

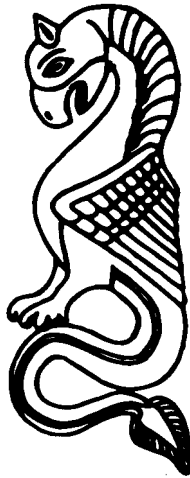
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William Barnes and Frisian Forefathers

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Introduction

William Barnes (1801–86) was such a manifold figure, we are still trying to come account with the full range of his interests and activities. His poetry (both in dialect and in ‘National English’) is increasingly valued, and will achieve one measure of canonicity with the forthcoming publication of Tom Burton and K. K. Ruthven’s three-volume critical edition of his complete poetry with Oxford University Press, while his ethnolinguistic purism, long a source of ill-informed scorn, is undergoing reevaluation.¹ Yet there is much more to him and his work; this article is dedicated to establishing his fascination with the Frisian language, and its place in his thought.

It was in his fifty-third year that William Barnes published *A Philological Grammar Grounded upon English*, which, the subtitle tells us, is ‘formed from a comparison of more than sixty languages’.² Amongst these languages we can find Albanian, Breton, Coptic and ‘Hawaiish’. There is, however, but no mention of Frisian, an absence particularly startling in view of the fact that in the last three decades of his life, Barnes was to publish various works either touching on Frisian directly or which drew on Frisian examples. In 1858 he noted in passing that ‘the Friesic dialect [sic] ... retains most of its old English words and forms’.³ But by 1862, his knowledge of Frisian had grown (no more talk of it as a ‘dialect’) and in his study *TIW*, he was able to cite numerous Frisian words and phrases in support of the case he makes there.⁴ In the following year, he, on a rare trip outside of Dorset, spoke to the members of the Philological Society in London on ‘our elder brethren, the Frisians, their language and literature as illustrative of those of England’.⁵ In his 1869 book, *Early England and the Saxon-English*, he devoted three dozen pages to ‘the Frisians, the father-stock of the Saxon-English’,⁶ and in 1877 he published a six-page review of the 1876 English translation

¹ Andrew Phillips, *The Rebirth of England and the English: The Vision of William Barnes* (Hockwold-cum-Wilton: Anglo-Saxon Books, 1996); Jonathan Roper, ‘English Purisms’, *Victoriographies*, 2 (2012), 44–59.

² William Barnes, *A Philological Grammar Grounded upon English* (London: Smith, 1854).

³ William Barnes, *Notes on Ancient Britain and the Britons* (London: Smith, 1858), p. 43.

⁴ William Barnes, *TIW; or, A View of the Roots and Stems of English as a Teutonic Tongue* (London: Smith, 1862).

⁵ ‘Notices of the Meetings of the Philological Society from November 6, 1863, to June 17, 1864’, in the appendix to *Transactions of the Philological Society* (1864), p. 2.

⁶ William Barnes, *Early England and the Saxon English; with Some Notes on the Father-Stock of the Saxon-English, the Frisians* (London: Smith, 1869), pp. 141–78.

and edition of the nineteenth-century pseudo-Old Frisian *Oera Linda Boek*, which he inclined to think ‘untruthful’ but of possible linguistic and historic interest.⁷ And, last but not least, in the later editions of his *Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* there are many Frisian references.⁸ Barnes’ ‘Frisian turn’ deserves attention: how did he discover Frisian? And why was it so important for him?

Unfortunately at this stage in our knowledge, we can only speculate on answers to the first of these questions, but there are several possibilities. The first of these is that Barnes’ interest had been fired by the activities of De Haan Hetteema, the Frisian lawyer and linguist (1796–1873), specifically the articles he contributed to the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, in which he compared Frisian with Old English and with English dialects.⁹ We can certainly imagine that the approach taken by De Haan Hetteema, which privileges provincial and older varieties of English as better historical witnesses than contemporary Standard English, would have appealed to Barnes, given his own existing interests in both Dorset dialect and in Old English. And given his association with the Philological Society we can well assume that Barnes would have come across these articles; indeed, he refers to the latter one in his writings.¹⁰ But Hetteema is not the only influence. An alternative, or supplementary, influence on his Frisian turn may well have been J. H. Halbertsma. Halbertsma (1789–1869) was the key figure in the nineteenth-century revival and reestablishment of Frisian, who during his long life authored, translated and compiled a diverse range of works, from a best-selling collection of popular rhymes and tales to a richly elaborated dictionary of Frisian with Latin as its metalanguage.¹¹ While Halbertsma’s key essay linking Old English with Frisian had been published in the 1830s,¹² it may be, that living in the provinces, Barnes only came across it, or perhaps was only seized by its importance, at a later date. It is also possible that word of the visits of Halbertsma to England in the 1850s may have piqued his interest in the writings of the great man. Be that as it may, we are on surer ground in tracing his Frisian turn when we consider Barnes’ participation in Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte’s scheme to transpose the Song of Songs into various English dialects. Barnes’ Dorset version appeared in 1859.¹³ J. H. Halbertsma’s translation of the Gospel of Matthew into West Frisian had appeared the

