The circle of William Barnes’s poetry: a discussion of the language and themes of his dialect poetry

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THE CIRCLE OF WILLIAM BARNES'S POETRY:
A DISCUSSION OF THE LANGUAGE AND THEMES OF HIS DIALECT POETRY

by

Valerie Shepherd

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy of the Loughborough University of Technology
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FOR MY MOTHER
ABSTRACT

Barnes saw his dialect art as a means of teaching and preserving -- particularly for the stability of his local audience -- conservative and traditional values. Nevertheless, the poems deal rather more than has been generally realised with the challenges of the nineteenth century. Part One of this study discusses Barnes's chosen themes in relation to his contemporary audiences, both in Blackmore and beyond, and also argues that there is a warmth and energy in his perceptions which communicates vital images of rural life that can allow his work to transcend its contemporary social and political context.

Part Two explains, through descriptive linguistic techniques, Barnes's practical application of his language theories and the appeal of dialect to Victorian readers. It is demonstrated that his desire to achieve a 'pure' language, together with his conviction that the circle of local speech forms are an integral part (and a signal) of local personality, may lead to artistic limitations. But it is explained that these beliefs, in freeing Barnes from the conventions of standard poetic diction, can also allow a rich individuality. There are, however, affinities (which may be appropriate in work designed to 'belong' to its rural personae) between his poems and elements of the folk tradition. Yet the blending of these with highly intricate verse patterns is handled with a skill that is able to incorporate natural speech rhythms.

The dissertation develops a judgement that Barnes's aesthetics were based upon his appreciation of a harmonious 'fitness' which he believed to be God-given and identifiable in what he took to be nature and society's inevitable mixture of light and shade. Consequently the themes and structures of his dialect poetry reflect a desire for compromise, stability, and optimism in the circle of local life. The result is poetry rather too limited in its perceptions and language to be of major significance. But the value of Barnes's work lies in its demonstration of dialect's artistic potential, in its formal skill, and in the warmth and vitality of its imagery.
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I am grateful to the staff of the Dorset County Museum who provided access to Barnes material, to Mrs Marjorie Salsbury for her efficient typing from a difficult manuscript, and to the Inter-Library Loan staff of Loughborough University for their persistence in locating material.

My mother, my friends - Diana and Robert Flanagan and Bernard Ratigan, and the children - Simon, Nick and Lucy, have all contributed practical help, inspiration, and patient understanding.

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PREFACE

This study is divided into two Parts, the first dealing, broadly speaking, with thematic considerations, the second approaching the dialect poetry from its language and its forms. There are a number of reasons for this division.

Firstly, the small amount of existing criticism on Barnes's work tends to concentrate upon one or the other of these two perspectives and therefore the evaluation and extension of such comments is clearer and more straightforward if they are dealt with in separate sections of the dissertation. Besides, the major focus to date has been upon Barnes's ideas of rural society and the relevance of these attitudes for nineteenth century readers and those of the present day: it seems logical to debate this major line of enquiry first, in Part One, and then to work from it.

Secondly, because Barnes was a philologist and had certain strongly held views about language, views which play a crucial part in his poetry, it is essential to discuss these underlying attitudes and their artistic manifestation as a distinct issue (in Part Two) in order to emphasise and explain their importance. Furthermore, because these linguistic attitudes tend to cluster around a belief in the value of individual languages -- especially their ability to draw a 'circle' about the people who use them, thus defining and expressing individual and group identities -- I have chosen to concentrate upon Barnes's work in dialect, since it exemplifies these ideas most fully: I have referred to his standard English poetry only when this helps to explain a point about his use of a local form of speech.

However, the relationship between the two Parts of the study is close. Naturally an examination of the language of the poems is also an examination of the ideas of the work, merely emphasising and evaluating the manner in which these ideas are illuminated. Besides, the title of this study -- The circle of William Barnes's poetry -- applies equally to both Parts. For Barnes's conception of an ideal society was based upon a value which he found in 'localness'. Therefore, Part One demonstrates his imaginative creation, through the dialect poetry, of a local community and the families within it, a creation which emphasises the security and
worth that he identified in such small 'circles': using the appropriate dialect, as I explain in Part Two, draws a yet more marked circle around his poetry and exemplifies Barnes's faith in 'localness'. He maintained that he loved his country because it contained his county, his county because it contained his village, his village because there lived his family -- evidently the ultimate and perfect circle. Within the two distinct Parts of the study I have considered the following main issues.

Chapter One discusses Barnes's conception of his role as an artist. I have described existing critical views of that role and argued for a greater 'serviceability' in this respect than has been generally allowed. I align myself with those critics who see metaphorical implications in the work as a whole, accepting that the poems contain not so much visions of actuality as images of Barnes's hopes for reality. I consider those images, throughout the study, in greater detail in many respects than the majority of published work on the subject has allowed. I have also, in Chapter One, given more attention than existing criticism to the connection between Barnes's role as a poet and his careers as a teacher and a vicar: I have discussed his conception of himself as a bard, particularly as a bard with a certain Christian duty, focused upon his community, to be carried out especially in his dialect art.

Chapter Two describes in detail the themes which, given his notion of his artistic role, Barnes chose as 'fitting' material for his poems. The idyllic nature of these themes has been stressed elsewhere. I have expanded on this aspect and compared it with other rural poetry. But I have also stressed a feature which critics have not always acknowledged, that is the awareness, within the idyl, of nineteenth century challenges to rural harmony. I suggest that the poems allow within their structures a controlled acceptance of shadow and tension and at the same time image a markedly cultivated -- as against naturally harmonious -- vision of rural living. Although Barnes insisted that he wrote no poetry with a 'drift' -- meaning a political motive -- I argue that particularly his dialect poetry is highly motivated by a desire to persuade readers to a specific point of view, towards accepting as 'good and loveworthy' certain images of rural life -- idyllic, controlled, coping with strain -- but it does not, in this respect, aggressively force an ideology.
Chapter Three tries, through the analogy of painting, to explain a quality of tone and atmosphere in the poems which is certainly acknowledged -- but rather vaguely -- in criticism to date. This is the beauty of light and peace which pervades so many of the poems. But, as I have said, it is shadowed more often and more significantly than critics have tended to notice and here I have extended my earlier discussion of this issue, arguing that Barnes used his poems not only -- as has always been accepted -- to praise his native Dorset but also to express, more than has been recognised, personal emotions which his controlled personality found difficult to release or admit in daily life.

Barnes's linguistic ideas have been given some attention elsewhere, but largely in isolation from his art. I have expanded on this attention, stressing not so much Barnes's belief in a theory of 'purity', which has been considered elsewhere, but concentrating particularly on his faith in the peculiarly local 'meaningfulness' of Dorset speech. Chapter Four details this faith, and Chapters Five and Six relate it to the poetry. I have expanded, in Chapter Five, the arguments of critics who have made some direct connections between the use of dialect and the quality of Barnes's art, but have disagreed with those who feel that the speech necessarily narrows the value of the poetry: I have explained that in my view, given his linguistic beliefs, the dialect poetry consolidates Barnes's expression of the value he found in localness. In Chapter Six I have looked more extensively than any published criticism at the semiotic value of the language and forms of Barnes's dialect work.

In this final respect the thesis becomes not only a study concentrating upon the dialect poetry of William Barnes, but also has something to say about the worth of local speech variations per se and emphasises their intrinsic importance and semantic power: thus it not only debates the artistic merit of a particular example of local poetry, but also tacitly endorses Barnes's personal recognition of the social and artistic potential of local circles of speech.
PART ONE
CHAPTER 1

THE ARTIST'S ROLE

THE VILLAGE RHYMER AND THE PUBLISHED POET

During his lifetime William Barnes's popularity extended well beyond
the Dorset Vale of Blackmore in which he was born in 1801. In 1844
J.R. Smith of London published a collection of his dialect poems, and in
1846 the same firm brought out an edition of work, not in the dialect
which had initially made Barnes's reputation, but in a standard English
more readily accessible to a city audience which would come to include
continental and American readers. Crosby and Nichols and Roberts Brothers
published American selections and other collections in England were brought
out by MacMillan in standard English and C. Kegan Paul in the dialect.
In 1863 Chamber's Journal included an article praising the dialect poems
for making the countryside accessible to the city reader. The Establishment
too approved of Barnes. He was not exactly, as I shall demonstrate,
the literary 'Yes-man' that E.M. Forster took him to be, wholly uncritical
of Victorian society. Nevertheless, Queen Victoria and Disraeli
expressed an interest in hearing Barnes read his poems, and, through the
efforts of Palmerston, he eventually received a small annual pension.

But Barnes does not seem to have gone out of his way to seek metropo-
litian readers. 'I did not look,' he said, 'as I sent [the poems] to
press, to them going beyond the west of England'. He had written for
the local Dorset County Chronicle, first in a rather conventional poetic
diction, then in Blackmore dialect, and it was the Chronicle's publisher,
G. Simmonds, who had persuaded him to compile his first collection of
dialect work on the rural themes which became his artistic preoccupation: Simmond's firm handled the printing whilst J.R. Smith arranged London
sales. Perhaps Julia Barnes also encouraged her husband to extend his
influence, in the same way that she urged him to leave a small school in
Mere to take on an establishment in Dorchester: 'Mr Barnes,' she insisted,
'you are burying your talents in this poor out of the way place.' However, when London society came to Dorset and wished to meet Barnes,
he was not over-anxious to comply. Frampton Court, near Dorchester, was
the home of Sheridan's grandson, whose three sisters enjoyed Barnes's
County Chronicle writing whilst staying there. Their first invitation to visit Frampton Court was politely refused by Barnes: 'he was unaccustomed to society'.

Still, he accepted a subsequent request, and 'all the distinguished persons that formed the party were greatly struck by the simplicity, varied knowledge and information he imparted on so many subjects of interest'. There was evidently no danger of Barnes -- now a local headmaster, accomplished, well-read, and registered as a ten-year's man at Cambridge -- being over-awed by society or being patronised as a simple peasant on account of his labouring background. In fact, Sir F.H. Doyle, Professor of Poetry at Oxford, remarked in a lecture given in 1868 that certain readers were piqued to 'a hot fit of wrath' when they discovered that they could not cherish an image of Barnes writing with a straw in his mouth and soil on his boots.

But the personal satisfaction of social and literary approval does not seem to have been specially important to Barnes. When he visited the London home of Caroline Norton, one of Sheridan's sisters and herself a poet, he wrote to his wife mentioning the highlights of his visit: the letter contains only the briefest of references to the success of 'my book' in the West End, a mention which is almost lost in the midst of anxious domestic enquiries and an excited description of Barnes's meeting with Professor Wheatcroft who had linked London with Slough by telegraph. In fact, Barnes rather despised the frequently automatic respect accorded to the written word, especially in preference to the spoken tradition: he remarked ruefully that 'no song-history is better than a fable unless it has been written by a dipper of a pen into a pot of ink'.

Besides, he did not publish his standard English poems, for audiences outside of Dorset, 'without misgiving that what I have done for the wider range of readers may win the good opinion of fewer'. He feared that those who had 'had their lots cast in town-occupations of a highly civilised community ... could not sympathise with the rustic mind' and therefore could not credit that the 'wisdom and goodness' which were the abiding themes of all his rural poems could be found in the rural family: the town dweller seemed to Barnes convinced that 'every change from the plough towards the desk and from the desk towards the couch of
empty handed idleness is an onward step towards happiness and intellectual and moral excellence'.

It would appear then, despite his publication and metropolitan popularity, that Barnes may have felt an affinity with the traditional village rhymer: he wrote his poems about, and wished to offer them primarily to, the people of his own local community, in their own local speech, rather than a poetic diction. Sir F.H. Doyle, speaking in 1868 to an Oxford audience, believed that such provincial poetry was essential for the benefit of 'men whose daily thoughts and words are too remote from those of established poets to be in any degree impressed by them'.

Richard Jefferies, writing in the late nineteenth century, recalled the village rhymer who 'was commonly the fiddler too, and sang his own verses to tunes played by himself. Since the printing-press has come in, and flooded the country with cheap literature, this character has disappeared, though many of the verses these men made still linger in the countryside'. Whether or not such a distinctive local character still existed in Barnes's life-time in the Blackmore Vale, the kind of folk verse which Jefferies mentions certainly did. In one of his early contributions to Hone's Year-Book Barnes himself described a toast in verse, delivered to the farmer by a representative of his labourers, after the 'harvest-home supper'. He wrote that 'when the cloth was removed, one of the men . . . would propose the health of the farmer in the following lines:—

Here's a health unto our master,
The founder of the feast;
And I hope to God, wi' all my heart,
His soul in heaven mid rest.
That everything mid prosper
That ever he t'ake in hand.
Vor we be all his servants,
And all at his command.

After this would follow a course of jokes, anecdotes, and songs, in some of which the whole company joined'.

Raised as a farmer's boy, Barnes was personally accustomed to this traditional practice of the sing-song. But his wide reading during his
later years of self-education made him aware of similar activities; involving both song-leader and audience participation, in ancient communities. In an article on ancient verse he describes a community chorus 'ruled by a choragus, who is a man of good bearing, fine voice and ready skill . . . the chorus, in its original state, was indeed the audience who surrounded . . . and answered him, at every pause, with shouts of triumph, approbation, or dislike'. The practice seemed to Barnes wholly natural. 'The truth seems to be rather that there has never been a full-shaped tongue that has sounded from the lips of generations of any tribe without the voice of song; and that to a bookless and unwriting people verse is rather a need than a joy'.

Barnes's friend, Thomas Hardy, appears to have identified this kind of need in the more modern nineteenth-century communities of agricultural Dorset, communities who were no longer bookless but still unlikely to be entirely literate. The Scotsman, Farfrae, in The Mayor of Casterbridge, sings in his own dialect to a small group of Dorchester labourers. A listening glazier regrets, 'Folks don't lift up their hearts like that in this part of the world . . . danged if our country down here is worth singing about like that'. Hardy's authorial voice evidently disagrees. It implies that the glazier and his friends cherished a deep -- if only half-consciously acknowledged -- pride in their country. He suggests that Farfrae's voice 'was to them like the poet of a new school who takes his contemporaries by storm: who is not really new, but is the first to articulate what all his listeners have felt, though but dimly till then'.

I draw attention to this passage because, although it is fictitious and, unlike Barnes, Farfrae was only performing songs from home and not personally creating them, its context, in terms of date and place, is similar to that of Barnes's first appearance as a local poet in historical fact: the novel is set in and around Dorchester in the early to mid-nineteenth century, the time and area in which Barnes first began to write. Furthermore, Hardy knew Barnes well and admired the local themes of his work. He praised 'a writer whose exceptional knowledge of rustic life is as unquestionable as his power to cast his memories of that life in beautiful and pleasing form'. He recalled that Barnes frequently read these poems aloud, in the dialect, before the people with whom they dealt. They seem to have provoked the kind of response that Farfrae --
and the old 'choragus' -- had elicited.

The effect, indeed, of his recitations upon an audience well acquainted with the nuances of the dialect -- impossible to impart to outsiders by any kind of translation -- can hardly be imagined by readers of his lines acquainted only with English in its customary form. 22

Lucy Baxter, one of Barnes's daughters, remembered this kind of reaction in a gathering at the Dorchester Town Hall.

It seemed . . . that the crowd of human beings was a magic harp on which [Barnes] played, bringing forth at his will the emotions he chose. If this seems exaggerated, let it be remembered that it was the first time a Dorset audience had heard its feeling, language, and daily life portrayed in its own common speech, and the effect was all the greater from the newness of the emotion. 23

However, a number of facts might oppose the concept of Barnes as an artist primarily motivated by local concerns. He did not begin his public readings until the 1850s: he had originally published his dialect poems, even in Dorset, under Latin titles: Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch objected that the publication of poems in 'hieroglyphics [indicating regional phonemes] imply a scholar's patronage'. 24 All these objections can, I think, be refuted. A full awareness of his provincial role may have come to Barnes only gradually. His Latin titles were eventually dropped, and he took, as I shall explain below, the first available opportunities to read aloud to local audiences. The use of 'hieroglyphics' was never intended as a learned mystification, but was essential in order to make clear the full quantity of dialect vowels and the rhythms of Blackmore speech: a standard orthography would have converted the phonemes of the dialect into standard English and at the same time destroyed metrical and intonational structures.

Nor does the fact that Barnes agreed to publish outside Dorset -- and even to include standard English work -- despite his 'misgivings' that his rural themes would be misunderstood, weaken the view of his role as 'village rhymer'. National publication may be seen as complementary to his primary focus upon local material and audiences. For although Barnes was not interested in personal fame, he was a teacher. Though he feared his poems might be misunderstood in the city, he hoped they would not. He explained that he wanted his work to 'teach his rustic brethren to draw pure delight from the rich but frequently overlooked sources of
nature within their own sphere of being'. 25 I suggest that he wished to extend the benefit of his teaching as far as he could. Local wisdom could be applied on a wider scale for he had 'heard from the pithy sentences of village patriarchs truths which he has since heard expanded in the weak wordiness of modern compositions, into paragraphs'. 26 Besides, it was his habit to experiment with and perfect a method of teaching in his local school, and then to publish that system of teaching -- be it mathematics, or spelling, or history -- for wider use. And, from his tiny church at Came, on the outskirts of Dorchester, he spoke out on national matters, sometimes against Empire-building, and once on behalf of distressed Lancashire cotton workers who were siding with the American North against the cotton-growing but also slave-owning South. 27 His prose writing also disseminated his views upon a wide variety of topics, domestic, educational, artistic, historical and economic. 28

The notion that Barnes's role as an artist was significantly shaped by his sense of himself as an educator can be supported and extended by a closer consideration of his conception of a similarity of purpose between ancient bardic verse and his own work as a poet, headmaster and vicar. The following section explains Barnes's belief that neither ancient verse nor his own poetry existed primarily as a vehicle for its creator's self-expression.

I shall be examining in subsequent pages the possible effects of Barnes's dual inspiration; that is, his wish to teach a local, rural, and perhaps 'bookless' people (after the fashion of the ancient choragus and the bard) and his simultaneous awareness of wider audiences and of perspectives of rural life detached from those experienced by its direct participants. After all, by the time of writing, Barnes was himself a learned, professional man, himself an observer rather than a member of the community which inspired his poetry.

