *eggenn*² (= to 'egg on'), though the pronunciation of the consonants in the two words was, in Orm's time, the same as now, i.e. *dzh* in the former case and a stopped *g* in the latter. But on examining the MS. I found that, though the editors make no difference, Orm did. The letter with which he always denoted the guttural stop (as in *god*, *gladd*, *eggenn*, &c.) is perfectly distinct from the sign which he used to express the *dzh* sound (as in *egge* 'edge,' *seggen* 'to say,' &c.). The latter, which in the following remarks, as well as in the transcript of the facsimile, is denoted by *g*, has the form of the continental *g* —: cf. *biggenn* in the facsimile, lines 2, 16, 18, 20, 41, 47, and *seggenn*, line 6. The former, which I shall denote by \mathfrak{g} , may be described as a sort of compromise between the Old English γ and the continental *g*: it has, in common with this

latter, the closed upper part, thus differing from the Old English γ ; but it has, in common with the Old English γ , the straight horizontal top stroke, which projects to the left as well as to the right of the letter —: cf. *godd*, lines 4, 9, 10, 12, 38, &c., *biginnen*, line 13, &c. This straight horizontal top, especially that part of it which projects to the left, is its most characteristic feature, and serves to distinguish it from the *g*, from the round top of which a short sloping stroke extends to the right, there being no stroke whatever to the left. The absence of any stroke to the left of the top of the *g* at once distinguishes it from the *g*. Except for the one or two isolated instances mentioned on page 4, Orm never confuses the two signs, but always uses them correctly, *g* denoting the guttural stopped consonant, and *g* the *dzh* sound. I give a few instances—the pronunciation, *g* or *dzh*, is added in brackets, the number which follows denotes the number of times I have met with the word in question in the Ormulum MS.: *egge* ‘edge’ (*dzh*-4) is in each case written with *gg*; *eggenn* ‘to egg on’ (*g*-5), *egginnȳ* (*g*-1) are in every instance spelt with *gg*. The verb *biggenn* ‘to buy’ (*dzh*-18) is always written with *gg*, being thus invariably distinguished from *biggenn* ‘to dwell’ (*g*-20). The verbs *leggenn* ‘to lay’ (*dzh*-2), and *seggenn* ‘to say’ (*dzh*-33) are in every instance written with *gg*, while the Scandinavian *trigg* ‘faithful’ (*g*-3), *kaygerrlegg* ‘love’ (*g*-2) are spelt with *gg*.

If any proof is needed that Orm’s *seggenn*, &c. really had the *dzh* sound, it is afforded by the use of the sign *g* in the Romance word *gyn* (*Ormulum*, ed. Holt, I. 245, *purrh snoterr gyn*, ‘through wise art’). This *gyn* or *gin* appears in other early Middle English writings, meaning, as here, ‘skill, art,’ or ‘a mechanical contrivance, a machine.’ It also got to be used in a bad sense, ‘cunning,’ and ‘a snare,’ surviving in the latter meaning in the Modern English ‘gin.’ It comes from the Latin *ingenium*, through the medium of the Old French *engin*. Some writers have, it is true, regarded it as Scandinavian, and brought it into connexion with the Old Norse *ginna*, ‘to deceive.’ But the pronunciation of the Modern English word entirely precludes the possibility of a Scandinavian