⁷ William Barnes, ‘The Oera Linda Book’, *Macmillan’s Magazine*, 210 (April 1877), 461–66 (p. 461) (review of *The Oera Linda Book: From a Manuscript of the Thirteenth Century with the Permission of the Proprietor C. Over de Linden, of the Helder*, ed. by J. G. Ottema, trans. by William R. Sandbach (London: Trübner, 1876), trans. from *Thet Oera Linda bok: naar een handschrift uit de dertiende eeuw, eigendom der familie Over de Linden aan Den Helder*, ed. by J. G. Ottema (Leeuwarden: Kuipers, 1876)).

⁸ William Barnes, *A Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect with the History, Outspreading, and Bearings of South-Western English* (Berlin: Asher, 1863); followed by a revised 1886 edition (Dorchester: Case; London: Trübner, 1886).

⁹ M. De Haan Hetteema, ‘Hints on the Thesis “The Old-Friesic Above All Others the ‘Fons et Origo’ of the Old-English”’, *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 3 (1856), 196–215; ‘Archaic and Provincial English Words Compared with Dutch and Friesic’, *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 5 (1858), 143–78.

¹⁰ *Early England and the Saxon English*, p. 167.

¹¹ For an understanding of the depths of the latter, see Anne Dykstra, *J. H. Halbertsma als lexicograaf. Studies over het ‘Lexicon Frisicum’ (1872)* (Ljouwert: Fryske Akademy, 2011).

¹² J. H. Halbertsma, ‘Ancient and Modern Friesic Compared with Anglo-Saxon’, in Joseph Bosworth, *The Origin of the English, Germanic and Scandinavian Languages, and Nations* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1836), pp. 35–80; also in Joseph Bosworth, *A Dictionary of the Anglo-Saxon Language* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, 1838), pp. xxxv–lxxx.

¹³ William Barnes, *The Song of Solomon in the Dorset Dialect. From the Authorised English Version* (London: Barclay, 1859).

previous year.¹⁴ Both were printed by the same London printer, George Barclay, and both were funded by the Prince. Bonaparte visited Barnes twice (the Emperor coming to Dorset each time, staying in a hotel in a nearby town), and, on the 12th of September 1859, the Prince gave Barnes Halbertsma's translation. It was a volume that Barnes was to quote from in several of his subsequent writings.

And then again there are other possibilities. Barnes, as an Anglo-Saxonist, may have had his interest in Frisian piqued by Max Rieger's reader, which, while focussing on Old Saxon and Anglo-Saxon, also included Old Frisian readings, and which we can be sure he knew from his references to it in his works.¹⁵ We can compare Barnes' Frisian reading with, for example, what we know of the reading of William Thoms, who is the only other of the nineteenth-century English Frisophiles whose reading is documentable from his published references to it. Doing so, we find that Thoms's Frisian books include the dictionaries of von Richthofen and Hettema,¹⁶ Eeltsje Halbertsma's *De Treemter*, his brother Joast Halbertsma's *Friesche spelling* and *De Scarwinkel fen Joute-Baes*, and their magazine *De Lapekoer fen Gabe-Skroar*.¹⁷ Barnes' reading on the other hand, as references in his own works from the 1860s indicates, encompasses works on North Frisian,¹⁸ Wiarda's book on East Frisian,¹⁹ and in West Frisian,²⁰ as well as editions and studies of the Frisian laws by Wiarda and Hettema.²¹ He also was familiar with J. G. Kohl's 1846 work *Die Marschen und Inseln der Herzogthümer Schleswig und Holstein*, and no doubt with other works he did not directly reference.²² Apart from the surprising omission of the work of von Richthofen, Barnes' reading is generally more scholarly in topic than that of Thoms, and quite possibly than that of the other nineteenth-century Frisophiles.

Frisian in the works of Barnes

1. TIW

The first of Barnes' books to heavily feature Frisian, and the most unusual, is *TIW* (1862). The work is Barnes' attempt at proto-Germanic etymology without recourse to the strict methods

¹⁴ *Het Evangelie van Mattheus vertaald in het Land-Friesch*, trans. by J. H. Halbertsma (London: n. pub., 1858).

¹⁵ Max Rieger, *Alt- und angelsächsisches Lesebuch. Nebst altfriesischen Stücken. Mit e. Wörterbuche* (Giessen: Ricker, 1861).

¹⁶ Karl Freiherrn von Richthofen, *Altfriesisches Wörterbuch* (Göttingen: Dieterichsche Buchhandlung, 1840); M. Hettema, *Idioticon Frisicum. Friesch-latijnsch-Nederlandsch woordenboek* (Leeuwarden: Suringar, 1874).