THE TEACHER AND THE BARD: "AN OBJECTIVE POET IN A SUBJECTIVE AGE"

Barnes had a theory, as I shall explain, that the poet and the teacher have similar functions. In his own life, the two roles were linked in actual practice.
Barnes habitually offered the entertainment of poetry readings alongside his more obviously educational talks. From about 1852 he gave linguistic and historical lectures -- and poetry readings -- to the Sturminster Newton Literary and Scientific Institute. Between 1855 and 1856 he helped to establish the Dorchester Working Men's Mutual Improvement Society and over the next ten years he contributed to its programme a number of lectures on history, the economy, the family, art -- and more poetry readings. He also added his verse to evenings at the Dorchester Corn Exchange arranged for the Dorset County Militia, and there was similar involvement in educational ventures outside Dorchester, including groups in Blandford Forum, Wareham, Weymouth, Corfe Castle, Poole, Shaftesbury, Bridport, the Portland Breakwater Mechanics Institute, and Sherborne. At Sherborne he met the Rev. Edward Nares Henning who also gave popular readings of Barnes's poems. 29

Local newspaper reports of these events record audiences that were 'large and respectable', enjoying an 'intellectual treat' of 'excellent discourse' based on 'lucidity and depth of research'. 30 It would seem that the enthusiastic response to Barnes the adult educator was similar to that of the younger boys in his own schools in reaction to his lessons. An ex-pupil testified that Barnes 'had the facility of interesting his scholars, and not only of causing them to understand, but to love what he taught' -- and this at a time when iron discipline and gloom tended to repress the nineteenth-century classroom.

But did Barnes's public readings, attached to his lectures and sometimes given independently of these, reach the audience for which he said he primarily wrote his poems -- and were they well received? It will be remembered that he said he wanted to 'engage the happy mind of the dairymaid with her cow, promote the innocent evening cheerfulness of the family circle on the stone floor, or teach his rustic brethren to draw pure delight from the rich but frequently overlooked sources of nature within their own sphere of being'. 32

The Utilitarian origins of adult education were rooted in a desire to extend knowledge of scientific principles 'among the literate skilled working men, known generally as "mechanics"'. 33 But the organisers of all these groups tended to be the local clergy (frequently the major source of educational expertise in rural areas) so that radical working
class management was exceptional, and consequently the programmes offered, and the audiences attracted, may have been further limited. However, by the mid-nineteenth century the institutes were beginning to enrol more 'diverse groups of men and women', and since Barnes contributed to such a large number of different educational gatherings it seems likely that he did reach both men and women from a variety of backgrounds, including those of his special interests.

The Weymouth Literary and Scientific Institution, for instance, aimed to provide a programme for 'working men and navvies, [arriving with the railway in 1856], of whom we have a great number in the town just now', as well as a meeting place for their wives and mothers. And when Barnes read to the Dorchester Working Men's Mutual Improvement Society, his daughter Lucy recorded the presence of men and women, 'rich and poor': this would suggest attendance beyond the usual, and mostly male, membership which had been attracted to such lectures (given by Barnes himself) as 'The Saxons in England, Especially in Dorset', 'The Beautiful and Art', and 'Labour and Gold'. Many of the lecture evenings in which Barnes participated were free and therefore theoretically within reach of all. He also contributed to 'penny readings' whose audiences were not restricted to membership of any society. In 1868 he attracted such a large audience to the Langport Penny Reading Society that in 'the crush . . . the bannisters were broken and the policeman was pressed so closely upon the dilapidated railings, that he and a number of other persons had a narrow escape of being precipitated on the stones in the passage beneath'. The Rev. Henning was unhappy with the 'unintellectual' bias of penny readings, much as he enjoyed the entertainment of Barnes's poetry, but to Barnes, as I shall explain below, poetry was itself an essential channel of education.

It would appear, then, that Barnes's readings did reach orally a number — if a limited number — of those working class people for whom he believed he wrote. However, the number of rural people who were able to actually read his work at home, and thus 'promote the innocent evening cheerfulness of the family circle on the stone floor', (as I have explained was Barnes's aim), is open to question. The Dorset County Museum is unaware of any assessment of Dorset County Chronicle readership in the mid-nineteenth century. Local literacy was probably limited
however, so that it seems unlikely that printed versions of his work would have reached a large number of his preferred audience. 39 Nevertheless, some did achieve his intended goal. In 1869 Barnes had a letter from 'an old Domestic Servant', brought up in Dorset but now working 'in the gloom of an underground London Kitchen'. She wrote to Barnes that, whilst dusting books from a sale, she had discovered a volume of his poems.

Sir, I shook hands with you in my heart, and I laughed and cried by turns. The old home of my youth and all my dear ones now mouldering in the earth came back to mind. How happy we used to be at Christmas Time. And sometimes I sit down ... and shut my eyes and try to fancy I am on Beaminster Down where I have spent many a happy hour years ago. 40

It is not surprising that Barnes -- despite Henning's misgivings about the unintellectual bias of penny readings -- could in practice set poetry readings alongside lectures in the way I have described. The theory behind his practice, and behind his belief that the poems could 'teach' their readers to appreciate rural life, is explained in a note amongst his papers, now kept in the Dorset County Museum. The note is entitled 'Poetry' and sub-titled 'Teaching': it reads --

Steering and guiding the soul to setting forth the good and loveworthy that men's, minds would more readily take and hold it. 41

He evidently believed that the discipline of versification and of lecturing techniques could help him to select and present his material in order to effectively achieve his moral intentions. The manner of this selection and presentation will be detailed below, particularly in the chapter entitled 'Like a Dutch Painting' and in Part Two's discussion of Barnes's use of language. His concept of 'good and loveworthy' subject matter is the central consideration of the chapter entitled 'The Good and the Loveworthy': although he wanted his themes to be of practical use to his readers and pupils, that utilitarian principle was extended to include cultural and spiritual enrichment and he remarked to the members of a Dorchester audience that he was 'like themselves, a working man, so he cheered them on in the path they had chosen of cultivating their minds and refining their tastes'. 42 The fact that Barnes was not of course a working man precisely 'like themselves' may account, as I shall show, for certain limitations upon those 'loveworthy' themes.
However, Barnes's conviction that the 'wisdom and goodness' of poetry and of teaching could not only exist side by side but could also be synonymous, is linked to his appreciation of the bardic tradition of art, which he believed could connect art and the religious life.

The figure of the medieval bard had of course long exerted a fascination over poets. But unlike Gray and subsequent writers including Blake and Keats, Barnes does not refer directly to the ancient poet in the subject matter of his own verse: his comments on the tradition are reserved for his prose.43

These comments make in themselves a further distinction between Barnes's response to the bard and that of earlier poets. Barnes believed that he identified -- and felt all poets should emulate -- a calm righteousness in the ancient writer's personality, which led him to concentrate on particular themes in a particular manner. Apparently Barnes did not associate with his concept of the bard the kind of sublimity and majestic gift of prophecy which permeates Gray's poem 'The Bard'.44 Nor does Barnes stress in his description of the bard the kind of vital energy which appealed to Keats in his Ode, 'Bards of passion and of mirth': and although Barnes's didactic interest in poetry might have led him to wish for the immortality of his words, the kind of modesty which he saw and admired in the ancient bard is not really equatable with the everlasting and dual personal immortality of Keats's conception.

Bards of passion and of mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new! 45

Nor does his poetry itself display the kind of visionary power of Blake's Songs.

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees. 46

Barnes's own interest in the bardic tradition had been inspired by a visit to Wales in June 1831. He was impressed to find that bardic poetry communicated and preserved 'lore'. 'Wherever there have been
deeds that were great to the minds of the tribes to whom they belonged,' he wrote, 'there has been felt a want of history: and the history of a bookless people is verse.' Bardic lore he found included not only history but also 'divinity, law, or science' and 'homely wisdom'.

It seemed to cover the same kind of ground as the 'world knowledge' which he said he wished to communicate to his school pupils. He wanted them to think first about 'garden plants and soils before the height of snow-lines on the mountains of Asia' and also of that 'great body of knowledge, Folk-lore . . . which in the rating of the people's knowledge is often slighted'.

However, it was the bardic concentration upon those moral aspects of lore which Barnes particularly admired since they appeared to match the 'good and loveworthy' topics which he thought should be central to his poetry. He wrote:

The bards held poetry (prydyddiaeth) as a high art, and did not bestow its name on every kind of verse. There were three branches of vocal song, Cerdd Dafawd, tongue music, as they called verse: 1. Clerwriaeth, minstrelsy; 2. Tealuwriaeth, homesong; and 3. Prydyddiaeth, poetry. It was the province of the poet to commend, celebrate, bestow praise, and joy, and glory. 'A poet ought not to concern himself with clerwriaeth, since it belongs to a minstrel to satirise, depreciate, shame and reproach.' Thence they made the business of poetry to be only the good and beautiful, and obscene songs, and coarse satires, with their ribaldry and profaneness, were not ranked with poetry, nor allowed the poet, but left to the Clewr, or minstrel. What lack of refinement is shown in the British mind by these facts? With us a work is too often rated by its sale rather than its high aim.

Barnes's personal aim was that his own poetry should not 'damp his [reader's] love of God or hurt the tone of his moral sentiment or the dignity of his self-respect'.

He evidently connected the 'high aim' of the content of bardic poetry with the qualities that he agreed, with the bard Edeyrn, should be paramount in the bard-poet's own personality.

Among the canons of poetry in the word of Edeyrn, is the following:- 'The spiritual powers belonging to a poet are obedience, habitual generosity, chastity, spiritual love, moderation in meat and drink, mildness, and godly diligence. These are contrary to the seven deadly sins, namely: pride, haughty malice, covetousness, fornication, luxury, anger and sloth, which corrupt the genius of poetry, and blunt the senses.'
Barnes's own personality appears to have been marked by such 'spiritual power'. Thomas Hardy testified to the 'simplicity of his character, his forebearance'.\textsuperscript{54} A former pupil remembered that the 'methods which Barnes adopted to secure the attention and improvement of his pupils were characterised by gentle persuasiveness, a persuasiveness however, that was rarely unassociated with quiet firmness'.\textsuperscript{55} An account in the Morning Post, inspired by the erection of a statue in his memory, described his 'faithfulness' as a vicar and as a husband: 'saintly George Herbert himself was not more exemplary in the performance of his pastoral duties . . . the surpassing strength of his fidelity may be inferred from the fact that throughout the thirty-five years he survived his wife he was in the habit of writing her name "Guilia" at the end of each day's entry in his diary'.\textsuperscript{56} Barnes personally believed that true art could only arise out of love for its subject. But his love seems always to have been of the quiet and restrained kind. The same pupil who remembered his gentle firmness also commented that passionate feeling was never evident in the man.

It is perhaps these calm and reticent, apparently selfless traits, which are behind Grigson's suggestion that Barnes never 'quite looked upon himself as a "poet" in our conscious European way'. The underlying reason for this attitude -- which I have been calling Barnes's bardic inclination -- was, in Grigson's view, that Barnes was 'fulfilled' emotionally.\textsuperscript{57} Grigson seems to be implying that Barnes did not need to use his poetry as a platform for his own ego, and Palgrave had felt something similar:

\begin{quote}
[He] keeps himself, with true ancient epic simplicity . . . wholly out of sight . . . Working for love of his art, and for love of his fellow country folk, he has never tried to fall in with the literary current of the day. In a 'subjective age' as Goethe described it sixty years since, Barnes has been obstinate in his objectivity . . . He avoids all display of personal feeling, all self-conscious confession, all inward conflict. \textsuperscript{58}
\end{quote}

This impression can be substantiated up to a point. However, I shall be qualifying Barnes's self-effacement, particularly in Chapter Three; for however consciously he moulded himself around the characteristics and work of the traditional bard, he also wrote out of a personal need. He made it perfectly clear that the writing of his poems was a 'refreshment' to him personally.\textsuperscript{59} Nor did he see his work as carefully constructed
propagandist messages of the 'loveworthy' themes he approved. Instead he described the processes of creation in terms of imagination and inspiration. He had, he said, 'visions' of the past, and sometimes 'second-sight'. 'I saw [pictures] distinctly before me and all that I had to do was to write them down. It was no trouble to me, the thoughts and words came of themselves.'

But it is in part this close engagement with images before his eyes, visions of clarity and substantiality, which leads to a sense of objectivity in Barnes. Whilst Grigson and Palgrave refer to Barnes's perspective, his 'objective' point of view, David Wright considers the ideas and material upon which that way of seeing was concentrated. Wright remarks upon the 'thinness' of a post-romantic 'preference for abstracts rather than objects':

one could maintain that the true indigenous line of English poetry through most of the 19th century went underground: that it is not really to be found in the world of the major figures, despite their often admirable achievements, but that of less publicized and sometimes unpublished poets, John Clare for one, William Barnes for another, and Thomas Hardy for a third.

Whilst Wright refers to the post-romantic, Isobel Armstrong describes romantic poetry itself as lacking in 'concreteness'. 'Its aim is not to be "concrete"... but to render the processes of a mind-created world, a world creating mind, through its processes.' Therefore romantic language is for her 'idealist' language, because it aims to make rather than copy and aspires to 'Living Form'. Barnes's antithetical intention seems to have been to concentrate upon images outside of himself and to copy them. His artist's eye (at one time he had thought he might develop his talent for engraving into a career) combined with his scientist's rigorous observation to strive for a detailed accuracy in the copying: he was once critical of a pupil who saw before her only plain green grass when he had noticed it dotted with white daisies, dull red sorrel, bright red cloves, grey grass-blooms and various subtle shades of green. (Nevertheless, despite his expertise as a naturalist -- and he contributed in his schoolroom to Pickard-Cambridge's eventual career as the 'Father of British Spiders' -- Barnes's pastoral images do not, as I shall show, have the kind of depth and accuracy found in the work of John Clare or Gilbert White.)
Yet Barnes's 'copying' is never without life, though its vigour is of a different kind to the 'idealist' vitality which Isobel Armstrong identifies in the romantics. Vivien de Sola Pinto demonstrates this point when he contrasts his own conception of romantic poetry with Barnes's art, through a comparison of Wordsworth's 'Nutting' with Barnes's 'Out A-nutten' (p.148).

Wordsworth writes:—

I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky. 64

Barnes remembers:—

Zoo drough the stubble, over rudge
An' vurrow, we begun to trudge;
An' Sal an' Nan agreed to pick
Along wi' me, an' Poll wi' Dick;
An' they went where the wold wood, high
An' thick, did meet an' hide the sky;
But we thought we mid vind some good
Ripe nuts among the shorter wood,
   The best vor nutten.

To Pinto, Wordsworth's poem represents a separation of the self from the objects before the eye. In Isobel Armstrong's terms it is Wordsworth's mental processes, rather than the event of nutting, which is brought to life in the poem. On the other hand, Pinto writes that 'at the moment of inspiration [Barnes's] whole being is, as it were, fused with [the scene's] vitality and beauty'. 65 That is, Barnes's total commitment to the visions before him inspires poetry which is alive with the form of the objects around him and with his personae's response to these forms, unmitigated by self-consciousness.

Self-consciousness marks a major difference between Barnes's dialect poems (as well as his later standard work) and his first attempts at verse which he wrote in what he called 'common English'. These early poems have an air of mannered conventionality in their language, subject matter, and tone. There are frequent references to 'Cyprian', 'Adonis' and 'Phoebus', and lines like 'And deserted and spurn'd by the treacherous
maid, / Adversity's storm I am doom'd to pervade' ring with the sound of
an earlier poetic diction. 66 And the reference to the lily, in the
early poem 'Though you Smile at my Zeal' (p.30), reads simply as a device
to increase the impression of tension in the emotional encounter being
described.

Though you smile at my zeal, like yon lily that tells
By its slow graceful bend the existence of air,
At the tale of my love as thy fair bosom swells,
It silently tells me that pity is there.
Then, dearest, bestow thou thy heart
while I live,
To show how I value the boon that
you give.

In the dialect work, however, Barnes uses his talent for fine observ-
ation and description -- admittedly already apparent in the image of the
lily -- but increases its significance. The poem 'I got two Vields'
(p.126) is, like 'Though you Smile at my Zeal', about an emotion: in this
case Barnes is describing the joy felt by the persona in the possession
of property. 'I got two vields, an' I don't care / What squire mid have
a bigger shef're.' But the reader comes to understand that joy, not
through a simile, like the image of the bending lily which represents
a lover's smiling, affectionate response, but through the joy invested
in the description of the property itself. Pleasure is evident in the
delicate particularity of Barnes's images of colour, shape, and movement.

Where yellow clotes, in spreaden beds
O' floaten leaves, do lift their heads
By benden bulrushes an' zedge
A-swaYen at the water's edge,
Below the withy that do spread
Athirt the brook his grey-leav'd head.
An' eltrot flowers, milky white,
Do catch the slanten evenen light.

The vital quality of Barnes's imagery is dealt with in detail in Chapter
Three, 'Like a Dutch Painting', which considers Hardy's remark that Barnes's
poems are like a 'still life, brief and unaffected, but realistic as a
Dutch picture'. 67
Here I would add that this kind of vitality, conveyed in the perception of objects, is bound up with Barnes's use of dialect. As David Wright points out, the diction of poets like Barnes, Clare, and Hardy is appropriate to their close engagement with the world outside themselves since it is the language of the spoken, not the written, word. It does not have a 'literaryism [which] like the glass panes of a greenhouse, let in the light but kept out the cold air'. Wright remarks elsewhere, that 'after the formal diction of eighteenth-century poetry, writers used a more thrilling and exuberant language like that of the Elizabethan poetry'. But it was not of course the language of contemporary use; it was no longer the genuine language of the day. Barnes's dialect, on the other hand, was still authentically live: the language was part of the life he observed, and its use therefore could, in theory, have a sense of spontaneous, original vitality. In this sense it may be the only appropriate, genuine 'living form' in which to artistically image that life. The resources of Barnes's 'living form', and the degree to which they do convey local vitality, are the central consideration of Part Two of this thesis.

