

The origin of the name FROME.

BY F. J. ALLEN.

I PUT forward the following suggestion with diffidence, knowing that it can only be substantiated by direct evidence as to the earlier forms of the word *Frome*.

It seems probable, from the repetition of the name *Frome* for rivers in other localities, that the word meant "a stream," like *Avon*, *Lyn*, etc. If this be the case, then the original form should have been HROME, and the initial F is due to the inability of the Teutonic colonists to pronounce the aspirated R. Similarly we have FLUELLEN for LLEWELYN, FLUMMERY for LLYMRU, owing to the difficulty of the aspirated L.

HROME or HROM would be cognate with Greek HREUMA (*i.e.* 'PEYMA) a stream, and Latin ROMA (town named from its stream, as in the case of *Frome*.) These words, together with others of parallel meaning, are from the Indo-european root SRU, *to flow*; thus:—

SRU, to flow

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SRU-MA, a stream

English STREAM

Anglo-Saxon STRĒAM

Old High German
STRAUM

Greek HREUMA

Latin ROMA

The root SRU also produced Latin RIU-US, *a stream*, and Welsh RHEAN, *a stream*. This latter is cognate with the ancient Gallic name of the river RHINE, and the provincial English RHINE or RHEEN, a water-course. RHO-DANUS (the river RHONE) may also be cognate. It is interesting to observe how the difficult initial SR became modified during the evolution of the different languages.

(Since putting forward the above suggestion, I have tried to find a less strained connection with some Anglo-Saxon word, as with FROM, *forward*, or with the roots found in FREE and in FLOW ; but the result is, if anything, less satisfactory than the above.—F.J.A.)

[The foregoing would have appeared immediately after Dr. Norris's paper on "Frome," but it only arrived after we had gone to press.—ED.]