¹⁷ E. Halbertsma, *De Treemter* (Deventer: de Lange, 1836); J. H. Halbertsma, *Friesche spelling* (Leeuwarden: n. pub., 1834); *De Scarwinkel fen Joute-Baes Mei len Oanwizinge om it Frysk to Læzen*, 2nd rev. edn (Deventer: de Lange, 1841).

¹⁸ N. Outzen, *Glossarium der friesischen Sprache: besonders in nordfriesischer Mundart, zur Vergleichung mit den Verwandten germanischen und nordischen, auch mit zweckmässigem Hinblick auf die dänische Sprache*, ed. by L. Engelstoft and C. Molbech (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1837); Bende Bendsen, *Die nordfriesische sprache nach der Moringer mundart: zur vergleichung mit den verwandten sprachen und mundarten*, ed. by M. de Vries (Leiden: Brill, 1860).

¹⁹ T. D. Wiarda, *Geschichte der ausgestorbenen alten friesischen oder sächsischen Sprache* (Aurich and Bremen: Förster, 1784).

²⁰ Gysbert Japix, *Friesche rymlerye* (Leeuwarden: Tjallings, 1681); Halbertsma, *Het Evangelie van Mattheus*.

²¹ T. D. Wiarda, *Geschichte des alten Friesischen Gesetzes* (Amsterdam: [n. pub.], 1820); M. De Haan Hettema, *Het Emsiger Landregt van het jaar 1312* (Ljouwert: Schierbeek, 1830); *Jurisprudentia Frisica, of Friesche Regtkennis* (Ljouwert: Schetsberg, 1834–35).

²² *Die Marschen und Inseln der Herzogthümer Schleswig und Holstein: nebst vergleichenden Bemerkungen über die*

of comparative historical linguistics, as becomes clear by an early remark that ‘the bulk of it [i.e. English] was formed from about fifty primary roots’.²³ Barnes believes that he has ‘reached these roots’ by his investigation of local English dialects and of cognate languages (sources more conservative than contemporary Standard English). The chief of these cognates is Frisian, as ‘Friesic ... is less forgone, than is our English, from its old form’.²⁴ Indeed, there is scarcely a double page to be found without a word followed by the abbreviation ‘Fr.’ for Frisian. At this stage, Barnes makes no distinction between West and North Frisian, nor does he make any reference to linguistic period. All his examples, whether drawn from Halbertsma’s translation of *Matthew* (e.g. ‘Thilde him op’), the work of Gysbert Japicx (e.g. ‘myn tomm’ in finger klomje’), or from Outzen’s dictionary (e.g. ‘blügg’), were all marked simply as ‘Fr.’.²⁵

It is not only a question of Barnes being indifferent to which variety or period the Frisian words come from. For him in this work it is also immaterial which variety or period of English the words they are supposed to be cognate with are from. Sometimes Barnes justifies his case by linking a Frisian word with a dialect English cognate: Frisian *waase* and northern English *wase* are given as examples of *W*-words of the first branch, those which are meant to represent what is ‘weak, yielding in form, or under pressure’. At other times he supports a form he has arrived at by likening a Frisian word with an Old English one: *waegsen* and Old English *weaxan* are given as examples of *W*-words of the second branch, and thus supposedly examples of what ‘spring[s] up or out in substance or motion’.²⁶

Sometimes the work is quite suggestive. The word ‘bling’ which sprang to prominence in English in the 1990s seemingly from nowhere designates, as the *Oxford English Dictionary* notes, ‘the visual effect of light being reflected off precious stones or metals’.²⁷ Barnes’ entry for ‘bl*ng’ in *TIW* refers to its (supposed) radical sense as ‘to cast or show light, or any colour or hue’ is rather prescient for a word that was only to emerge well over a century later, and shows us the strength of his feeling for words. Overall, however, this whole extraordinary work, with its combination of etymologizing and phonaesthesia, is more the product of Barnes as poet than Barnes as philologist. But it is instructive to look at his motivation: the work is really done to justify the ancient dialects of English as against ‘Book English’, and it calls upon Frisian (and other sources) to support the primacy of the dialect forms over (what he would have seen as) the loans and corruptions of Standard English. All this chimes in with what he described as ‘the many cases in which the folk-speech is full and distinctive, while [Book] English is defective’.²⁸ If Barnes and Halbertsma had ever met, they would have found themselves in agreement in the importance of the ‘folktaal’.²⁹

2. Early England and the Saxon English

In 1869, the same that year Halbertsma died, Barnes published *Early England and the Saxon English*. The work as a whole has a epigraph from Isaiah: ‘look unto the rock whence you are

Küstenländer, die zwischen Belgien und Jütland liegen, 3 vols (Dresden: Arnold, 1846).