However, although Barnes was writing in everyday language — and, moreover, a language which he no longer spoke personally, after he left the farm environs of its normal usage to become a professional man — there is nothing casual in its use. I consider in Part Two how accurately Barnes used the Blackmore speech and explain his conviction that local forms of language should be preserved. Besides, he always insisted upon clarity and accuracy of expression. His clerical experience as a young man in a solicitor's office dealing with the complexities of law and using Latin terminology, reinforced by his linguistic interests which led him to a knowledge of sixty languages and the compilation of grammars, together with the challenges of teaching, must have strengthened his belief that 'Not only children, but even adults frequently think they understand what they read or hear, when they do not'. Consequently he was determined that he and his pupils should communicate precisely exact observations. Clarity and lucidity were also the key-words in complimentary newspaper reports upon his lectures to adult groups.

Barnes did not allow his work to go 'rotten', in the sense in which Pound intended that criticism of much nineteenth century poetry. He
resisted 'the application of word to thing' becoming 'slushy and inexact, or excessive and bloated'. The consequence of inexactness, at least according to Pound, is that 'the whole machinery of social and individual order goes to pot'. When Barnes began to write, traditional order still existed in his environment more than in most. His daughter wrote that Blackmore was a kind of Tempe — a happy valley — so shut in by its sheltering hills, that up to quite modern times the outer world had sent few echoes to disturb its serene and rustic quiet. But I have suggested that Barnes was not simply an insular village rhymer. He must have been well aware of challenges from outside. Yet, as I explain in Chapter Two, Barnes preferred the status quo, feared upheaval, and resisted abstract questioning: the community he describes in his poems is based on the old organic rural order, he abhorred aggressive response and was therefore suspicious of Chartism, and when Tennyson tried to draw him into a theological debate he politely resisted and retired to bed. Isobel Armstrong suggests that Hopkins reacted in 'dread of idealism' and attempted to 're-establish a concrete referential world, a world that can be acted on and in and which acts on the subject independently of him'. Barnes, I think, strove to preserve order — to maintain a concrete referential world — by trying to imaginatively recreate and thus to preserve the objects, sights, sounds and sense of the world into which he had been born. There must, he insisted, be something outside of the self in which to believe: 'The Soul requires a fixed standard of excellence without itself to attain to'. Barnes's personal security rested in things beyond himself, in his orthodox faith in God, in his recognition of beauty and harmony in nature, and in his determination to discover what he felt to be the best of man's potential.

All these are represented in his poetry. In a very obvious sense then Barnes is a subjective poet, despite Palgrave's belief that he remains 'wholly out of sight'. For the selection of certain objects on which to focus, and the perspective through which the reader is shown these objects, is the work of Barnes's subjectivity. Choosing to emulate bardic tradition and to 'teach his rustic brethren' certain attitudes is of course a kind of subjective decision. And in Chapter Two I demonstrate the particular kind of rural world which Barnes's poetry represents as a result of his 'subjective' vision, shaped as that vision is in part through his origins as a farmer's boy and in part by his subsequent
career of self-education and of professional work backed by a profound religious faith.

However, Barnes's subjectivity in his poetry can be qualified, largely in connection with the presentation of his images. He would never have denied that he exerted a tight control over the representation of his themes in the matter of selectivity. Personally he disliked photography because he believed, however mistakenly, that the camera lens could not choose its subject matter, could not decide what to enhance and what to minimise. He felt that painting was infinitely preferable because the artist could control his composition: if a tree stump was an eyesore before the painter, he could ignore it in his canvas, whereas the camera could not. Still, he insisted that he did not write with what he called a 'drift', meaning a specific and forcefully overt political angle. And although, through his selectivity of image, he made his own conservative political position abundantly clear, it is true that, as Palgrave remarked, Barnes did not force his opinion upon the audiences of his poetry.

He had strong opinions and was not afraid to declare them in his prose and from his pulpit. In 1858 his experience of social conditions in Dorset and beyond caused him to exclaim, 'There is a social disease among us and who would not wish to find its origin?'. He castigated national policy abroad: 'as a nation we have to answer for much unrighteousness towards weaker tribes'. And he suggested practical solutions to the ills he criticised. In articles in the Poole Herald in 1848 he offered 'Humilis Domus: Some Thoughts on the Abodes, Life and Social Conditions of the Poor, especially in Dorsetshire', in which he called for a lessening of the labourer's 'excessive daily toil', attacked the new Poor Law, and recommended practical solutions like communal farm machinery.

But it is true that his poetry does not, as Coventry Patmore remarked, aggressively 'protest against anything in religion, politics, or the arrangement of society'. There is no poetic protest if by protest is meant something like the aggressiveness of Pope's wit, the savagery of Swift's irony, or the moral argument of Blake. Nor did he bewail rural change with the strength of Crabbe's 'Deserted Village',
or so pointedly use the country to reveal the drawbacks of the city as Arnold does in 'The Scholar Gipsy'. And he did not use his pastoral for criticism of a very specific kind, unlike Robert Young whose Dorset dialect eclogues attack the evils of drink. It is perhaps for these reasons that Robert Bridges could complain to Hopkins that Barnes lacked 'fire'.

On the contrary, as Palgrave suggests, 'keeping his eye always on his object, Barnes [leaves] the reader to be moved or not by its simple presentation. His . . . scenes from the drama of rural life supply, indeed, abundant material for the subtle analysis, in which our day is so fertile. But [that subtle analysis] finds no expression among them'. Hardy made a similar point. He believed that Barnes was able in his verse 'to elude . . . those dreams and speculations that cannot leave alone the mystery of things, -- possibly an unworthy mystery and disappointing if solved'. The precise manner of his versification, his choice of language, his assumption of the role of Dorset labouring speaker in his poems, and the tones of his imagery. -- all of which contribute to the 'simple presentation' of which Palgrave speaks -- are discussed in detail in the following chapters. But here the general form of Barnes's poems, and the relationship they invite between speaker and hearer, may be approximated through a comparison between the verses and Barnes's presentation of material to his school pupils. At nine o'clock each morning he put before his class, in his usual calm, clear manner, a scientific experiment, a picture, a theory or an historical fact. He described these, and made comment upon them, in simple unambiguous language. His boys were then to parse their teacher's words until they and Barnes could be sure there had been no misunderstanding between them. Finally his pupils were to record what they had heard and seen in their own -- clear -- words.

The following poem, 'Sheep in the Sheph'de' (p.538), is presented in a similar way. The objects in the landscape are clearly rendered for the reader, who is then asked to listen to a quietly made comment arising out of their contemplation.

In summer tide, I took my road
Vrom stile to stile, vrom ground to ground,
The while the burnen zunsheen glow'd
On lezze an' meHd, wi' grass a-brown'd,
Where slowly round a wide-bent bow
The stream did wind, that glided low,
In hopevul hours, a-gliden on,
In happiness, too soon a-gone.

An' there below the elem shroud,
Vor coolness vrom the burnen glow,
A vlock o' panken sheep did crowd
Within the sheMpe the sheMde did show,
A-wheelen slowly on an' on,
Till they did lie, wi' sheMde a-gone.
'An' oh! that happy hours should glide
Away so soon, an' never bide.

The poem satisfies the dictates of bardic art -- as Barnes saw it. It refers only to 'the good and beautiful', and it is written with the 'mildness' and -- it may be inferred when placing the poem in the context of the whole of Barnes's canon -- the 'godly diligence' which he believed Bards must show in their own personalities. Furthermore, the lines clearly avoid the kind of protest or political 'drift' which Barnes abhorred. Nevertheless, it makes a point. Barnes draws a moral from nature, evidently following what he took to be bardic tradition, and also emulating the technique of poets of the previous century who, like Thomson for instance, offered pointed instruction through their rural verse. The method is very similar to the structuring of the following example from Thomson, confidently didactic, and without Palgrave's 'subtle analysis'.

Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
Upward and downward, thwarting and convolved,
The quivering nations sport; till, tempest-winged,
Fierce Winter sweeps them from the race of day.
Even so luxurious men unheeding pass
An idle summer life in fortune's shine. 85

Barnes's moral point, expressed throughout his poetry, was clear and straightforward. He openly declared his intention to use his verse to
'light up [the countryside's] more lovely features, foster its better feelings and tastes and touch its soul with the sweet pastoral spirit'. In other words, his poems stress the need to recognise the best of life -- before the light passes as it does in his poem 'Sheep in the Sheâde'. Their lines continually identify that best of life as Barnes saw it, largely untroubled by Hardy's 'mystery of things' and staunchly faithful to God. But I shall explain that they do also admit that light may pass. 

But Patmore was right to say that Barnes did not protest in his poetry. But his decision to 'light up' those aspects of life which in his estimation were 'good and loveworthy' topics for a poetry which he hoped would guide his audience, is surely a kind of active proclamation of his own subjective perspective and a passive resistance against the challenges of nineteenth-century development.

The ultimate in quiet affirmation and peaceful resistance is perhaps Barnes's decision, when challenged by Darwinian theory which countermanded so much of his world view -- based as it was on God as supreme Creator -- to abandon his scientific interests and lecturing, and his school, and from the context of his rural vicarage, to continue writing poetry in the vein of the last thirty or forty years. Open argument was out of the question for the modest, self-effacing Barnes, except for the occasional criticism voiced through his prose: faith expressed through the good works of poetry was not.

Brenda Culloms writes of the later nineteenth century:

The nation's moral and cultural standards were being set not, as for so long by an entrenched landed aristocracy, but by a thrusting, educated ambitious middle class whose leading members did not open their Bibles to find a blueprint of a better world either on this planet or elsewhere. In these circumstances how much real influence could the country parson exert? 

In the case of Barnes' bardic attempt to teach through his poems, the question cannot be answered with absolute certainty. It is only possible to attempt, as the introductory paragraphs of this Chapter attempt, some assessment of Barnes's intentions together with the kinds of audience he reached and the verbal responses to his poetry they were prepared to declare and which have been preserved.
However, the potential power of Barnes's work has been the subject of a considerable portion of the small amount of criticism that exists on his poetry. Certain contemporaries believed his vision must be 'a great boon to the class which Mr Barnes describes'. But a contrasting modern response is expressed by John Barrell and John Bull. Their edition of *English Pastoral Verse* finds Barnes excellent in his way, but 'too hopelessly nostalgic to be at all serviceable'.

Barnes's effect upon the modern reader, reacting to his poetry from a personal point of view, unrelated to an academic consideration of his nineteenth century relevance, is also divided. Auden comments:

I cannot enjoy one poem by Shelley and am delighted by every line of William Barnes, but I know perfectly well that Shelley is a major poet, and Barnes a minor one.  

Arthur Bryant, on the other hand, writes:

I doubt if he was a minor poet at all. I think he was a great one... The whole kinship between man and nature seems to be summed up in [his work].

As Barnes's deliberate intent was, at least in part, to teach through his poetry, it is reasonable to assess him -- aside from the excellence which Barrell and Bull acknowledge (and which I will suggest in subsequent chapters rests particularly in the quality of his imagery and in his use of language) -- from the point of view of the 'serviceability' of his chosen lesson. That lesson is briefly considered in the immediately following pages and then in detail in Chapter Two. The social and economic inexactitude which Barrell and Bull criticise has to be accepted to some extent. And the 'wide range of subject matter and treatment... unmistakable originality of vision... and [evidence] of maturing' which Auden considered mark the thematic content of a major poet, are not in evidence. But Bryant's 'kinship between man and nature' is stressed again and again in Barnes's chosen themes, and it is a kinship which, judging from the proliferation of country reminiscences in the bookshops at present and from the current marked academic interest in pastoral poetry, has a strong fascination -- a kind of serviceability -- for a considerable number of readers.
A SERVICEABLE MYTH?

It is indisputably true that agricultural life in Victorian England, and in at least some parts of Barnes's Dorsetshire in particular, could be harsh and miserable. Cobbett's *Rural Rides* described poverty and greyness up to a few miles from Barnes's home. Robert Young's poetry laments the degradation of escape into drink from Dorset rural trials. Later studies have supported this picture of distress. G.B. Mingay finds much of the worst rural poverty existing from east Kent westwards to Hampshire, Dorset, Southern Wiltshire, and parts of Devon, despite there being little 'activity in the age of parliamentary enclosure'.

It was also the age where little industrial development was taking place to provide surplus labourers with alternative employment, and where the labourers themselves were firmly anchored in the parishes by the operation of the settlement law.

Yet Lucy Baxter suggests that Blackmore itself was a relatively comfortable rural area. She wrote:

> Life in Blackmore was practically the life of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, until the nineteenth was actually far advanced. The farmer helped to till his own land, his wife did not disdain to churn her butter and curd her cheeses, and the days passed in homely and rustic duties.

A vision of community peace is apparently corroborated by Hardy, for the Vale is also the location of the village of Marlott, that 'langorous ... tinged with azure ... broad rich mass of grass and trees' in which Tess Durbeyfield grew up. There seem then to be some grounds for accepting the unusually idyllic picture of Blackmore described in Barnes's poems. Besides, fidelity in the description of appearances, objects and events would probably be expected from a man who always insisted on accuracy of observation and communication in his classroom and elsewhere.

But though Hardy's novels do include elements of the idyll, like Tess's 'fertile and sheltered trait of country', they also show, beside an assertion of rural pleasures, that poverty and distress existed as well. However in K.D.M. Snell's view, argued in his recent *Annals of the Labouring Poor*, that suggestion of poverty and strain does not go far enough for social
and economic accuracy. He doubts the verisimilitude which has traditionally been applauded in Hardy's work by, amongst others, Merryn and Raymond Williams, Norman Page and Arnold Kettle. He finds Hardy reticent on the actual conditions of life in Dorset: on the low wages and unemployment; on the prevalence of and reasons for religious non-conformity; on the reality and character of political belief; on the agricultural unionism and bitterness of class antagonism; on labourers' attitudes to work and the use of the land; on working-class sexuality; on familial relationships and the treatment of the elderly; on the notorious hostility to the New Poor Law and its administrators. However, if Hardy ignores certain aspects of real life, Barnes may evade far more. Apart from a small number of eclogues on social matters, poverty figures hardly at all in Barnes's idyll, as I shall demonstrate in a detailed examination of his themes in Chapter Two.

Ignorance of the real situation could not have been the reason for Barnes's omissions. Though he had developed a professional career away from the farm of his birth, Barnes maintained some contact with labouring life. As a vicar he was 'a constant and frequent visitor in . . . cottage homes' and a contemporary remembers that 'he used to talk to the cottagers on all points, religious and political, and his intimate acquaintance with their dialect and modes of thought gave him an opening where other men of his intellectual superiority would have been at fault, and have only excited suspicion and reserve'. Further, that intellectual advancement -- gained with the help of local teachers and developed through prodigious reading whilst working first in a solicitor's office, then as a headmaster, and ultimately as a vicar trained at Cambridge, and backed by comparative experiences outside of his county as he travelled a little and published and corresponded with admirers of his poems -- helped Barnes to recognise and assess the true rural condition through a distanced and balanced perspective which he recorded in his 'Humilis Domus' articles on rural poverty. If the vision Barnes offers in his poems is not exactly false then, it is knowingly selective, and would be misleading if it were read as an accurate account of rural existence generally, or indeed of local Blackmore life in its inevitable human mixture of light and shade.

But Barnes never intended his images to be taken as accurately representative of rural life generally. As I explained in my introductory
paragraphs, he wrote first and foremost for that local audience which did enjoy some benefits from Blackmore's comparative comforts. And he deliberately set out to concentrate upon these 'lovely features', to 'light them up' and to avoid attendant shadows. He acknowledged that the figures he described were -- whilst not wholly fictitious -- representative of labouring families who were 'somewhat above the average'.

He also made plain in his poems that his vision belonged partly to memory. Many of them are written in the past tense and frequently refer to the long past days of childhood. Barnes demonstrates too an awareness that Blackmore life was -- as Lucy Baxter's observation stresses -- somewhat anachronistic by acknowledging, from time to time, changes that were going on outside the vale.

And Barnes made perfectly clear his reasons for choosing to 'teach' his local audiences this selective image of rural life which did not precisely match their actual existence in its entirety. He wanted to give them a poetry of 'their own'. It was to be a 'high toned poetry' which would help them, he believed, to 'contemplate the charms of rural nature'.

These comments point clearly to Barnes's separation from the kind of people amongst whom he had been born. Though he used their personae through which to write, he obviously cast himself, as I have been suggesting, in the role of their mentor.

His removal from the land accounts for some of the minor omissions of his work, which I shall be indicating in Chapter Two: he was no longer familiar with the minutiae of labouring existence though he may well have remembered the general picture. But his relatively distanced and uninvolved position would no doubt also assist him to achieve the selectivity and 'lightening' of images which he firmly believed would benefit his community. The result is, in R.A. Forsyth's view, a 'myth' of rural life.

Forsyth argues that Barnes's 'particularity' was crucial to his purpose.

[His] particularity of selection and treatment of country life and its virtues, did not result from a sentimental evasion of contemporary
issues, but amounted rather to a conscious criticism unwaveringly aimed at those very issues . . . Barnes's work, more especially his poetry, constituted a myth of minor though not insignificant proportions, and of a thoroughness and consistency to be measured by the graceful strength of his verse. 103

I would accept Forsyth's contention and suggest that Barnes's work is in no simple sense a primary source valuable as a repository of the actual facts of country living. His friend, Hardy, wrote:

Art is a changing of the actual proportions and order of things, so as to bring out more forcibly than might otherwise be done that feature in them which appeals most strongly . . . to show more clearly the features that matter in those realities, which, if merely copied or reported inventorially, might possibly be observed, but would more probably be overlooked. 104

Barnes's poems of rural life are a source of one Victorian's reaction to realities, of his perception of what mattered most and appealed -- to him -- most strongly. It is a reaction which has, as I shall show in subsequent pages, much in common with the thinking of more prominent Victorians, including Smiles, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris.

It is that selective reaction -- resulting in a poetic 'myth' -- which I would suggest accounts for Barnes's popularity (albeit for rather different reasons in each case) amongst his local audiences, his city contemporaries, and more modern readers.