²³ p. v.

²⁴ p. 174.

²⁵ pp. 243, 114, 20.

²⁶ pp. 193, 203.

²⁷ *OED Online*, 3rd edn, <<http://www.oed.com>>, s. v. *bling*, n. and adj.

²⁸ William Barnes, *A Glossary of the Dorset Dialect with a Grammar of its Word Shapening and Wording* (Dorchester: Case; London: Trübner, 1886), p. 60.

²⁹ See Goffe Jensma, *Het rode tasje van Salverda. Burgerlijk bewustzijn en Friese identiteit in de negentiende eeuw*

THE WIFE OF AN IDLE HUSBAND.

Az de bern my to' eare kriytte
As the bairns 'me to ear }
 to my ear } cry

Mâm, mâm ytte, ytte, ytte,
Mammy, mammy, eat, eat, eat, (Food)

In iyk yild nogh yten fiyn
And I money nor food find

Yn miyn pong,* nogh' yn uws spiyn,
In my purse, nor in our larder,

Den tinckt my† miyn hert moat brecke.
Then me-thinks my heart must break.

* Pong, a primary form of poke, sack, pocket, pong,
pog, puke.

Figure 1: William Barnes' interlinear rendering of Japicx's *Sjolle Kreamer in Tetke: Early England and the Saxon-English*, p. 170, ll. 83–87.

hewn, and to the quarry whence ye are digged', and Barnes clearly considered both 'the Saxon English' and the Frisians as that quarry whence modern Englishmen 'are digged', given that he devotes three dozen pages to 'the Frisians, the father-stock of the Saxon-English people'. In these pages, he gives a potted history of the Frisians up to the fifteenth century, says something about the old Frisian laws and about the poetry of Gysbert Japicx. He gives an excerpt of the latter with an interlinear translation (see Figure 1). Here Barnes tries to use English words cognate with the Frisian, even if they are less common, e.g. 'bairns' for 'berns' (rather than 'children'), 'mammy' for 'mâm' (not 'mummy'), 'me-thinks' for 'tinckt my' (not 'I feel', or 'it seems to me'). In other words, it is quite a *source-language* orientated (or here, frisianizing) translation. But in cases where the meaning of the Frisian words may be more obvious to the English reader, he does not feel it necessary to supply the cognates of 'yild' or 'yten'. In the case of 'pong', he also gives us an anglicizing rather than a frisianizing translation by using the word 'purse'. But in his asterisked footnote he alerts us to dialect and other equivalents of 'pong' in English: *poke, pog, pocket*. While Barnes would have been quite capable of producing a poetic translation of Gysbert Japicx (indeed of all the 'unwritten books' of the nineteenth century, one of the most intriguing would have been ***The Poetry of Gysbert Japicx, Translated by William Barnes*), this is a translation by Barnes the philologist, someone who is keener to stress the affinity between Frisian and English than to render Gysbert poetically. Barnes's discussion of Frisian and the Frisians in *Early England and the Saxon English*, which now distinguishes between West, North and East Frisian, mutates towards its end into an annotated bibliography on Frisica, including titles he has not himself seen, but knows from a booksellers' catalogue from Nijmegen. Thence it develops into a call for further study by his compatriots of early

(Ljouwert: Fryske Akademy, 1998), pp. 72–79, 197–98.

Frisian laws, Frisian speech, and Frisian personal names, a call which in the short run at least would seem to have had little response.

3. *Glossary and Grammar of the Dorset Dialect*

Barnes wrote a series of glossaries and grammars of Dorset dialect during his life, each one larger than the last.³⁰ In his earlier descriptions of Dorset dialect, he had briefly chosen to represent Danish and Swedish as close cognates to English: ‘the modern Danish and Swedish are so much like English that some sentences of those languages, as uttered by a Dane or Swede, would be intelligible to an Englishman who might not have learnt them’.³¹ But with his discovery of Frisian he now had a closer cognate to deploy, which he could discuss in much greater depth. In his third version,³² references to Frisian begin to make their appearance, and in the fourth and final version, we find numerous mentions of Frisian within the 44-page grammar (both North Frisian and West Frisian, Barnes now distinguishing between the two languages in a way he had not during his composition of *TIW*).³³ In fact, there are more Frisian references in the grammar than to anything else other than Old English. In the glossary, which would have been an easier arena to note comparanda, Frisian cognates are by contrast only mentioned three times, under the words ‘Bline-Buck-o’-Deavy’, ‘Dor’, and ‘Trant’.³⁴