Their reasons for approval vary according to whether myth, offered as an alternative to actuality and as a goal to be striven for in the face of actuality, is seen as a clarifying metaphor or as a mystification. I am using these terms in the senses discussed by R. Feingold in his consideration of Raymond Williams's evaluation of the pastoral. Feingold writes that Williams sees pastoral verse as 'a literary form that worked to mystify that actual countryside into an idealised and lyricized evasion of the harsh actualities of production and exploitation upon which a new economic and political energy was founded'. 105 But Feingold argues that if pastoral is seen not as an attempt to present literal truth but as a strategy for placing a structure upon reality which incorporates and communicates a response to the literal truth, it is theoretically possible for that structure to be a valuable clarification, of attitudes, emotion, and other underlying (if not surface) actualities.
His local audiences evidently welcomed the structure Barnes's poems placed on their daily lives.

At one moment the whole mass of people would be breathless with interest at such descriptive poems as 'JeMne's Wedden-day in Mornen', 'Grammer's Shoes'; the next, the women would be sobbing audibly over 'Meary Ann's Chile', or 'My Love's Guardian Angel', then hey presto! sorrow would flee away, and the multitude of faces relax into smiles, with now and then a burst of hearty laughter, at 'What Jack and I Done', or 'A bit o' Sly Coorten'.

It was obviously good, light entertainment. But Barnes was also hoping that his hearers would respond to his carefully structured vision as if it were a goal to strive for. His naturally peaceful and conservative personality would not stir his listeners to try to change the structures of their often hard lives. Whilst saddened by agrarian distress, as his prose writings show, he could do nothing but try for its amelioration through a fostering of the psychology not of outward challenge and conflict but of patient acceptance and of the preservation of an inner self-respect. He offered his 'myth' to the local community not as a mystification but as a serviceable model to aim for, uttering 'the happy emotions with which agricultural people can, and he thinks should, contemplate the charm of rural nature'.

This kind of 'clarifying' intention is accepted in Barnes by Max Keith Sutton who does not agree with Bull and Barrell that 'to-day, more than ever, the pastoral vision simply will not do'. Like Forsyth, Sutton sees Barnes's pastoral as 'a way of dealing with reality, not of avoiding it'. Besides, he is critical of Raymond William's slighting of evidence that rural people could have been happy (citing, for instance, Williams's selection of harsh details from an autobiography whilst ignoring the writer's assertion that he was 'perfectly happy') and suggests that, 'with all its hardships, rural life has afforded surprising possibilities of happiness, and pastoral writing may be truthful in representing good times as well as bad'.

However, contemporary city readers also approved the chosen emphasis of Barnes's vision. One reviewer evidently -- if condescendingly -- saw it as a clarifying myth.
If the landlords and upper classes generally may thus be led to a more intimate acquaintance with [the poor and] their feelings and habits, and to a more sincere sympathy with their wants and hopes, and for their homely and household prejudices, which are far too frequently violated and despised, we are convinced that Mr Barnes will feel that his poems have aided in a work, whose success he would value far above any fame or emolument that may accrue to himself. We are satisfied that all the poor want is to be known, and to be communicated with directly by refined and honourable minds, instead of being left to the tender mercies of an ill-educated class, whose own bargains have been often hardly driven, and whose prosperity, therefore, depends upon oppression and illiberality. Against this treatment their only weapon is deceit; and the consciousness of deceiving produces a savage gloom in their character, and a suspiciousness of the upper classes most unfavourable to both parties. 110

In his book The Dark Side of the Landscape John Barrell argues that the nineteenth century poor were seen as a distant and generalised object of both fear and benevolence. 111 Barnes's model of rural life evidently encouraged the above reviewer's benevolence, but it might equally have acted as a 'mystification', allowing fear to be minimised and the status quo to be maintained. It is perhaps primarily for this reason that Bull and Barrell find his idyll an un-serviceable myth.

It could certainly have endorsed the kind of position held by Richard Jefferies, himself the son of a small farmer. Observing conditions towards the middle and end of Barnes's life he remarked that labourers were 'too ungrateful for the many great benefits which are bountifully supplied them ... from the farmer's home' -- and which, I might add, are prominently featured in Barnes's work. 'No term,' wrote Jefferies, 'is too strong in condemnation of those persons who endeavour to arouse an agitation among a class of people so short-sighted and so ready to turn against their own benefactors and their own interests.' 112 Barnes himself spoke of his carefully selected images as a 'humanising engine'. 113 But apparently neither he nor his local readers heard any divisive arrogance in his claim. He said he wrote out of love for the rural worker. And the rural worker evidently loved Barnes: 'There, miss, we do all o' us love the passon, that we do: he be so plain'. 114 The following remark by another contemporary reviewer is perhaps nearest in attitude to Barnes's conscious position.

Anything which exalts a man in his own opinion as a member of an honest and honourable class ennobles him. Anything which causes him to appreciate more fully the blessings he enjoys as a class member of the
Church and of the State is an addition to his sense of happiness, an incitement to grateful reflection, and a joint security for his being a good citizen and a good Churchman. 115

Barnes's conception of himself as local teacher, and -- as I shall show in Part Two -- his use of the local dialect, are symptomatic of his sense of the labouring class as a class, with a position to be maintained in the hierarchy: nevertheless, it was a position he believed could be enjoyed and should be respected. It is hardly surprising then that Barnes could appeal to two very different audiences, magnifying the light side of the landscape and thus encouraging his local hearers, playing down its negatives and thus comforting the city reader. He did not deliberately mask the shadows to satisfy the Establishment, but his own social position, somewhere between it and his rural personae, must have -- in affording him a dual perspective -- helped to shape his 'good and loveworthy' themes. The kinds of images which result from his being a caring observer of rural life -- rather than its careworn participant -- are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

However, the pleasure today's reader derives from Barnes's work is unlikely to stem (unless he is a historian or sociologist) from considerations of nineteenth century social economics which no longer directly affect his personal life. Yet its current 'serviceability' also seems to stem from 'mythical' qualities in its images, mythical that is in that they refer to no present reality but inspire nostalgia for an age which may or may not have existed in actual fact. Perhaps it is an age composed of those fantasies which Raymond Williams identifies in a pastoral retrospection, that continually places an ideal world further and further back in a Golden Age. 116 There is something of this nostalgic pleasure in Arthur Bryant's response to Barnes. He wrote his article (referred to above), which appreciates 'the profound truth and simplicity of Barnes's apprehension of life' and the poetry's imaging of the 'whole kinship between man and nature', in a motor-car,

travelling reluctantly from the Dorset coast to London, where a press of business, not even my own, necessitates my presence. In London the air will smell of petrol, the pavements will be dusty and the parks parched and grimy.

Yet Bryant would have disputed any suggestion of 'mere' nostalgia in his reaction. He had spent the previous evening in Barnes country and there
believed he sensed the actual presence — not the blurred memory — of the kind of idyll the poetry describes.

It was as though the very spirit of beauty that underlies our seemingly harsh, tragic world had become visible in this hallowed place. 117

It is a view shared by C.J. Sisson, who implies that the poems celebrate for him eternal values which are relevant to audiences far distant in time and place from the Dorset origins of their creation. He believes, quoting a phrase of Barnes's, 'Barnes's theme . . . is nothing less than what is fit "for the good continuance" of the human animal'. 118 They certainly have, as I demonstrate in Chapter Three, 'Like a Dutch Painting', a quality of vitality, of warmth and light, which transcends the immediate social context of their inspiration.

Besides, in Suzanne Langer's words, 'literary events are made, not reported'. 119 And, as I shall explain below, Barnes did not create his literary images simply with the dictates of his social, teacher's conscience in mind. They are also influenced by his theories of art, and by the literary tradition — though his choices in both these respects were no doubt affected in their turn, consciously or unconsciously, by his bardic preferences and his place in Victorian society. As Northrop Frye argues, 'at any given period of literature the conventions of literature are enclosed within a total mythological structure, which may not be explicitly known to anyone, but is nevertheless present as a shaping principle'. 120

HARMONY OF THEME AND FORM

John Reed, in his work on Victorian conventions, argues that Victorian 'mythology', in Northrop Frye's sense, 'was basically the Christian faith and even when Victorian authors departed from actual religious tenets . . . they yet retained the moral schemes that were a part of that creed'. 121

Barnes demonstrates his adherence to the Christian faith in his perception of the bardic tradition, his motive to teach, and his consequent selection of themes. His Christian belief is also evident in his theory of aesthetics. To Barnes the beautiful in art was 'the result of an
unmistaken working of man in accordance with the beautiful in nature'. 122 Because such beauty, in Barnes's view, 'is the unmarred result of God's first creative or forming will', it must follow that it would be the duty of the God-fearing to describe and praise that original beauty. His theology seems to have followed the thinking of men like William Paley whose Natural Theology he may well have read as a prescribed text whilst a ten-year's man at Cambridge, if not beforehand; the world's 'design must have had a designer. That designer must have been a person. That person is God'. 123 Barnes argued that through time God's original intentions might have been obscured, 'still, in plants, animals, and man, and in the world, there is yet so much of the beauty of God's primary work, that our minds can well rise from their marred shapes to the higher ones, or the beau ideal, of which they may be spoilt forms; and that .. ideal is, in our opinion, one of the true objects of high art'. Furthermore, 'a better acquaintance with true art will lead us to greater truths'. These truths should be pleasureable as well as edifying: 'many a cheek has been paled, and lovely piece of childhood marred, to longsome hours of over-work . . . well ought they to be cheered by beautiful works of art'.

Barnes believed that God's original beauty was above all 'fitting' or harmonious. The colour described in his work must then be as balanced as the colour combinations he found in the landscape. 'Nature is very sparing of showy contrasts . . . it is not uncommon for one or two strong colours to be overcast with a tinge of its fellow, or for both of them to be reconciled by a common touch of black or of some third colour.' He must also identify pleasing shapes in the landscape. Since that which is beautifully 'fitting' derives something of its harmony from its usefulness, these contours will usually be curved: 'if the whole surface of the earth were level it would be overspread with water, and unfit for the abode of man, who needs his dry ground, and plants, and animals'.

It follows then that Barnes should strive for a perfect and fitting balance in the shapes of his own work, and the intricate patterns of versification he followed are considered in Part Two. His choice of dialect is also linked to his sense of God's 'first-forming will'. I shall explain in Part Two his belief that dialects can be representations
of that first creation and must therefore be preserved. Besides, he saw individual speech forms as crucial in the forming and expression of personality: therefore, to be appropriately 'fitting', his poems of Blackmore Vale should be written in the natural speech of its people.

However, Barnes did not wish his poetry to ignore the marred results of God's first-forming will in their entirety, even though he wished to 'light up' the landscape as far as possible. The contrast of perfection with imperfection could allow the former to be the more significant. Besides, a combination of light and shade could produce a more genuine harmony of form. Pain, trouble and discomfort, were not necessarily imperfections to Barnes: God made the winter as well as the summer, and 'If wintervrost do chill the ground / 'Tis but to bring the summer round'.124 Nor will he entirely reject, in the themes of his poetry, signs of progress beyond God's first intentions. Moral first intentions could not be improved upon, but Victorian invention was not entirely to be dismissed in its response to developing economy: he loved the old buildings constructed from natural stone and wood but he accepted the advantages of new materials, believing that 'brick is made for walling' and is good for it'.

It would seem that artistic harmony was for Barnes, in its balance of light and shade (though excluding the totally dark, and anything he found to be crude and vicious), a kind of panacea for the ills of the modern world. It could make within its balanced form a logical sense of society's mix of light and dark, offering a model of good and loveworthy living which his readers might emulate, and providing in its aesthetic beauty a distraction from and compensation for the darkest shadows of reality. Rather than acknowledge and challenge the full implications of change, which he could not fail to see in either Darwinian theory or in the actuality of Victorian industrial revolution -- the former destructive to his faith in God, the latter an attack upon much that he defined as loveworthy in man and nature -- Barnes chose to retire into the secure boundaries of his vicarage and into the formal harmony of his poetry: both actions may be seen as 'holding' operations, attempts to stand still within the metaphors of his ideals.
The construction of that 'literary metaphor' will depend to some extent of course on Barnes's absorption of the conventions of literary tradition. Hearl believes that Barnes chose to read little verse in case it should destroy his own invention, and Hopkins found in Barnes an unusual freshness: 'that nothing should be old or borrowed ... cannot be ... still I grant in Barnes an unusual independence and originality ... [his images] are rather all of his own finding and first throwing off'. But, although T.W. Hearl suggests that the only representative of English literature on his shelves were an illustrated Shakespeare and Joseph Andrews, and his library ticket for Cambridge records largely grammar books among his borrowings, nevertheless his daughter refers to a wide reading in literature, especially classical languages, and the examples used in his own discussion of poetic technique in his Philological Grammar, are drawn from an extensive range of writers, both English and foreign. However, he abandoned the conscious emulation of much literary convention when he turned from his early writing in standard English to his dialect work. Those early poems are marked by a conventional and mannered diction, and an unoriginal treatment of themes of unrequited love and mutability. (He did carry into his later standard English poems, though not into his dialect work, the sonnet form which he much admired in Petrarch and used extensively in the early ordinary English verse.)

Still, there are elements in Barnes's mature work which do relate to certain conventions and artists. For example, I shall be discussing in Part Two his deliberate use of verse patterns, and also his perhaps less conscious links with the folk tradition, particularly in form and language.

Chapter Two and Three assess Barnes's thematic choices and the tone and images of his work partly by comparison with other poets and traditions. Because of his bardic intentions to encourage his conception of the good and the loveworthy rural life, I would naturally expect Barnes's pastoral to have affinities with country writing in the tradition of the Golden Age, and also expect it to bear some relationship to the Georgics since he was convinced that work is itself a blessing: there will be no anti-pastoral. The work will have some obvious didactic elements, drawing -- as I explained earlier with reference to Thomson -- morals from nature, and it will have a Christian perspective. All these elements may be
modified according to the expression Barnes might have felt his Dorset
personae would naturally give them.

However, I have not begun by placing Barnes firmly in a particular
ideological group. His view of literature, in relation to society, does
not precisely match any one ideology, of the broad kinds identified by
Terry Eagleton in his description of 'the rise of English'. For
example, whilst Barnes believed that poetry should embody certain
dignities of form and theme, and also that it should be the disseminator
of these rational values, he clearly embraced a wider definition of
'taste' and audience than the poets of the Enlightenment, in his willing-
ness to elevate a local diction and local preoccupations to the platform
of acceptable literature. And he did not have the self-confident wit
-- and spite -- of the eighteenth century writer: he believed he wrote
only out of love, and in a loving fashion. Nor was he, strictly speak-
ing, a Romantic in his view of the world, himself, or of his writing.
It is true that he used a language of men, and true that, through it, he
abhorred (as I shall show) the restraints of utilitarianism and the
oppressive greeds of the city economy, but the love of nature that he
expresses does not, I will suggest, reach the heights of some Romantic
appreciation: therefore his attitude does not, in this respect, amount
to an 'ideology' one could label as 'Romantic'. Above all, Barnes did
not see the poem as first and foremost an expression of the imaginative
self, but believed it to be a reflection of the objective world -- if a
reflection carefully and selectively mirrored by the artist. Barnes
insisted, moreover, that he was not political. And he is not, in the
sense that he does not declaim abstract themes of political ideology --
but he is profoundly, if unconsciously, political in his deliberate use
of the poem to speak out for a specific locality and specific class (as
he interpreted its needs). Eagleton sees the 'failure of religion' as
the main impetus for literature's take-over bid in the field of nineteenth
century morality. Barnes's personal belief in the ability of art to
embody and to spread 'good and loveworthy' values is not only linked to
eighteenth century standards of taste, but is certainly close to Arnold's
conviction that literature can reach out -- and control -- through the
classroom. But Barnes, of course, firmly linked his poetry to his faith
in God: he believed that religion must not -- had not -- failed. And
although he wished to maintain the social status quo, and to keep the
labouring class content, this was not a conscious (or even, I think,
unconscious) desire to oppress, but was linked to a genuine admiration for a rural way of life.

Given the fact that Barnes does not, therefore, fit particularly neatly into any single ideology, I have begun, not from the standpoint of patterns of thought against which he can be measured, but by taking, as starting points for discussion, ideas or sets of convictions held by Barnes and assessing these, where helpful, by comparison with the perspectives of other writers. The former practice might have given this study the apparent coherence of a more rigid framework, but I believe it would have been a reductive method, a distraction from Barnes's individuality which drew upon a number of ways of thinking yet selected and rejected from these as he deemed fit. Besides, although Barnes himself clearly recognised and indeed endorsed the existence of trends of thought and groups of people (he approved the class system, eulogised the family unit, and lived by the institution of the Church, for instance) he was always acutely conscious of the individual within the group: he abhorred the city's tendency to stamp out individuality, set great store by the distinct value of each separate form of speech, treated each member of his class with respect whilst maintaining his own position as headmaster. It seems only appropriate, then, to begin by taking him on his own terms, and in so doing to establish his own particular poetic identity.

Therefore, my next Chapter concentrates upon the themes of Barnes's poems; the ideas which he chose to suggest, through his art, were representative of, or important to, the rural labouring family. Since these concepts are largely conveyed through the imaginary personae of a local community, it has been helpful to make most frequent comparisons to other writers -- for example, Duck, Bloomfield, Clare and Hardy -- who also display a marked sense of place. If Barnes is linked to any ideological bracket in this respect, it must be to an ideology of localness, which -- in Barnes's version -- values particularly the preservation of a co-operative group identity, whose literature may be an integral part of its personality. This is not to say that his poetry cannot have wider application. As Alan Hertz has recently remarked,

Written in the language of the Blackmore Vale, Barnes's last poems describe the circumstances and experiences of its natives. They are nonetheless of much larger significance. Many of Barnes's finest lyrics
are undervalued because . . . they are read as quaint exercises in regionalism, not as expressions of a universal vision. 129

They were exercises in regionalism, but never quaint in the sense of an eccentric remoteness from a wider humanity: as I have implied above, Barnes would have been the first to insist that Blackmore people, like every other group and community, had an individual value, but a value which stemmed from, and made them equal participants in, a common humanity.
CHAPTER TWO

THE GOOD AND THE LOVEWORTHY

Barnes maintained, as I explained in Chapter One, that poetry and teaching could each disseminate an image of good and loveworthy living. His conception of the good and the loveworthy, as it is described through the themes of the dialect poems in particular, is the central concern of Chapter Two. (My thesis focuses on the dialect work, using standard English poems largely as helpful comparisons: generally the later standard themes resemble the dialect vision though they can display a more anxious response to the shadows that sometimes cross the idyll.)

In Part Two, which considers in detail the language used to articulate his ideas, I shall be explaining that Barnes envisaged individual dialects as 'circles', through which local life could be expressed and preserved. The poems speak, then, through an imaginary local persona. There is evidence, as I shall show, confirming that his attitudes more often than not represent Barnes's own point of view. It is rather as if Barnes is fulfilling, through his art, the desire expressed in an early standard poem, to stand aside from life, to watch, assess, and then to offer a guiding light to those who participate more directly in the 'roaring sea' of existence.

A WISH

Build me a tower beside the roaring sea,
Where, on the rock the billows dash and foam,
But where no stormy waves may come to me
To break the stillness of my lonely home.
There would I spend my peaceful days, and roam
Along the lofty cliff, where I might see
The stately gliding vessels go and come,
With bloated sails, across the glitt'ring sea.

There should my lamp, at evening, lend its light
To wavy sailors on the heaving deep;
And, while the rolling waves should foam and swell,
Excited by the chilly winds of night,
There would I pond'ring sit, and nightly keep
My lonely watch, and bid the world farewell. (p.66)*
But metaphor is not generally an immediate constituent of Barnes's dialect work. It purports to be the language of everyday, more immediate communication, its monologues one side of an imaginary conversation between speaker and audience. The image of local life thus enacted — Barnes's guiding light, as it were — is, as the sub-sections of this Chapter demonstrate, one of a close-knit, co-operative community, secure in an efficiently cultivated landscape, where time moves in comfortably repeated cycles, and where faith in God and in His intention that man shall achieve an earthly fulfilment — through his family life and through his work — is paramount. It is not a wholly insular vision, totally enclosed in the local 'circle': the Chapter's final sub-section demonstrates both the poems' acknowledgement of a challenging outside world and their proffered solution to the conflict. I would add that it seems reasonable to consider sub-themes of the good and the loveworthy with general reference to the whole canon of the dialect poems: there does not appear to be any very significant alteration in thematic patterns as Barnes grew older.


THE PEOPLE OF THE POEMS: A CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY

Barnes's poetic landscape is heavily peopled. It is the kind of nature poetry which W.J. Keith would call 'human nature' poetry, distinguishing it from the descriptive genre by which, according to John More, writing in 1777 on Thomson, 'we chiefly mean [poetry that] . . . refers to external nature, and . . . has no direct connection either with the human character, or any department of social life'.

Keith acknowledges that it is debatable whether any nature poetry can, even in its concentration upon the external world, be said to be descriptive without humanity, since all description is mediated by the human eye. But it is a matter of emphasis and there is virtually no poem in Barnes's canon without direct reference to some person or persons, be
it simply the 'I' of the speaker or a wider group. Even without a
directly pinpointed human subject or object, we are constantly aware
(perhaps largely because of the use of dialect) of an unspecified voice
uttering a monologue.

But Barnes chose to narrow his human nature poetry even further,
since he would include in it only 'good and loveworthy' humanity. What
then, in his view, made a man, woman or child, eligible for inclusion in
verse which he intended should only include the lightest and best features
of Dorset people?

First, all received their living from the land. There are few
professional men and their families in these poems. Second, although
poems may deal with individual personalities, for the most part these
individuals are seen as members of groups. Thirdly, the keynote of
behaviour within these units is co-operation, a vital, energetic
co-operation. Thus, 'Borrow and Lend' (p.546) begins from the simple
and familiar actions of borrowing and lending tea. But it extends to
a general consideration of mutual help imaged in a see-saw. 'Since you've
a-taite me, I'll try / To lift up you when I be high.'

The children in Barnes's poems play a vital, energetic role in their
coop[erative] community. Few of them are actually named. Most figure as
memories of a poem's individual persona as he recollects his own early
experiences. In fact, the community represented in Barnes's work seems
historically to belong to the days of his own boyhood: much of it then is
a revitalisation of his own memories. So it is perhaps not surprising
that the air of vitality and optimism surrounding Barnes's child figures
pervades much of the poetry's community as a whole. John Clare wrote,
'There is nothing but poetry about the existence of childhood . . . and
there is nothing of poetry about manhood but the reflections and the
remembrance of what has been'. But Clare's painful acknowledgement
of the gap between the memory and the present reality, an acknowledgement
which shadows the joyful in the recollection ('Tis fruitless to mourn
thee / But who can help mourning / To think of the life / That did laugh
on thy brow') is muted in Barnes.
Mostly the children are playing.

My wrigglen kite mid pull my string
An' when noo ball did rise an' vall,
Some other ge↑me wud still be nigh,
Avore my jay's all pass'd me by. 4

It is the emotional benefit of this play which Barnes evidently cherished.

No city primness train'd our feet
To strut in childhood through the street,
But freedom let them loose to tread
The yellow cowslip's downcast head. 5

Otherwise these children are, as soon as they are old enough, helping in the work of the family. But, even before they are old enough to contribute, they are playing at work.

... the little bwoys
Do stride an' fling their eMrms all ways,
Wi' busy picks, an' proud young looks
A'meMken up their tiny pooks. 6

These are the innocents of Blake's Songs -- but the adult persona who watches them gives no sign of the experience to come. There is little authorial sense, built into their small drama, of the 'darkening green' which just begins to shadow Blake's 'little ones weary' who 'no more can be merry'. 7 Barnes concentrates upon the light in their lives. Even the child he meets beside the grave is, he thanks God, sanguinely accepting her orphan state, and though young deaths figure in the poems it is the life of the child in 'The Lost Little Sister' (p.534), her skipping feet, her snow-white frock and pretty face, that is highlighted. Or, rather than focus upon the suffering of dying and parting, a poem offers a dream of heaven lit with fair, meek children, 'each in lilywhite, /'Wi' a lamp alight'. 8 And there is no sense that the children are learning, as they emulate their father at work, either of the shadows that come eternally with age, or of those fast approaching through the nineteenth century changes which Barnes, by the time he committed his recollections...
to verse, must have recognised. Nor -- oddly, since Barnes was a school
master -- are they learning in the actual schoolroom (though Barnes was
never anxious for children to exchange their 'world-knowledge' of daily
life for 'book-learning').

Edward Thomas, however, believed that the reader -- if not the child
within the poems -- is reminded by comparison of the inevitable decline
of innocence.

The children are always laughing, playing, dancing in their 'tiny shoes',
but their heavy elders and the home under the elm or in the 'lonesome'
grove of oak remind us, if not them, of age and death . . . It is in
contrast with these rather stiff, darkened men and women, who have winter
and poverty on their horizon, that the children in Barnes's poetry are
so blithe.

Certainly the image of the child should be placed within the full
context of Barnes's village community as it is spread before his audience
in the totality of the canon. D.H. Lawrence believed that a poem, a
single poem, could only show a fragment of humanity, and therefore
preferred the novel's greater scope in its breadth of personalities
and situation. The breadth -- in terms of numbers of people and
situations -- is there in Barnes's work as a whole. But I am not sure
that it extends across the range of tones of human experience. Thomas's
reference to 'darkened' men and women is a salutary corrective to the
vast majority of Barnes criticism which has concentrated upon the gay
amongst his poems 'grave and gay'. But although the grave is undoubt-
edly there, and needs to be given fuller attention that it has had, it is
difficult to recognise in Barnes the kind of melancholy that Thomas,
imagining that its people 'go with heads a little bowed', felt. Barnes
certainly speaks with a deep sadness of loss, of friends and relatives now
dead, of landscape altered beyond repair, but still the community
surrounding the children of his poems is full of loving and loveworthy
models of a reasonably contented humanity which he seems to imply must
and can survive in a climate of change.

As they grow older Barnes's young men and women remain energetic --
and retain the playful, innocent air of their childhood. They do not,
unlike Jude, strain for a life beyond their village. And amongst them,
within the village, there are no Arabellas. If they knew how to stick
pigs their knowledge does not become the subject of a poem. Instead we witness their horseplay in 'Out A'Nutten' (p.148) or 'Tæken in Apples' (p.150). A 'Bit O'Sly Coorten' (p.95) recognises Fanny's ability to manipulate John -- but the manipulation is restrained in its manner (to verbal wrong-footing in contrast to Arabella's frankly physical teasing) and also in its intent (to maintaining the upper hand in a mild flirtation in contrast to Arabella's scheming towards sexual fulfilment and the marriage market). The Times Literary Supplement criticised the absence of 'fiercer passions' in Barnes's work. There is some passion. Sam and Bob work each other into a frenzy as they taunt one another about their relative working skill and strength, so that 'The Best Man in the Vield' (p.117) ends with a challenge to a fight. But it is a fight in which we witness only the verbal challenges ('Now don't thee zay much more than what'st a-zaid, / Or else I'll knock thee down, heels over head'). We see nothing of the ugly violence, the blood and bruises which are implied in Crabbe's equivalent.

See the stout churl, in drunken fury great
Strike the bare bosom of his teeming mate!
His naked vices, rude and unrefined,
Exert their open empire o'er the mind.  

It is true that love is not all coyly teasing. When Jenny walks she moves her lover to 'madness'. But Barnes's love poems have a freshness and lightness about them which corresponds to the atmosphere surrounding Angel and Tess as they 'studied each other, ever balanced on the edge of a passion, yet apparently keeping out of it', but it does not follow Hardy's pair, 'converging, under an irresistible law' and into the trauma of a more complex and starker reality. It concentrates instead upon 'love that burn'd but thought noo harm'. Barnes recognises the attraction of sexual love and its fulfilment in marriage, but the story in between -- particularly if it is a painful story -- he does not tell. There is the occasional reference to a girl harmed by her lover's desertion, and, once or twice, to an illegitimate child. But the history, and the consequences, of these tragedies are barely sketched.

The young remain generally healthy and happy. There are none amongst them like Bloomfield's Poll. She began, like Barnes's young women,
'With hat or airy shape and ribbons gay, / Love to inspire, and stand in Hymen's Way'. However,

... ere her twentieth Summer could expand...
Her mind's serenity was lost and gone...
Terror and joy alternate rul'd her hours;
Now blithe she sung, and gather'd useless flow'rs;
Now pluck'd a tender twig from every bough
To whip the hov'ring demons from her brow...
Her midnight meals in secrecy she takes,
Low mutt'ring to the moon, that rising breaks
Through night's dark gloom: ...
... oh how much more forlorn
Her night, that knows of no returning dawn! 19

The dawn does leave Barnes's landscape. He acknowledges that shadows cross the light he sets out to portray. But he sees -- and even welcomes -- them as sent by God. It is just not the business of his poetry to detail their coming.

In fact, the story of Barnes's young people is generally limited. This is not necessarily simply because he wished to avoid a complex period, but may derive from the circumstances of his own life. Perhaps he concentrated largely upon adult, settled couples, with glances back to childhood, because these are the two ages which he either experienced personally or encountered whilst he lived on his father's or aunt's farms: he did not remain on the land through his own teenage years and as a young man he was intent upon study and much of his engagement to Julia was spent separated from her whilst he taught in Mere. Besides, his mother died whilst he was very young and it is understandable that he should prize the years before the disturbance of her loss and also wish to imagine in his poetry the settled existence of a mature pair and complete family unit (as he does in 'A Father Out, An' Mother Hwome' (p.238)).

John R. Reed quotes an author of a book on feminine excellence, written in 1841: 'A female's real existence only begins when she has a husband'. 20 Yet a great deal of Victorian literature does not concentrate upon that 'real existence'. It is rather the quest for that existence which pre-
occupies the heroines of, say, Jane Austen and the Brontës. The marriage ends rather than begins a tale. Barnes therefore departs from the convention in his choice of emphasis upon the fulfilled goal. It is perhaps for this reason that he and Coventry Patmore -- dubbed the Laureate of marriage -- had a high regard for one another. Reviewing Patmore's work, Barnes approvingly contrasts him with the 'loose verses' of the Restoration which he saw ridiculing women and marriage.21 He compares Patmore's Honoria with Petrarch's Laura: both poets project an idea of the 'majesty of a pure-minded beauty as a refiner of man'.21 He is echoing here what Reed identifies as the Victorian conventional presentation of the good woman as a domestic saint. It is the image of womanhood presented by most of Barnes's own poems. The Victorian opposite of the noble idea, the destructive female which Reed identifies as the 'Judith' type, (like Blanche Ingram in Jane Eyre),22 is rare in Barnes and weakened almost beyond recognition into the mild irritation of Fanny's teasing23 or Aunt Anne's tantrums.24

But Barnes's approval of the pure female rested in her active and positive participation in the marriage relationship. Purity did not for Barnes mean weakness. He could not have subscribed to the Victorian attitude to woman expressed by Robert Bell in The Ladder of Gold.

Stern and obdurate strength is not the finest characteristic of women: they are most strong and lovable in their weakness. In this aspect we discern their humanity, which brings them nearer to our sympathies; and even their errors and failures add a grace to our devotion by leaving something for our magnanimity to forgive. 25

On the contrary, Barnes found female humanity in a woman's decisive individuality.

Do not begin with the thought that the minds of man and woman are of the same cast, or that one is higher than the other; neither is the higher, but they differ that each may be the best for its mission, and each has that which the other lacks; and both make together the one full mind of mankind. 26

He does not seem to go as far as Tennyson's recommendation that 'the man be more of woman, she of man'.27 For Barnes there are two separate roles to be played: their co-operation in marriage achieves that 'full mind of mankind'. This co-operation is best demonstrated, in Barnes's
view, in the separate roles of parenthood. The little girl carrying from her mother's store a basket with 'her father's welcome bit o' food' to find him in the meadow, is 'bless'd wi' mmore than some - / A father out, an' mother hwome'.

That father both teaches and plays with his children. He teaches them to carry on the work of the farm and the smallholding, and the upkeep of the family's home and garden like Wordsworth's Michael. But he enjoys them too. In fact, that enjoyment seems to be a reward for his own labour, though this should not be read as an escapist negation of labour, a suggestion that it is an unrewarding and painful struggle.

O when is a father's good time,
That do pay vor his tweil wi' mmost jay?
Is it when he's a-spenden his prime
Vor his childern, still young in their pla'y?
Where the zun did glow warm vrom his height,
On the vo'k, at their work, in white sleeves;
An' the goold-banded bee wer in flight,
Wi' the birds that did flit by the leaves;
There my two little childern did run,
An' did rile, an' did roll, in their fun:
An' did clips, in their hands,
Stick or stwone vor their pla'y:
In their hands, that had little a-grown;
Vor their pla'y, wi' a stick or a stwone. 30

Despite Barnes's own evident comfort in memories of his childhood, and his own happiness to be found in revitalising through his art idyllic recollections of its freedoms, his poems offer a simultaneous emphasis on the rewards in their own right of adult labour and struggle.

A mother's role is implied in a child's recollections in 'Mother O' Mothers' (p.510). It is not the physical care that she took of her son or daughter that is remembered. Instead it is the way she walked and smiled that is cherished — and, in particular, the way she communicated. This mother told 'teales o'vorgotten wold vo'k'. One especially taught her child to talk: she 'worded my own little tongue'. It is perhaps not
surprising that a poet should remember mothers for their stories and their conversation. And in Barnes's case it is specially explicable. His mother had particularly enjoyed poetry. Besides, she died when he was about five so that his store of memories must have been very limited. After her death he was brought up partly by his aunts, but the loss of a natural mother may have minimised his images of a protective, nurturing woman.

On the other hand, images of protective motherhood could belong more to the twentieth century than to the nineteenth: mothers in Barnes's co-operative farming families had practical jobs to do away from their children's side, and these children were themselves rapidly drawn from the fireside and into the fields. Barnes's own wife had, in addition to the responsibility of caring for her own children, the job of overseeing much of the administration of his school. However, whether the reason lies in Barnes's personal biography, or is connected more generally to the customs of Victorian rural families, the result is an image of motherhood which emphasises not only her industry ('sprack's a bee on wing') showing her always finding 'some usevul work to do / Until the vallen dew', but also celebrating her individual attractiveness.

Oh! now could she come, as we all be a'twold
She walked in her time, o' the comeliest mwold,
An' show us as what we do zee in a dream,
Her looks an' her smiles by the twilighted stream. 32

Yet, though mother and father are both individuals, defined by a number of experiences including their separate work and their separate parenthood, it is their roles in combination which Barnes emphasises most in his poetry of a co-operative community. The family together is his epitome of the good and the loveworthy. Though it is one husband's 'set time vor to go / To the grist-mill out at Sherbrook under Bere', his main concern is to arrange that his wife and children should meet him on the way home.

At the time, then, I've a-twold ye, you mid hear
My two wheel rims come a-spinnen on the road,
An' the spring cart wi' the seat up shall be leer
To teäke you, Jeäne, an' the childern vor his lwoad.
Zoo come out, then, to the zun
Wi' the youngsters vor a run,
Come an' meet me, wi' the childern, on the road. 33

V. de Sola Pinto finds a similar poem to this one, 'Father Come Hwome' (p.182), 'superior to [Burns's] much lauded "Cotter's Saturday Night"'. 34 The reason may be that, whilst Burns's poem is descriptive and written as if by an observer of the scene, 'Father Come Hwome' is an eclogue, a small drama acted out in front of the reader without a mediating observer. 'Come an' meet me, wi' the childern, on the road' is a dramatic monologue, so that again the reader is close to the speaker, apparently without the artist's intervening presence. This formal means may contribute to de Sola Pinto's view of Barnes as unselfconscious in his writing: 'for him at the time of inspiration, as for all poets of the popular tradition, his inner life is merged into the spiritual quality of his subject'. 35

Barnes's landscape is, then, a landscape of community: the people are integrated, as I shall show below, into their natural setting.

Barnes's poetic role within this group is neither as detached as Keith would suggest Wordsworth's becomes, nor as involved as John Clare's. Keith shares de Pinto's view that Wordsworth, despite his theoretical principles about rustic life, could never personally blend into that life. Pinto describes Wordsworth as 'a bird of paradise trying to imitate the habits of a barn-door foul'. 36 In Keith's view, 'Clare, by contrast, was local to the core'. 37 Barnes, as I explained above, was local by birth and poetic motivation, but he was not, in his writing, wholly at one with the personae of his poems despite the apparent close-ness suggested by the dramatic monologue and eclogue forms. As I shall argue throughout the dissertation, Barnes speaks through the mask of his labouring people, revealing sometimes more, sometimes less, of his own self which is now detached from the land.