One case in the grammar where Barnes draws on Frisian is when discussing the survival of the plural ending *-en* in a few common words in Dorset dialect. After contrasting his Dorset examples (*cheesen, housen, pleüçen*) with their ‘Book English’ equivalents (*cheeses, houses, places*), Barnes turns to Frisian examples of plural *-en*: *scjïppen, wolwen, slangen, douwen, hannen, fuotten, foxen, holen, nesten*.³⁵ All of these are drawn from Halbertsma’s Gospel translation. It is might seem an unusual move in an English dialect grammar to cite Frisian comparanda (and indeed it might be a unique one), but by showing that this ‘good liquid ending’ can be found in Frisian as well, Barnes is making an implicit argument (to some degree but not entirely etymologically correct) that the Dorset forms are historically anterior to the Standard English forms, which should not thus have priority over them. Similarly in his discussions of deixis, verbal aspect and phraseology in Dorset dialect he draws on Frisian parallels. Furthermore, Barnes argues that although Dorset English has a large number of diphthongs, this is quite acceptable as Old English itself did and modern Frisian still does.³⁶ In other words, his knowledge of Frisian (in this case its morphosyntax) is deployed once again to justify dialectal English as against ‘Book English’.

At an early stage Barnes had relied on parallels between Old English and Dorset English to elevate the latter, but now following his Frisian turn he draws on both Old English *and*

³⁰ William Barnes, *Poems of Rural Life, in the Dorset Dialect: With a Dissertation and Glossary* (London: Smith, 1844) and its 1847 second edition, ‘the dissertation and glossary enl. and cor.’; and his 1863 and 1886 editions of a *Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* (see n. 7 above).

³¹ *Poems of Rural Life* (1844), p. 4.

³² *Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* (1863).

³³ *Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* (1886).

³⁴ For the sake of completeness, these references are, firstly, to ‘buck’, as featured in a local name for ‘Blind Man’s Buff’, compared with Frisian ‘bokke’, in the sense ‘the beginner, or main player, for the time, in their [i.e. Frisian] children’s games’; secondly to ‘dor’, in the alliterative phrase ‘dum and dor’, i.e. dumb and foolish, which garners an unpaginated reference to the *Oera Linda Boek*; and thirdly to ‘trant’, meaning ‘to tramp’, which he compares with ‘trantie’, a word that was used ‘in old Friesic ... for dancing’.

³⁵ *Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* (1886), p. 16.

³⁶ *Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* (1886), pp. 5–6.

Frisian parallels to bolster his case. Indeed, in the first example cited here, that of the plural ending *-en*, he draws solely on Frisian parallels, although he would have been able to draw on earlier English examples too.

William Barnes as Frisophile

Most of the English Frisophiles can be considered to belonging to one of three groups: those with Old English interests (like Joseph Bosworth);³⁷ those with an interest in local English dialects (like John Davies);³⁸ and polyglots (like John Bowering).³⁹ Barnes, however, belonged in all three categories! Thus when he finally discovered Frisian, he was very ready to integrate it into his philological work, as we have seen he did in quite a thorough-going way. It should be remarked that his interest in Frisian was at its height in the early 1860s, immediately after his meetings with Bonaparte, a period in which he wrote *TIW*, added most of the Frisian comparanda to his dictionary of Dorset English, and addressed the Philological Society on the subject of Frisian. But his interest in Frisian did not simply disappear: he worked his oral address up into a substantial and well-referenced book-chapter.⁴⁰ And the revision of the *Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* published in his final year contains newly-added Frisian comparanda.

It might also be noted that his was quite a bookish Frisophilia: he never set foot in Friesland, for example. But then again, for that matter, for all his knowledge of sixty-plus languages he never stepped foot outside England, and indeed rarely ventured outside his home county. While we have seen that the answer to the first of our questions, what caused his Frisian turn, is not entirely clear, the answer to the second question, why Frisian was so significant to Barnes, is much more apparent. Just as Junius's interest in Old English several centuries earlier can be seen as means of elevating the status of Dutch,⁴¹ we can likewise see Barnes' interest in Frisian was a means of elevating his own mother tongue, the Dorset dialect of English.

To close, we might consider the fact that all the other nineteenth-century English Frisophiles had some sort of connection with J. H. Halbertsma.⁴² Barnes' concentration on Frisian connections to English in his works, and Halbertsma's concentration on English cognates in his dictionary, suggests they had much in common, and in working an opposite ends of the same problem could even have collaborated. And yet somehow Halbertsma ('Mr Friesland') and Barnes (the Englishman with the greatest knowledge of Frisian) missed

³⁷ Best known as the author of *A Compendious Anglo-Saxon and English Dictionary* (London: Smith, 1855).

³⁸ The Rev. Davies was the author of an article 'On the Races of Lancashire, as indicated by the Local Names and the Dialect of the County' that appeared in *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 2 (13) (1855), 210–84.