(I shall be discussing below, in relation to the theme of work within Barnes's landscape, the position of these labouring, co-operative families, within the social hierarchy of the community, as a whole, and including the local squire. I shall also be considering the occupations of these land-working people more precisely.)
Barnes's people and their landscape are closely integrated. His countrymen do not 'tower symbolically against a sky of sunset fires' as Massingham describes Thomas Hardy's figures; they do not dominate the land. Nor do his personalities shrivel to the kind of insignificance which John Barrell finds in Wordsworth and the paintings of Constable. 'Both men', he argues, 'prefer to distance them into symbols and tokens of humanity, rather than encounter them in a condition which no degree of charity or self-deception could allow them to pretend was noble, contented, or anything but degraded'. Barrell finds Constable, in making this symbolic conversion, reducing the size of his figures 'until they merge insignificantly with the landscape', or else distancing them, or 'even when they are in the foreground [painting] them as indistinctly as possible' to evade their actuality. Similarly he believes that Wordsworth's shepherds are kept at 'a distance that was fit'.

Barnes's figures neither dominate nor fade into the landscape. His people and their surroundings complement each other as they do in 'Mornen' (p.147) where the cowherd's activity is regulated by the actual circumstances of the weather, the formation of the land, the natural timing of the day and the seasons, and the biological rhythms of the animal world.

We can't keep back the daily zun,
The wind is never still,
An' never ha' the streams a-done
A-runnen down at hill.
Zoo they that ha' their work to do,
Should do't so soon's they can;
Vor time an' tide will come an' goo,
An' never wait vor man,
As the cock do gi'e me warnen;
When, light or dark,
So brisk's a lark,
I'm up so rathe in mornen.
This balanced relationship is as one would expect in poetry which describes Barnes's conception of a successfully worked landscape. Barnes's personalities live by the land and the land is physically shaped by their efforts. It is perhaps this kind of reciprocal benefit which Massingham is indicating when he contrasts Barnes with Clare. Clare, he suggests, 'spoke for the country that has made the husbandman' whereas Barnes, he believes, wrote of 'the countryman who has remade nature'.

Massingham goes further and finds Barnes himself standing amongst the people of his poems: he 'partakes in . . . the life of the village community'. I have already questioned Barnes's relationship to the community of his poetry, and I shall be looking more closely at linguistic signals which suggest his position somewhere behind the masks of his personae. But I would agree with the general point that Barnes's poetic voice is certainly closer to the peopled landscape he creates than, say, Thomson's more distanced monologue. The latter seems to stand back with the reader from the image in view, offering a word picture constructed, as John Barrell suggests, in the manner of a Claude or Poussin painting, so that our mind's eye is drawn by the words from the foreground to a distant prospect.

But if by 'remaking' nature Massingham means the process of cultivating the land, then Barnes's poetry -- whether he stands amongst or slightly to one side of his countrymen -- does seem to be a response on behalf of the cultivator rather than the land he worked. For there is, in his work and in the landscape he describes, a feeling of control. Its form, as I shall demonstrate, is tightly organised. Thematically there is little that is wild, and no sense of the tradition of the sublime. W.T. Levy suggests that a collaboration between Thomas Bewick and Barnes would have been interesting. It is true that both give as much prominence to the figures in their landscapes as they do to the surroundings themselves. But Bewick seems to have had a taste for the sublime which did not appeal to Barnes, for it was this atmosphere in his work which intrigued the young Jane Eyre, hidden from the Reeds in the window seat and fascinated by 'the rock standing up alone in a sea of billow and spray; . . . the broken boat stranded on a desolate coast; . . . the cold and ghastly moon glancing through bars of cloud at a wreck just sinking'. Barnes's poems, however, concentrate upon the tilled
fields, the domestic animals and the apparently well-kept homes of an agrarian population. Sometimes the weather -- which treats alike the cultivated and the wild and cannot be ignored by the farming world -- does challenge. Its wind can be 'wild-reaven', rocking the elms and driving the waves in 'the dark-water'd pond'. It is so in 'Jenny Out Vrom Hwome' (p.145). But it is significant that Jenny is away from her home, 'vrom tongues that be dear, / Vrom friends that do love me'. Probably we can assume that her home is amongst the rest of the people in the poems, and that these people come roughly from the area of the Vale of Blackmore. For Barnes implied that he was using their particular dialect. He used to say that his figures were similar to the personalities he had known whilst living in that area, and the place names he uses are genuine ones from the district, like Lydlinch, Bagber, Stock and Thornhill, whilst some of the farms and large houses mentioned, including Herrenston, can be seen on contemporary maps. If this is the setting of most of Barnes's poems then it is not surprising that its terrain is unspectacular. Charles G. Harper, in his work on Hardy country, confirms its lush dairyland peacefulness.

Furthermore, the shape of the land may help to mould the people who live upon it. Christopher Dawson emphasises the differences, rather than the similarities, between various communities: he argues that different communities, though sharing a basic agrarian economy, vary in their particular manifestation. 'To every type of agriculture, to every group of cultivated plants, there corresponds a special human culture.'

Still, harmony in a landscape's contours and lush colours need not have prevented Barnes from seeing a rough and dark stormy day in that landscape in terms of wildness and threat: it need not have prevented him from investing his poems occasionally with a sense of powerful majesty in nature, or even of frightening chaos. After all, he believed that the eye sees what the mind shapes. He notes, in a poem about a family visiting castle ruins, that each member of the group saw something different in his surroundings. The poem's speaker saw the ruins as the legacy of men that 'wer a-gone avore we come'. His son, however, much more aware of the present, watched the 'daws' bright wings' and his wife enjoyed her 'mid's light springs'. John, however, did not even see the remains of the castle: 'the pleace /Vor him had only Polly's felce'.
Barnes shared, then, Hardy's belief in the effect of emotion upon perception. 'The poetry of a scene varies with the minds of the perceivers. Indeed, it does not lie in the scene at all.' But Barnes refused, unlike his friend, to see shadows cast upon the land of his poetry. He did not recognise in his poems 'keen lessons' of deception and wrongs, shaping the sun and the tree and the pond into Hardy's impression of 'neutral tones'. Barnes had personally endured intensely difficult times, when Julia died and when his school began to fail. And his travels away from the tranquil Vale must have provided him with landscape material which could have matched and expressed the pressures and pain he knew darkened life: they must have brought him an awareness of a different and naturally more sublime terrain, for barren and wind-blown moors and heaths and sea are not far away from Blackmore.

But it is not surprising that even the wind in 'Jenny Out Vrom Hwome' is brought under some kind of control, that, far from being either thrilled or intimidated by its roar, Jenny wants to enlist its help as a messenger, in that roaring, to her family left behind. It is not surprising because Barnes set out to bathe his poetic community in the most comforting light possible. His motives, as discussed above, were the moral improvement of his audiences and his belief in a God-given harmony in the natural world. He saw a God-given 'fitness' in all things, 'fitness of water to irrigate growth, and to run for all lips to the sea; fitness of land to take and send onward the stream'. (He may have been familiar with Thoreau's philosophy of nature and the feeling that man discovers his own true self only when in tune with the natural world, since there is a record of him being sent a poem about Thoreau by an American correspondent.) So it is not surprising, if the community of his poems lives by cultivating nature, that Barnes would choose, in his concentration upon people in the landscape, to show the processes and results of their 'good and loveworthy' efforts to work and control the land. In return for these efforts he finds the land and its creatures co-operative. Trees are essentially 'good company', the cow is patient (she'diden start nor kick the pail, / When Nanny zot to milk her'), and pets assume humanity so that the dog did 'blow, / Vrom to time, a whinen sigh: / A-meanen, "Come now, let us 'goo / Along the knolls wi' rabbit holes"'. All of nature, in Barnes's philosophy, is designed for relationships of reciprocal benefit.
How bright the spreaden water in the lew
Do catch the blue, a-sheenen vrom the sky;
How true the grass do teêke the dewy bead
That it do need, while doustic roads be dry.

By peêir an' peêir
Each thing's a-mêHde to sheêre
The good another can bestow,
In wisdom's work down here below.

The pleasure Barnes expresses in nature's beauty in co-operation with humanity, is infinite. But this sense of harmony seems to belong far more to artistic response and convention than to actuality seen through the eye of the workman. Neil Philip's anthology, Between Earth And Sky, is a mixture of fact and fiction drawn from poetry and prose of rural life between the period of enclosure and the Great War. The more spontaneous the writing and the nearer it is to a landworker actually experiencing some kind of relationship between man and nature, the more contrived and difficult that relationship appears to be. There is little or nothing of harmony and beauty in the following description of a combined effort. This primary source, from a labourer named Mark Thurston who worked in Essex, claims a kind of mute acceptance of painful effort.

Sometimes the mare would be nigh standin' on her hind legs, staggerin' about, and me tryin' all the time to keep her on the move. You see, treading the corn like this didn't crush the kernels, but drove a lot of 'em out of the husks, and of course the threshers liked that. Fast as the men had pitched up one load, another 'ld draw into the barn; and presently the 'oss and me was right up there under the roof, in the dark, sneezin' and splutterin' fit to bust. Once the mare was up there she'd have to stay till the job was done -- 'cause though you could get her down, how was you to get her up again? Two or three days she'd be up there, an' more if bad weather held up the carting. Sometimes it 'ld get so dark -- well, I couldn't see; but I had to keep on keepin' on, so long as they was a-bringin' in new loads and torsin' 'em up from the mainst'y. And when it was all done at last, the only way of getting the old mare down was to drag her by the halter, so's she slid on her hoofs and belly, clatterin' an' kickin' up no end of a shine. You can bet a hoss had to be purty tough to stand it. Why, 'twould be called cruelty to-day -- 'twouldn't be allowed. But such things weren't thought nothin' of, them days.' 56

Barnes avoids the anguish. And although there is little of the sublime in his work it does not follow that his emotional response to the land is stunted or dull. Instead there is a gentle but profound pleasure.
There is for instance an unmistakeable delight in the close attention he gives to the changing air in 'The Sky A-clearen' (p.123), in his memories inspired by the movements of a gliding brook, leaning withy and floating water-lily in 'The Clote' (p.125), and in his feelings which are as ruffled as the surface of the water in 'The Bwoat' (p.343). In each case his response has to do with the movement and vitality of his surroundings. It is related to a connection between a natural object and a person who is particularly alert or responsive: as the sky clears, work can resume; when the lily floats it reminds the persona of the joy of learning to swim; although the water's surface, broken by a boat carrying his beloved, returns to a steady level when she has passed, the persona is left unquiet with a 'ruffled mind'. Hardy's description of Barnes's poems as 'still lifes' is discussed in some detail in the following chapter, but it is clear from just these few examples that he could not have meant that their images seem passive with no sense of energy: rather, they appear to represent vital moments of life caught in time.

Barnes's poem 'The Zilver-weed' (p.434) suggests an ambivalence in his feelings towards cultivation and to nature untamed. Each seems a mixed blessing. Roses round the family home are 'a-trimm'd an' traIn'd' by the maidens so that they bear beautiful 'bloomen buds vrom Spring to Fall': but the girls have small sisters and brothers whose rushing feet at play beat down the silver-weed. When the family has gone, however,

... now the zilver leaves do show
To zummer day their goolden crown,
Wi' noo swift shoe-zoles' litty blow,
In merry play to beMt em down.

But though the silver-weed may now live unhindered, there is no caring hand left to cherish the roses.

An' where vor years zome busy hand
Did traIn the rwoses wide an' high;
Now woone by woone the trees do die,
An' vew of all the row do stand.
But still, there is no doubt that Barnes finds nature, wild or cultivated, infinitely preferable to artificiality.

The grass mid sheen when wat'ry beâds
O' dew do glitter on the meâds,
An' thorns be bright when quiv'ren studs
O' raîn do hang upon their buds --
As jewels be a-meâde by art
To set the plaînest vo'k off smart.

But sheîken ivy on its tree,
An' low-bough'd laurel at our knee,
Be bright all day, without the gleâre,
O' drops that duller leaves mid wear --
As Jeîne is feîir to look upon
In plaînest gear that she can don. 57

However, since a gentle, warm-lit pleasure is the essence of Barnes's poems, they are unlikely to include amongst their themes of nature those cruder aspects of agrarian life which must exist even in its domestic cultivation. But, whilst Robert Bloomfield recognised that his own poems, being 'experimentally true', could not describe sheep rearing and ignore 'their fleeces drench'd in gore', Barnes habitually limits his range to the pleasantest and most easily palatable images -- a choice which Bloomfield might sometimes make with tongue in cheek.

His gay companions Giles beholds no more;
Clo'sd are their eyes, their fleeces drench'd in gore;
Nor can Compassion, with her softest notes,
Withhold the knife that plunges through their throats.
Down, indignation! hence, ideas foul!
Away the shocking image from my soul!
Let kindlier visitants attend my way,
Beneath approaching Summer's fervid ray;
Nor thankless glooms obtrude, nor cares annoy,
Whilst the sweet theme is universal joy. 59
Barnes 'sweet theme' is, in truth, 'universal joy'. Hopkins remarked that his images are 'straight from nature', but it must be added that they are from a limited nature.

Massingham was correct, then, to claim that 'all the graciousness and greeness and floweriness of the Dorset pastures is in Barnes'. But it was not strictly accurate to add that 'all that lives upon them' is also there. There is not, as there is in Clare, a range of animals which includes the badger, the vixen, the mole, the mouse 'so odd and so grotesque'. There are no 'stupid and nameless' insects and there is no hedgehog hunting the field for rotten meat and eating what the dogs refuse.

But then Barnes does not look beneath the 'rotten hedge' where Clare found the hedgehog. He is not keen to explore 'swamps of wild rush-beds, and sloughs' squisy traces': he did not delight in the 'refuse of nature' which Clare would not forsake 'for sweetest scenes that nature could make me'. The one snake that appears in Barnes is simply a player in a scene of girlish giggling and pranks at the harvest. Bees that could have stung and killed are safely installed in their hive, after the briefest of struggles which is rewarded when mother 'made us a treat all round / O' sillibub to drink'. There is one owl in the poems, and a nervous passer-by takes the noise of his flight for 'men on watch vor little good'. But this traveller is soon home, safe and sound amongst her sleeping children and smiling at 'their happy rest'. These night excursions through the dark wood, when the undergrowth creatures in which Clare delights might have been seen, are very few and far between.

C. Day Lewis finds a number of contrasts in the work of Clare and of Barnes. As a result he terms Clare 'morbid' and Barnes 'wholesome'. Though there is some truth in these judgements, neither is completely accurate if they are assumed to carry a reductive hint which I doubt that Day Lewis intended. The element of truth that does exist may be demonstrated through a comparison of the two poets' feeling of security in place. Both experienced dislocation: Clare moved from Helpstone to Northborough, Barnes from Blackmore to a teaching position in Mere. Both experienced a change in the appearance and traditional usage of
their surroundings, for both lived through the transformation of Enclosure.

Clare's reaction to both traumas was a profound distress which he clearly articulates.

Now this sweet vision of my boyish hours  
Free as spring clouds and wild as summer flowers  
Is faded all— a hope that blossomed free  
And hath been once no more shall ever be  
Inclosure came and trampled on the grave  
Of labours rights and left the poor a slave  

There is 'morbidity' in the response in the sense that it concentrates so potently, in this and other poems, upon the death of freedoms Clare had loved so much. But morbidity is not of course the overwhelming drive behind all the poems. They may be full of life and energy— and the continued ability to feel these forces despite the trauma of enclosure. In 'The Flitting', though he mourns the loss of a beloved and secure place, Clare eventually finds an alternative inspiration: his old home is not entirely gone for ever but is linked to his new environment by a nature which flourishes in both places.

. . . this 'shepherds purse' that grows  
In this strange spot in days gone bye  
Grew in the little garden rows  
Of my old home now left . . .  
But times will change and friends must part  
And nature still can make amends  
Their memory lingers round the heart  
Like life whose essence is its friends

Barnes too reacts to separation and enclosure. But his response to both kinds of insecurity does not appear to be as acutely distressed as Clare's: he could never be described as 'morbid'. Yet if he is, on the contrary, 'wholesome', this need not mean that beneath the clean, light and optimistic surface of his poetry, there was no awareness of distress in dislocation. Poems like 'Leady Day and House Ridden' (p.73) and 'Woak Hill' (p.378) deal with disruption and loss. In fact, it is the
'dealing' with change, the coping with challenge, which might be seen as the real theme of these two poems. They display a control over feeling which may contribute to the term 'wholesome' and to Bridges's charge that Barnes lacked 'fire'.

'Leady Day and House Ridden' is not without direct reference to insecurity. But is is buried in a long poem and left almost to its end, whilst the body of the work concentrates upon the paraphernalia and effort of the move. This concentration upon activity is perhaps a way of holding the trauma of the change at bay, and the persona does not allow himself to dwell upon his sadness until, when his old house is absolutely empty, he can no longer avoid it.

Vor when a man do le've the he'th
An' ruf where vu'st he drew his breath,
Or where he had his bwoyhood's fun,
An' things wer woonce a-zaid an' done
That took his mind, do touch his heart
A little bit, I'll answer vor't.
Zoo ridden house is such a caddle,
That I would rather keep my staddle.

'Woak Hill' also concerns a way of coming to terms with change. The displaced widower immerses himself in the fantasy that his wife is still beside him and moving with him. His new neighbours label him as mad -- possessed, no doubt, with his own kind of 'morbidity'. But it is his way of dealing with insecurity.

. . . vo'k thought, vor a season,
My mind wer a-wandren
Wi' sorrow, when I wer so sorely
A'-tried at Woak Hill.
But no; that my Me'ry mid never
Behold herzelf slighted,
I wanted to think that I guided
My guide vrom Woak Hill.
This kind of deliberate, controlled behaviour, helping the persona to come to terms with an inevitable trauma, might be termed 'wholesome'. Though I believe that 'Woak Hill' may be as deeply moving as Clare's 'The Flitting': it displays a profound courage in the determined measures taken to cope with loneliness.

But sometimes Barnes' acceptance -- inevitable in a way, given that his faith included the conviction that 'tis our sin / Do make woone's soul so dark 'ithin, / When God would gi'e woone zunsheen' -- veers towards the evasive. 67

For instance, he does not ignore the disruption of enclosure. But in an eclogue dealing with it there is a sense of acceptance which might come more easily to Barnes, successful schoolmaster-writer of the poem, than to the imagined labouring personae of 'The Common A-took in' (p.158). Enclosure is happening and, the poem seems to suggest, it cannot be helped: there are ways of compensating, but, if they are not available, then the workhouse is the only solution.

THOMAS . . . I wer twold back tother day,
That they be got into a way
0' letten bits o' groun' out to the poor.

JOHN Well, I do hope 'tis true, I'm sure;  
An' I do hope that they will do it here,  
Or I must goo to workhouse, I do fear.

In 'The Common A-Took In' (p.196) and 'The Dreven 0' the Common' (p.195), although the persona remembers a freedom now lost and in contrast to the present restriction of enclosure, he dwells not on a sense of exclusion -- as Clare might have done -- but upon the remembered joy of the once open fields, children jumping and skipping, searching for birds nests and strawberries, and room enough for everyone's cows and geese.

That sense of joy and freedom remained so strongly with Barnes that he could title a poem in his third collection of 1862, compiled long after the main disturbance of enclosure, 'Open Vields' (p.412). He is referring to fields which are 'open' in contrast to the claustrophobia
he senses in city streets. He is, then, opposing the country against the city: he is not contrasting one kind of traditional countryside with the new, post-enclosure, rural order. Barnes evidently continued to find freedom in the country, despite the consequences of agrarian development. But then Barnes was not a landworker. Enclosure did not affect him so directly as it did the labouring people who speak his dialect poems. As a schoolmaster and vicar the concept of rural freedom could exist more easily for him. He could enjoy the land rather as today's town dwellers can go out into the fields and draw sustenance from its fresh air and comparative naturalness. In fact, whilst enclosure was depriving the local labourer of a sense of sharing property, Barnes was prospering and entering a position from which he could possess land: eventually he was able to purchase two fields and become the landowner that his dispossessed ancestors had once been ('The Pleace our Own Again' (p.344)).

There is perhaps here a link forward with the kind of writing which John Heath-Stubbs calls 'the poetry of the weekend cottage'. He remarks that 'the motor-car and the bicycle made access to the countryside, for the first time, widely possible for the urban middle-classes, and this superficial-picturesque holiday-writing had a wide appeal'. There is a link, in that Barnes is similarly rather distanced from his subjects and his personae. But there is nothing 'superficial' in his images, unlike those of Heath-Stubbs's twentieth-century reference.

For, although Barnes may be distanced by profession from his personae, and therefore exempt from the grimiest actualities of their lives, there is nothing shallow or transitory in his feeling for the land. The response he describes in 'Open Yields' is profound and all-encompassing. It is true there is nostalgia for the past ('As we did meet . . . free / Vrom ceäre, in play below the tree'). But then nostalgia becomes something more substantial. It is redeemed through Barnes's firm focus upon a present which still, for him, includes a vision of children playing in the forms of his own sons and daughters.

An' here our children still do bruisë
The delisy buds wi' tiny shoes, . . .
An' there in me' th their lively eyes
Do glissen to the zunny skies.
And there is nothing superficial in his descriptions of these visions: the particular details which appeal to him, and the precision with which these details are imaged, carry a sense of his fascination and affection for the landscape and its children.

As a\textit{Tr} do blow, wi' le\textit{H}zy pe\textit{H}ce
To cool, in she\textit{H}de, their burnen fe\textit{H}ce.
Where leaves o' spreaden docks do hide
The zawpit's timber-l\textit{w}oaded zide,
An' trees do lie, wi' scraggy limbs,
Among the de\textit{H}isy's crimson rims.
An' they, so proud, wi' e\textit{H}rms a\textit{sp}read
To keep their balance good, do tread
Wi' cel\textit{H}reul steps o' tiny zoles
The narrow zides o' trees an' poles.

This kind of belief in the permanency of his controlled, cultivated landscape and its people, is paramount in Barnes. It is there despite his inevitable awareness of change all around the Vale and despite his acceptance (demonstrated in poems on the railway, including 'The Rail-road, I' and 'The Railroad, II' (p.309)) of some infiltration of industrialisation into Blackmore. The feeling suggested in 'Open Vields' that the past lives on in the children of the present, is repeated in several poems, including 'Evenen, an' Maidens out at Door' (p.98).

But when you be a\textit{lo}-st vrom the parish, zome m\textit{w}ore
Will come on in your ple\textit{H}zen to bloom an' to die;
An' the zummer will always have ma\textit{f}dens avore
Their doors, vor to chatty an' zee vo'k goo by.

Vor daughters ha' mornen when mothers ha' night,
An' there's beauty alive when the fe\textit{H}rest is dead;
As when woone sparklen we\textit{H}ve do zink down vrom the light,
Another do come up an' catch it instead.

Barnes's decision to highlight the best of his landscape seems to have meant endorsing tradition and implying that it can live on through change. Therefore he believes that permanent objects and buildings on the landscape are 'hallowed ple\textit{H}ces',\textsuperscript{69} carrying with them the imprint
of the past and stamping it on the present. 'Zoo now mid nwone ov us vorget / The pattern our vorefathers zet.' 70 The building described in 'The New House' (p.497) is, in contrast, altogether too new: it has not had time to acquire character, feel, or stories of its own to tell.

An' noo mesh is eet a-spread
O'er his zide in patchy green,
An' noo ivy have a-clung
To his wall, wi' leafy stem.

The house will gain its beauty and its importance through its human associations, in the same way that objects, as Tom Paulin points out, gained significance for Barnes's friend Hardy. Paulin looks, for instance, at Hardy's 'In a Waiting-Room' and argues that 'its strength lies in its observation of a drab reality and in the way it extracts beauty from ugliness by infusing it with human associations'. 71 Paulin's discussion of 'The Whitewashed Wall' is also relevant since he draws attention to the way in which a mark on the wall, though now white-washed over, is still real for the woman whose house it is, so real that the memory of the son to which that mark is linked becomes more than a memory and he is virtually present still. 72 Whether or not Hardy had been influenced in his ideas on perception by Barnes -- an influence for which I have discovered no special proof -- comparison with his poems does help to emphasise a marked feature in Barnes's work.

For Barnes it is hospitality which exerts some of the most valuable and lasting influences upon a building, as it will upon the new house.

Zoo come, friends, when you do roam,
Come to zee us, come at whiles,
Wi' your looks, an' words, an' smiles,
We shall veel the mwore at hwome.

There is hospitality in his images of all local homes, great and small. But he emphasises particularly the traditional hospitality of the squire. However, 'The Girt Wold House o' Mossy Stwone' (p.222) recognises that this tradition is beginning to pass, even in Barnes's own time. It had 'woonce a blehzen kitchen-vier, / That cook'd vor poor-vo'k an' a
squier', but 'The very last ov all the recluse / That liv'd the squier o' the Pleâse / Died off when father wer a-born'. The poem might be placed in the tradition of the country house poem, which Raymond Williams sees as exemplifying social, economic and moral orders. Williams finds the tradition altering from first, as in Jonson and Carew, exemplifying a received and apparently natural social order, then, as in Marvell, demonstrating an order still achieved but now precarious, and finally, by the time of Pope, becoming a matter of 'conscious moral teaching'. Williams finds the idea of charity powerfully asserted so that its neglect is 'now not only a moral and theological example, it is a default of use'.73 Barnes, in his poem 'The Leane' (p.306), makes clear his belief that the labourer suffers, rather than benefits, from the destruction of the old land order. The new owners have, he asserts, only one motive.

Vor 'tis meâke money, Thomas, an' teâke money,
What's zwold an' bought
Is all that is worthy o' thought.

The old squire, in Barnes's view, had a genuine generosity and authority which could be respected. And whilst the new and selfish landowner is intent upon

... dreven out, Thomas, an' heven out.
Trample noo grounds,
Unless you be after the hounds,

the old Squier o' Culver-dell Hall

Wer as diff'rent as light is vrom dark,
Wi' zom vo'k that, as evenen did vall,
Had a-broke drough long grass in his park;
Vor he went, wi' a smile, vor to meet
Wi' the trespassers while they did pass,
An' he zaid, 'I do fear you'll catch cwold in your veet,
You've a-walk'd drough so much o' my grass,'
His mild words, Thomas, cut em like swords, Thomas,
Newly a-whet,
An' went vurder wi' them than a dreat.
Whether or not Barnes's interpretation of the 'trespassers' reaction was accurate, it is certain that this squire's kind of mild authority matched the approach to discipline Barnes had personally used in his school -- an approach which pupils like C.J. Wallis remembered with affection and respect.

A peaceful and harmonious security is then the dominant factor in Barnes's image of a landscape worked by his poetry's co-operative community. Cultivation, control, and continuity are its hallmarks. But these features are recognised by a man who in many respects is closer to the benevolent Squire of Culver-dell Hall than to the 'trespassers' on his land. Therefore, living at some distance from the labourer-subject of his poetry, his vision may have qualities which are incongruous when expressed by rural personae. Anachronism is sometimes part of this incongruity. Barnes's view of time is the subject of the following paragraphs.

TIME IN BARNES'S POEMS: A SENSE OF EVERLASTING CONTINUITY

Barnes's sense of time is, as I have been demonstrating, bound up with his sense of place. Objects, remaining constant from one time to the next, are, as the poem 'Our Father's Works (p.270) explains, both witnesses to passing time and to a sense of permanence.

Ah! I do think, as I do tread
Their path, wi' elems overhead,
A-climen slowly up vrom bridge,
By easy steps, to Broadwoak Ridge,
That all these roads, that we do bruise
Wi' hosses' shoes, or heavy lwoads;
An' hedges bands, where trees in row
Do rise an' grow aroun' the lands,
Be works that we've a-vound a-wrought
By our vorefathers' cele an' thought.

There is a sense of cyclical time which is summed up in 'Lydlinch Bells' (p.302).
Vor Lydlinch bells be good vor sound,
An' liked by all the naéghbours round.

Their sons did pull the bells that rung
Their mothers' wedden peals avore,
The while their fathers led em young:
An' blushen vrom the churches door,
An' still did cheem, wi' happy sound,
As time did bring the Zundays round.

The cycles of generations match the cycles of the seasons. Time is partly told by their natural manifestations. Green boughs, daisy beds and swallows, signal the arrival of spring, but they also carry with them the promise of return next year. 'Hope in Spring' (p.89) insists that there will also be 'nesh young leaves o' yollow green' again next year, and 'though thik spring wer gay, / There still would come a brighter May'. In the suggestion of a brighter May yet to come there may be a hint -- despite the usual emphasis on permanence, continuity and ever-recurrent cycles -- of progress through time -- certainly of optimism.

Although I have been demonstrating that Barnes looked fondly back on childhood days, it must be stressed that he did not do so with regret for the present. His dialect poems do not maintain the pessimistic outlook of his early, standard, 'Lines' (p.29) in which he imagines a 'joyless' and 'impotent' old age. On the contrary, the old people in Barnes's dialect work are generally vigorous and fulfilled, enjoying their grown children and their own rest, as they do in 'Married Peair's Love Walk' (p.331).

Come, Etty dear; come out o' door,
An' tellke a sweetheart's walk woonce mmore.

But often when the western zide
O' trees did glow at evenen-tide,
Or when the leéter moon did light
The beeches' eastern boughs at night,
An' in the grove, where vo'k did rove,
The crumpled leaves did vlee an' spin,
You coulden shëldre the pleasure there:
Your work or childern kept ye in.
Come, Etty dear; come out o' door,
An tehle a sweetheart's walk woonce mware.

Barnes would evidently not have shared Wordsworth's feeling that the best 'spots of time' are chiefly those of 'our first childhood' and are essential antidotes to 'trivial occupations and the round of ordinary intercourse'. He believed in a natural human desire to progress and advance.

A great distinction between man and the beasts that perish is that he is a progressive animal . . . Progression is not only the distinction of the special, but is the great promoter of activity with its single members . . . The labourer works with an unwearied vigour when he finds that his toil better his state . . . From the consideration of the progressive habits of man, we find the demoralising tendency of very low wages, and the plan of paying the poor a fixed sum per man out of the parish funds; for when a man knows that he cannot better his condition of exertion, his exertion ceases. 76

To an extent then, Barnes recognised times of change and development and acknowledged a need to adapt to their alterations. But he favoured a cautious and selective adaptation. Although he could introduce the railway into his imagery, the two poems 'The Railroad, I' and 'The Railroad, II' (p.309) both deflect from a consideration of the invention to make the train play a part in symbols of God's continuing companionship and the security of a central point of faith: the landscape passes quickly by as 'the zweepen train / Did shoot along the hill-bound plain', but the sun, 'our heav'ly guide, / Did ride on wi' us, zide by zide' in the same way that God,

. . . beholden vrom above
Our lowly road, wi' yearnen love,
Do keep bezide us, stage by stage,
Vrom be' th to youth, vrom youth to age.

The poem 'John Bloom in Lon' on' (p.473) shows the miller enjoying his train journey and looking forward to seeing the inventions displayed in the Crystal Palace when he reaches London. But, fattened on Dorset corn, this miller is far too bulky to fit in to a tiny London carriage
and he returns home evidently confirmed in his preference for country life. The poem extends, virtually to allegory, the idea of the city which Barnes expresses elsewhere: it is claustrophobic and repressive in its money-making concerns, with 'pent Hir' (in 'Sound o' Water' p.311), dark rooms and 'peevish meMsters' (in 'My Orcha'd in Linden Lea' (p.233)), in contrast to the freedom he found in the country. Furthermore, there is virtually no reference in any of his poems to the introduction of the city's new inventions on to Blackmore farms. Barnes does not make poetry, unlike his fellow country parson Charles Tennyson, out of images of the steam threshing machine.

The fly-wheel with a mellow murmur turn'd;
While, ever rising on its mystic stair
In the dim light, from secret chambers borne
The straw of harvest, sever'd from the corn,
Climb'd, and fell over, in the murky air. 77

I am reminded, then, of my initial comparison between Barnes and Hardy's character, Farfrae. Both sing with pride, in local dialect, of their home communities. But here the comparison stops. And the difference between the two personalities, one real, one fictional, also illustrates a difference between Barnes and Hardy. For Hardy demonstrates, through Farfrae's success and Henchard's decline, a need -- which he also explores in other novels -- for men and women to adapt fully to cultural change if they are to survive, let alone prosper. Barnes did not fully adapt. His poems concentrate upon an illuminated landscape of traditional rural life, whose sources of light were already diminishing by the time of writing. The poems -- and Barnes in his own life -- rejected a Darwinian view of time and progress, as just so much 'venom brought / To kill our hope an' taint our thought'. 78 Yet Barnes, although his poems did not fully adapt to cultural change, did not personally decline either. Though his school failed, as pupils encountered an increasingly eccentric and, after the death of his wife, rather withdrawn teacher, and though he found himself unable to continue his scientific lectures after the challenge of Darwinism, Barnes's equilibrium was perhaps saved by his removal in later life to the vicarage at Came. In fact, Grigson believes that in the same way that in his view Northampton asylum kept Clare safe, Barnes was protected by remaining physically and emotionally within the boundaries of a
relatively unchanged locality. However, although the man himself survived in his time, it may be that his very safety and limitation hampered the writing of poetry which, unlike Hardy's more modern work, does not appear to have a wide and significant appeal in a century far different from its time of writing. It is a difficulty which Hardy himself acknowledged in his preface to his own edition of Barnes's poems.

It may appear strange to some, as it did to friends, in his lifetime, that a man of insight who had the spirit of poesy in him should have persisted year after year in writing in a fast-perishing language, and on themes which in some not remote time would be familiar to nobody, leaving him pathetically like

A ghostly cricket, creaking where a house was burned.

Barnes's appeal and relevance is certainly limited by the anachronism of his work. Nevertheless, there are qualities in his poems, particularly in his imagery and use of language, which, as I shall be demonstrating, give the poems lasting value.

RELIGION IN BARNES'S POETRY: THE CENTRE OF THE COMMUNITY

When Barnes retired to his vicarage at Came he had retreated only from certain aspects of a changing world. Otherwise he remained vital, writing the poems which were to him part of the good works that his faith and his profession called for, and believing that the community which he described in these poems was essentially good and lovable, since God was at the centre of its being, the church at the centre of its society.

I believe there are four related aspects of Barnes's religious perspective to be considered in an examination of his poetry. These are (a) the connection he found between God and nature, (b) his quiet faith in an infinitely good God and his consequent refutation of pessimism and agnosticism, (c) the connection he made between faith and daily life, (d) the particularly close relationship he felt between religion and work.

(a) For Barnes the relationship between God and nature -- and between man and nature -- is close but essentially separate. I have shown that Barnes
believed that man's perceptions of the natural world are structured partly by his own emotions. Also, in a sense, natural objects in Barnes's poems act as objective correlatives for him, since it is through describing the value he finds in them that he communicates his feeling of pleasure in life. But he did not see that world as itself a sentient being. A degree of apparent personification in his poems is at least partly due to the dialect convention of referring to plants and animals with personal pronouns. If that convention arose from a rural community's belief in animism it was not a belief wholly accepted by Barnes personally. Nor did he find God immanent in the landscape.

In this respect there is a contrast between Barnes's response to nature and that of his admirer, Gerard Manley Hopkins. The two poets have been compared because of their use of rural themes, frequently expressed through Anglo-Saxon derivatives and ancient verse forms. But Hopkins either saw a much closer connection between God and nature than Barnes envisaged, or else his emotional response to that connection was so much more intense than Barnes's reaction, that there appears to be a difference in their beliefs.

Although Hopkins wrote that the 'azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder' he does not seem to have meant precisely that the natural world is God. He wrote that 'the sun and the stars shining glorify God . . . They stand where he placed them, they move where he bid them. "The heavens declare the glory of God." They glorify God, but they do not know it.' That is, the world -- though not exactly God made manifest -- is imbued with His power: it is 'charged with the grandeur of God'. Grigson remarks, 'that current, in the words of one of the comments of Hopkins on the Ignatian Exercise, is "The Holy Ghost sent to us through creatures". Therefore "The Windhover" can be dedicated "To Christ Our Lord" since it describes the Falcon who is not exactly God but who is His representative, "morning's minion, Kingdom of daylight's dauphin".'