³⁹ Jonathan Roper, 'Some Varieties of English Frisophilia', in *Philologia Frisica Anno 2008*, ed. by P. Boersma, G. T. Jensma, and R. Salverda (Ljouwert: Fryske Akademy, 2012), pp. 236–49 (p. 237). Quite apart from his political and diplomatic career, Bowering (1792–1872) was famed in his lifetime for his knowledge of a wide range of the languages of Europe and Asia. He published translations from a variety of European languages including German, Dutch, Spanish, Polish, Serbian, Hungarian, Czech, and Frisian.

⁴⁰ *Early England and the Saxon English*, pp. 141–78.

⁴¹ Sophie van Romburgh, 'Why Francis Junius (1591–1677) Became an Anglo-Saxonist, or, the Study of Old English for the Elevation of Dutch', in *Appropriating the Middle Ages: Scholarship, Politics, Fraud*, ed. by Tom Shippey, *Studies in Medievalism*, 11 (Cambridge: Brewer, 2001), pp. 5–36.

⁴² Roper, 'Some Varieties of English Frisophilia', p. 237; see also Alpita De Jong, *Knooppunt Halbertsma. Joost Hiddes Halbertsma (1789–1869) en andere Europese geleerden over het Fries en andere talen, over wetenschap en over de samenleving* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2009), pp. 253–97.

establishing contact with one another! In one sense however, Halbertsma and Barnes did manage to meet, namely via the pages of each others' works. Barnes cited the copy of Halbertsma's *Matthew* that he had been given by Louis Lucien Bonaparte in all three of his major works which drew on Frisian. And Halbertsma possessed some of Barnes' works: he too had a copy of Barnes' rendering of *The Song of Solomon*, as well as his *Hwomely Rhymes*⁴³ and two copies of the 1847 edition of his *Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect*.⁴⁴

Now, while the 1847 version of Barnes' Dorset 'dissertation and glossary' that Halbertsma worked with was produced before Barnes' Frisian turn, and thus has no mention of any Frisian cognates, Halbertsma was, nevertheless, able use that earlier edition for his purposes, as we can see by his marginalia in 2013 TL. He seems to have been particularly interested in tracing examples of Old English /θ/ ([θ] and [ð]) becoming /d/ in dialect, making marks against the entries for the words 'Drub' (i.e. Standard English *throb*), 'Dringe, or Drunge' (which Barnes derives from Old English *þringan*), 'Dred' (i.e. Standard English *thread*), and 'Dick' (which Barnes derives from Old English *þecan*). This sound change had long been of interest to Halbertsma. For example in his essay on Frisian written for Joseph Bosworth he had written:

may not the English alone boast of having preserved the true sound of the old *etch* (þ *th*), which has disappeared from the whole continent of Europe, so as not even to leave the means of forming a faint idea of the sound of this consonant, without the aid of English?⁴⁵

But his concentration on words beginning with *d-* might also be due to more practical considerations, as it would seem that Halbertsma turned to his large collection of English dialect dictionaries chiefly when he was working on the letter *D* in his dictionary. If we look at his marginalia in his copy of Thomas Sternberg's *Folk-Lore and Dialect of Northamptonshire*, then we see that of the eight headwords he comments upon, five begin with *D* (while a sixth is an early entry under *E*). Halbertsma made other annotations in Barnes' 'dissertation and glossary', including noting Frisian parallels for the Dorset words 'dent' ('daen') and 'dick' ('dek'). (It seems, however, that a later, anonymous reader thought little of Barnes' discussion of the development of diphthongs in Dorset dialect on page 27, writing 'rot!' next to it, using a pencil rather than Halbertsma's black ink and sharp handwriting.)

Oddly enough, the use Halbertsma made of Barnes' glossary in his posthumous *Lexicon friscum* does not match up with these marginalia.⁴⁶ While Halbertsma does mention 'Drub' as a cognate of *Trobbelje*,⁴⁷ for his entry on 'daen' he does not draw on the parallel he had noted next to 'dent' in Barnes' glossary, but chooses rather to cite the entry on 'Dent, dant' in Anne Elizabeth Baker's Northamptonshire glossary. This is presumably for its closer vocalic match, and also for the illustrative quotation she provides from Spenser's *Fairy Queen*. There is only one explicit acknowledgement of Barnes in Halbertsma's work. It comes under 'libben-deá', for which Halbertsma notes as parallel 'Ang. Dorset *dead-alive*; dull, inactive, moping. Barnes' (see Figure 2). Sure enough we find in Halbertsma's copy of Barnes' 1847 glossary that the word *libben-deá* is written in the margin next to the entry for 'dead-alive'.

Beyond this one explicit notice of Barnes, Halbertsma would seem to have drawn on his work in a few other places too where we find the note 'Ang. Dorset', namely *s.v.* 'drammelje', which he notes has a parallel in 'Ang. Dorset, *drimble*', *s.v.* 'Dikelje', where he notes in passing

⁴³ *Hwomely Rhymes, a Second Collection of Poems in the Dorset Dialect* (London: Smith, 1859).

⁴⁴ These works are now kept at Tresoar in Ljouwert with the call numbers of 2008 TL, 2011 TL, 2012 TL and 2013 TL, respectively.

⁴⁵ Halbertsma, 'Ancient and Modern Friesic Compared with Anglo-Saxon'.

⁴⁶ Justus Halbertsma, *Lexicon friscum: A-Feer*, ed. by Tiallingius Halbertsma (Deventer: de Lange, 1872).

⁴⁷ *Lexicon friscum*, p. 598.

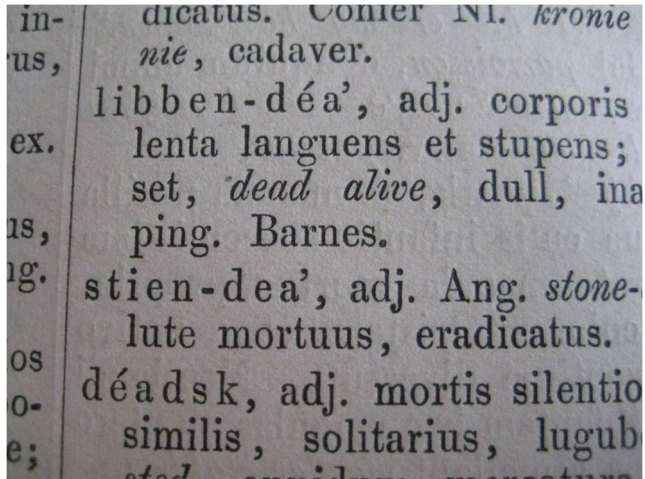


Figure 2: Entry for *libben-deá'* in Halbertsma's *Lexicon friscum*.

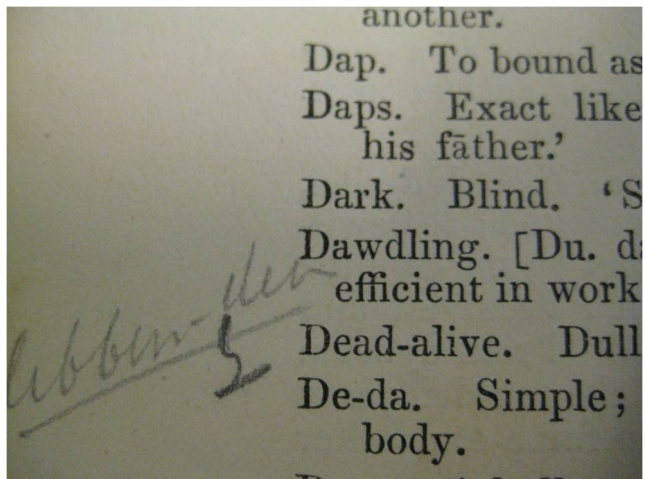


Figure 3: Entry for *dead-alive* in Halbertsma's copy of Barnes' *Poems of Rural life, in the Dorset Dialect*, Tresoar 2013 TL.

‘Ang. Dorset *chimp*’ (i.e. a young shoot) as a parallel for ‘kimpe’, and s.v. ‘et-grow’, where he cites ‘Ang. Dorset *ee-grass*’ (i.e. aftermath, or after-grass).⁴⁸ He also cites a Dorset placename that he may have known via Barnes’ work: ‘Ang. Badbury, urbs in pago Dorset’.⁴⁹

As mentioned before, while there are many mentions of Frisian grammar in Barnes’ final discussion of Dorset dialect, few *words* are mentioned (three in the pages of the glossary itself, together with another one in the introduction). What is particularly striking is that none of the verbal parallels Barnes chooses are to be found among those which Halbertsma had chosen. In one way this is not so surprising as only four words are proposed by Barnes, whereas a thorough investigation of dialect English parallels with Frisian terms, something which has never been undertaken, would throw up a large number of results (consider for a moment the number of parallels Halbertsma working a century and a half ago was able to find just for words beginning A–F).

It seems that the Barnes’ engagement with Frisian became known finally in the Netherlands when an archaeologist friend of Barnes (based in London but with Dorset connections) contacted J. H. Halbertsma’s son Tjalling J. Halbertsma, following the latter’s publication of his father’s *Lexicon friscum*, and the latter sent a copy to Barnes in the June of 1873 together with the following words:

My Dear Sir,

Having heard from your friend, Mr. Charles Warne, the great interest you take in the works of my lamented father concerning the Frisian language, I fulfil herewith a promise made to your friend, of sending you a copy of his *opus postumum*, which no doubt will claim your attention still more than his anterior publications, as he had himself proposed to show the great affinity that exists between the genuine English dialects and the Frisian, from which fact he would probably have deduced another fact — viz., that it was especially the Frisians who, at the time of the so-called Anglo-Saxon invasion peopled a part of England and Scotland.

I hope you will accept of the book I offer you, and remain

Truly yours,

T. J. Halbertsma⁵⁰

In return, Barnes sent some of his dialect poetry to Tjalling Halbertsma, a volume which has also found its resting place at Tresoar, where its call number is 245 TL, where the catalogue describes it as ‘geschenk van den schrijver aan Dr. T. J. Halbertsma’ (‘gift from the author to Dr T. J. Halbertsma’). The latter wrote back to Barnes in words that must have delighted him:

I immediately perused your poems with great pleasure, and became convinced that the Dorset dialect is a true daughter of the Saxon ... as most of the words were almost familiar to me, by their resembling so much Friesic, Dutch and Saxon words.⁵¹

And yet, at the same time as confirming the West Germanic character of Barnes’ dialect, there is also here an implicit correction to Barnes’ Frisocentrism. Just as words found in Dorset

⁴⁸ *Lexicon friscum*, pp. 731, 659, 944.

⁴⁹ *Lexicon friscum*, p. 143, s.v. ‘bade, bate’. The word is cited in connection with Old English *beadu* ‘battle, conflict’. Nowadays the first element is generally held to be the personal name *Badda* (which may itself, however, derive from Old English ‘beadu’, battle or war): *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names, Based on the Collections of the English Place-Name Society*, ed. by Victor Watts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), s. v. *BADBURY*.

⁵⁰ Lucy Baxter, *The Life of William Barnes, Poet and Philologist, by his Daughter* (London: Macmillan, 1887), p. 256.

⁵¹ Baxter, *The Life of William Barnes*, pp. 256–57.

are not only found in that county (for example, Halbertsma's *chimp* is, so the *English Dialect Dictionary* tells us, found in the neighbouring counties of Wiltshire, Somerset, Gloucestershire and Hampshire, as well as in Dorset), so cognates to Barnes' Dorset words are to be found not just in Frisian, but also in Dutch and in Low German.⁵² Indeed, the remark 'true daughter of the Saxon' may even suggest that the epicentre of such similarities is not in Friesland itself, but further to the east. T. J. Halbertsma was clearly right to raise the existence of other Germanic parallels. If we consider the word *wase* in *TIW*,⁵³ Barnes could have, to judge by the entry on *wase* in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, picked out Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, German, or Dutch cognates (i.e. in any of the Germanic languages) as well as the single (Frisian) cognate he cites. But this was to be a suggestion that Barnes would not take to heart. He had by now too much of an emotional connection to the Frisians. Throughout his writings we find again and again kinship metaphors employed in relation to the Frisians. They are our 'elder Brethren', 'fore-elders', 'fatherstock' and 'fore-fathers'.⁵⁴ And there is also a kinship metaphor to be found in the Latin dedication Barnes wrote in the copy of his poems that T. J. Halbertsma was now commenting on, where he referred to his work as 'hoc opusculum in lingua Dorsetiense, Frisicae venerabili linguae congener' ('this little work in the Dorset tongue, of the same family as the venerable Frisian tongue'; Figure 4).

But just as much as the note of fellow feeling in his treatment of things Frisian, the second reason that the aged Barnes did not adjust his approach in the just over a decade that remained to him was that his knowledge of Frisian, then unequalled in England, had become too important to his project of showing that 'the provincial dialects [of English] are not jargons but true and good forms of Teutonic speech'⁵⁵ for it to be abandoned now.⁵⁶

⁵² *The English Dialect Dictionary: Being the Complete Vocabulary of All Dialect Words Still in Use, or Known to Have Been in Use During the Last Two Hundred Years*, ed. by Joseph Wright (London: Frowde, 1898–1905), s. v. 'chimp'.

⁵³ p. 193, where Barnes also has the forms *waize* and *waze*.

⁵⁴ Respectively: Baxter, *The Life of William Barnes*, p. 222; Barnes, *TIW*, p. 147; Barnes, *Early England and the Saxon English*, pp. 141, 147.

⁵⁵ *TIW*, pp. xvii–xviii.

⁵⁶ I am grateful to Tresoar in Ljouwert to be able to use the image of Halbertsma's copy of Barnes' *Poems of Rural Life*. Thanks to Alderik Blom, Anne Dykstra, Jarich Hoekstra, Goffe Jensma, Alpita de Jong, Jelle Krol, and Jacob van Sluis for help and advice while writing this article. This research was supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Center of Excellence CECT).

Vero admodum digno
Trillingio Halbertsma
Amici.
Patris Doctissimi
Filio natae felici.
Hoc opusculum
in lingua Dorsetiense
Frisicae Venerabili Linguae
Congenere, scriptum
dono dat. grato animo
Wm Barnes.
Winterborne Came Dorset.
12. Jun. 1872

Figure 4: Latin dedication to T. J. Halbertsma written by Barnes in the gift copy of his *Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect*: third collection, Tresoar s 245 TL.