Barnes saw the world as the product of God, and in no sense a manifestation of God Himself. He would have accepted the argument of Paley's Natural Theology, which, as I explained above, he probably read whilst a ten-year's man at Cambridge, that God and His creative power
are confirmed by the very existence of infinite intricacies in the objects of the natural world. Therefore those intricacies must be honoured and treasured, and carefully described in his poetry if his work is to honour God and at the same time show to its readers and hearers those 'sources of nature within their own sphere of being' which he believed were 'frequently overlooked'. Barnes found a God-given 'fitness' in the natural world, a harmony and utility in the landscape in all its variety and contrasts, which was not only aesthetically satisfying, but practically necessary for man's survival. So God made the sun whose heat man enjoys, but when the heat becomes too much for him he can turn aside to quench his thirst from a convenient river bed.

Zoo when, at last, I hung my head
Wi' thirsty lips a-burnen dry,
I come bezide a river-bed
Where water flow'd so blue's the sky;
An' there I mehde me up
O' coltsvoot leaf a cup,
Where water vrom his lip o' gray,
Wer sweet to sip thik burnen day. 83

(b) However, though Barnes is grateful for God's creation, and though he is sensitive to its beauty, and finds pleasure and comfort in it, his joy in his faith never reaches the heights expressed by Hopkins. There is certainly delight in the lilting and enthusiastic rhythm of the poem 'May' (p.86).

Come out o' door, 'tis Spring! 'tis May!
The trees be green, the yields be gay;
The weather's warm, the winter blast,
Wi' all his traEn o' clouds, is past;...
Mother o' blossoms, and ov all
That's feEn a-yield vrom Spring till Fall,
The gookoo over white-weEv'd seas
Do come to zing in thy green trees,
An buttervlees, in giddy flight,
Do gleEv the mwost by thy gay light.
But perhaps Barnes's own controlled emotions, to which his school pupils and friends always testified, prevented him from a more passionate apprehension of 'all that glory in the heavens' in order to 'glean our Savour'. His poetry cannot therefore be charged itself with a grandeur which Hopkins experienced in his relationship with God and then transmitted through the excitement and intense power of his work, as he does in 'Hurrahing in Harvest'.

And if Barnes was not so emotionally overcome by a perception of God's created beauty, nor is it likely that he would be so fearful of His power. Though Parins finds a resemblance between Hopkins's 'Carrion Comfort' and one of Barnes's Sabbath Lays, it is a resemblance I would qualify. It is true that both 'Carrion Comfort' and Barnes's 'Why hast Thou forsaken me?' each question why God tries man. Hopkins's 'Why wouldst thou in me?' is matched by Barnes's wondering why he should be 'in affliction tried / As silver in the fire?'. But Hopkins's terror is manifest in his description, with its particularity and the energy of its alliteration, of God's 'darksome devouring eyes' and His 'lionlimb'. The more restrained Barnes confines himself to a single adjective: God's face is 'frowning'. And whilst Hopkins is overcome and powerless, 'heaped there ... frantic to avoid thee and flee', Barnes only 'calls' and 'groans'. It is true that both poems answer their own question in the same way: for Hopkins the trial is sent that 'my chaff might fly: my grain lie, sheer and clear': for Barnes it is to 'purge me of my pride ... I fly as driven chaff'. But Hopkins acknowledges to the end of 'Carrion Comfort' his struggle as he 'lay wrestling with (my God!) my God': the knowledge of the struggle is still there and communicated -- maybe not quite resolved -- in the spontaneity of the exclamation of recognition, 'my God.' The comparative control of Barnes's poem is particularly marked in its ending.

But while I groan beneath Thy rod
Support me with Thy staff.
And after heaviness and pain
In mercy let me see
The brightness of Thy face again.

LAMA SABACHTHANI?
It is true that the final words still focus on separation. But they have been uttered at the end of each of the previous stanzas as well as this final one. They are akin in their form, then, to the refrain which Barnes used habitually to give regular pattern to his structures. Further, they are part of a rhyming couplet, whose repeated sound draws attention to another regularity in the poem, that of metre. I feel that these patterns, faithfully followed, may draw attention to themselves, and reduce the emotional weight of the final cry so that, overall, the poem does not have the sense of spontaneous or profound feeling which Hopkins communicates: there is neither deep terror nor the possibility of ecstasy. Instead the Sabbath Lay is a subdued rehearsal of a conventional prayer, directed at an acknowledgment of God's support and goodness, seen as His staff and bright face.

I am not suggesting that Barnes was unable to avoid a deadening regularity in his writing -- I shall be arguing that his linguistic skill was extremely versatile -- but that he had chosen to opt for comparative restraint. In fact the sense of personal struggle which is at the core of 'Carrion Comfort' would be surprising if found in a Sabbath Lay written, as this one was, to be sung by the family group at home. Barnes wrote six sacred songs, 'set to music . . . by my old friend Mr F.W. Smith', and when they were published by Chappell the title page explained that they had been adapted for 'domestic use, some of them harmonized for three voices'. But there is no real sense in any of Barnes's work that God has ever forsaken him, or that his faith is anything but easy to maintain. The Lays were written in standard English, but the dialect poems carry even less marks of strain and suffering: after all, they were written to highlight the good and the loveworthy.

An' in our trials He is near,
To hear our moan an' zee our tear,
An' turn our clouds to sunshine. 88

Barnes belonged to the optimists amongst the Victorians. He could have echoed Browning's 'God's in his heaven; all's right with the world'. Firm in his conviction that God is constant, in the same way that 'rivers don't gie out, John', Barnes did not, unlike Hardy's Tess and 'not a few millions of others', distrust Providence. 89
It is true that he accepted, like Hardy, that 'pain has been and pain is'. But whereas Hardy, though believing that 'if way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst', could find no intrinsic benefit in that Worst, Barnes saw suffering as an intentional part of God's plan: it had its own special value. He could welcome darkness because he believed that shadows were not God's punishment but rather a necessary experience if human beings were to appreciate His contrasting light. Light and dark together make harmony, and for Barnes suffering exists to 'meake us zee, if tis His will, / That He can bring us good vrom ill: / As after winter He do bring, / In His good time, the sunny spring'. Man must bear this essential pain with equanimity. To be downcast is, in Barnes's view, sinful: "'tis our sin / Do meike woone's soul so dark 'ithin, / When God would gi'e woone zunsheen'.

(c) Besides, Barnes believed that God also provides the means to accept struggle with a constructive turn of mind. He is near to 'turn our clouds to zunsheen' through the joy and comfort to be found in the natural beauty of His creation.

An' many times when I do vind  
Things all goo wrong, an' vo'k unkind,  
To zee the happy veeden herds,  
An' hear the zingen o' the birds,  
Do soothe my sorrow more than words.  

Faith is closely linked then, in Barnes's view, with the practicalities of daily existence. He could not have accepted Matthew Arnold's conviction in 'Dover Beach' that the world 'Hath really neither joy, nor life, nor light, / Nor peace, nor certitude, nor help from pain'.

Therefore the kind of comfort which Barnes might have wished to offer to Robert and Thomas of the eclogue 'Two Farms in Woone' (p.160) is expressed in the poem 'The Spring' (p.71).

'An God do melike his win' to blow  
An' raIn to vall vor high an' low,  
An' bid his bornen zun to rise  
Vor all alike, an' groun' an' skies  
Ha' colors vor the poor man's eyes:
All the implications of the eclogue suggest a sad and improverished future for Robert and Thomas, but it is acceptance of their situation which underlies the poem. Its closing comment is Robert's resigned 'Why then we sartainly must starve. Goodnight!'

There is not then, in Barnes as there seems to be in Clare, any strain between a firm faith in God's goodness and the observation of suffering on earth. There is none of the irony and bewilderment expressed in Clare's 'Address to Plenty'. Maybe, Clare's poem suggests, God is good, but the rich do not all observe His maxim 'hunger feed, / Give the needy when they need', or perhaps the explanation of suffering is that 'Endless Mercy stoops to save; Causes, hid from mortals' sight, / Prove "whatever is, is right"'. Nevertheless, the poem expresses an unbearably painful distinction between 'Thou, by name of Plenty styl'd, / Fortune's heir, her favourite child' and -- whatever God's intentions -- the suffering poor which those blessed with plenty ignore: 'Depress'd with want and poverty, / I sink, I fall, denied by thee'. The word 'thee', related to the syntax of the whole poem, seems to refer to personified Plenty: but it is difficult not to feel in the word also an address -- conscious or unconscious -- to God.

Yet I do not think that Barnes's acceptance of suffering as part and parcel of life was intended to invite a condescending pity, or provide a mitigation of concern, through a conviction that there is a better life to come for poor and labouring people. For though he wrote his poems primarily for local people about local things, he seems to extend his message to all men. It is not confined to his dialect poems but offered also in his standard work which was intended for a wider audience beyond Dorset, and the personae of both sets of poems, even when they are undeniably wearing the masks of labourers, seem to be uttering a conviction which Barnes was addressing to all men, rich and poor. It is a more generalised message.

... God, beholden vrom above
Our lowly road, wi' yearnen love,
Do keep beside us, stage by stage
Vrom be'th to youth, vrom youth to age. 96
Besides, Barnes is not simply focusing on a better life to come. He differs then from Robert Sims and Hannah Moore who, in Bratton's view, concentrated upon relief in an after life. As I have said, it was Barnes's basic intention to highlight the good and the loveworthy in this world. Poem after poem describes these qualities and ends with praise to God.

Zoo why should we shrink back at sight
Ov Hindrances we ought to slight?
A hearty will, wi' God our friend,
Will gaIn its end, if 'tis but right. 98

Hardy was apparently irritated by Barnes's constant reference to God in his poems. He believed that Barnes was too 'parsonical' and took it upon himself to censor whole 'parsonical' stanzas from his own edition of Barnes's work. Yet these lines were to Barnes essential elements of his poetic structures. Believing that 'the Soul requires a fixed standard of excellence without itself to obtain to' he required faith in God to be supported by outward ritual observances and by the visible organisation of the church. These 'parsonical' stanzas would be akin to the praise offered up each Sunday within the local church.

Church going was an essential element in community life, in Barnes's vision. The building and its services are both a 'meMns o' grace' and the firm centre of village life, as the poem 'The Church an' Happy Zunday' (p.193) demonstrates. The church's presence is in no way a restricting damper on community vitality. On the contrary, it offers relief from the week's 'ceMre an' tweil'. It is a focal point for local society: 'Tis good to zee woone's naighboors come / Out drough the churchyard, vlocken hwome / As woone do nod, an' woone do smile'. In the sight of different generations, meeting after a service, there is promise and evidence of everlasting growth and vitality -- of a good life on earth.

An' woone do toss another's chile;
An' zome be sheekhen han's, the while
Poll's uncle, chucken her below
Her chin, do tell her she do grow,
At church o' happy Zundays.
Barnes's poems do not, then, despite their acceptance of suffering, suggest that he would have endorsed in his own church the practices of those Victorian parsons whom Brenda Culloms identifies running 'their parishes with an iron grasp of spiritual discipline, insisting that the most important thing in life was to meet death in the correct submissive frame of mind, and that life on earth was but the prelude to the more welcome life hereafter'. Instead he emphasised those benefits to be found on earth — including, especially, work. If work was a punishment meted out by God after the Fall, then in Barnes's view man must discover in it, as in all other trials, its most positive values and comforts.

He could have agreed with Cowper that work is the primal curse, 'But soften'd into mercy; made the pledge / Of cheerful days, and nights without a groan'. Yet he would not, unlike Cowper, as a salutary antidote to those 'that press your beds of down / And sleep not', have suggested that they come and see the struggling labourer 'sweating o'er his bread / Before he eats it'. Barnes's antidote would rest in the observation of that good which he insisted might be found in a life of effort. It is an antidote which, in a sense, he offered through his poems in their concentration upon that 'loveworthy' good.

(d) Barnes's first collection of dialect works appeared in 1844, a year after Carlyle's Past and Present. There is a close correspondence between Carlyle's opinion on work and that of Barnes in his poems. Carlyle wrote,

There is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in Idleness alone is there a perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish, mean, is in communication with Nature; the real desire to get Work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations, which are truth. 103

Barnes's 'The Milk-maid o' the Farm' (p.80) parallels Carlyle's thinking. Poll works earnestly. She doesn't stay up late or get up late. As a result she is, in Barnes's view, ennobled, for her pail is carried on her head 'as if she wore a gooden crown', and her walk is like a 'lady' with 'steently tread'. And though Barnes used such images of class structure to epitomise nobility, Poll herself is evidently in
complete accord with the natural world. Barnes sets her image against the evening sun within the sound of bubbling brooks: her feet are the first to mark the morning's dewy grass, and the cows respond patiently to her. If the sacredness which Carlyle found in this kind of labour is not specifically mentioned in the poem, it is found clearly articulated in other similar verses which include Barnes's habitual 'parsonical' perception. It is present, for instance, in the poem 'Sleep Did Come wi' the Dew' (p.106).

Zoo we don't grow up peHle an' weak,
But we do work wi' health an' strength,
Vrom mornen drough the whole day's length,
An' sleep do come wi' the dew.

And ultimately God, rewarding faith and work in life, will 'teHke us into endless rest, / As sleep do come wi' the dew'.

But Barnes's view of the nobility and value of work limited his artistic vision of its realities. He seems to have believed that God in his 'fit' scheme of things -- would distribute tasks appropriately according to capability. So, maids can sing cheerfully as they do in 'The Sky A'clearen' (p.123), and

... draw their white-streamed reHkes among
The long-back'd weHles an' new-meHde pooks,
By brown-stemm'd tress an' cloty brooks;
But have noo call to spwei1 their looks
By work, that God could never meHke
Their weaker han's to underteHke.

In Barnes's work there is no Tess, struggling just over the Vale in the turnip fields, for he believed

'Tis wrong vor women's han's to clips
The zull an' reap-hook, speHdes an' whips;
An' men abroad, should 1eHve, by right,
Woone faHthvul heart at hwome to light
Their bit o' vier up at night.
Interestingly, Snell believes that Hardy was not representing reality in his images of women in the fields. A variety of factors perhaps, including the kinds of feelings Barnes articulates here, evidently contributed to their exclusion from field labour. But on the whole, Barnes's image of work, influenced as it is by his religious views, and perhaps his own social and physical distance from the labourer, may be more idealistic than realistic. This image and its limitations is the subject of the following pages.

GOOD AND LOVeworthy WORK: BARNES'S BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK TO THE INDIVIDUAL AND TO THE COMMUNITY

In a sense Barnes's poetry offers more of working life than Clare's. For Clare's poems concentrate upon his delight in uncultivated nature, and when they turn to people in relation to labour they focus upon the emotional misery of poverty and the consequences of enclosure, or, as in 'The Shepherd's Calendar', they revel in the emotional relief to be found in relaxation and companionship, or in the contemplation of nature when work is done.

Yet Barnes's work poems, perhaps because he never personally worked the land, are not as 'experimentally true', as Bloomfield intended, as I mentioned above, his own to be. Bloomfield's 'Farmer's Boy' may not offer the precise and extensive agricultural details of the Georgics, but he does approach the tradition in, for instance, his description of milking time with its fairly broad picture of practicalities.

Slow rolls the churn, its load of clogging cream
At once forgoes its quality and name;
From knotty particles first floating wide
Congealing butter's dash'd from side to side;
Streams of new milk through flowing coolers stray,
And snow-white curd abounds, and wholesome whey.

Barnes's dairy poem on the other hand, as I demonstrated above, concentrates more upon Poll's moral excellence as a milk-maid than the technicalities of her skill.
O Poll's the milk-maid o' the farm!
An' Poll's so happy out in groun',
Wi' her white pall below her eurm
As if she wore a goolden crown. 107

Nor do Barnes's poems clearly differentiate between a wide variety of rural labouring roles. Work with sheep, in the fields and in the dairy is specified: otherwise the work referred to seems loosely connected with the land. Readers are not made sharply aware that, as Hardy wrote in *The Dorsetshire Labourer*,

villages used to contain, in addition to the agricultural inhabitants, an interesting and better-informed class, ranking distinctly above those -- the blacksmith, the carpenter, the shoe-maker, the small higgler, the shopkeeper . . . together with nondescript-workers other than farm-labourers. 108

Any of these could be the personality behind poems like 'Vull a Man' (p.373), it is true, but none of them is specified in terms of the practicalities of their professions.

Part of the reason may lie in the pressures being brought to bear upon this intermediate class of people and causing their gradual disintegration throughout the nineteenth century. Merryn and Raymond Williams identify two sources of pressure.

First, internally, in the dominance of orthodox capitalist agriculture (lifeholders, entitled to their cottages for the duration of three lives, were now increasingly dispossessed when the last life ended; Hardy describes such cases in *The Woodlanders* and *Tess*); second, externally, in the development of a manufacturing urban economy which steadily cut out the more localized craftsmen. It is in these senses that capitalist social relations, while not exclusive, were dominant: that they exerted pressure on all who did not belong to or fit in with them, dispossessing, undercutting or effectively pauperizing a majority of this residual class. This in its turn interacted with the altered relative economic position of agriculture, in the now industrialized and free-trading (food importing) national economy, to produce a relative 'rural depopulation'. 109

Nevertheless, this depopulation was gradual and hardly complete during the majority of Barnes's writing years. Though it may have contributed to the limitations imposed upon his images of working roles, it is more likely that he made his choices according to his moral purpose.
It was, as I suggested above, the co-operative nature of work and other social and religious values which Barnes identified in community effort, that are the focus of his poems, rather than the intricacies of individual tasks. Hardy mentions shop-keepers amongst his list of intermediate people. Barnes did not like shop-keepers: a former pupil recalled that he was irritated by their 'aping' of the manners of a higher social class. Perhaps he could not find in livings derived from competitive dealing, rather than from land production which he saw as co-operative effort, examples of those moral lessons of peaceful community which he wished to draw. In consequence, though Barnes may avoid a trivial fantasy of 'happy swains' and instead offer a more 'real Picture of the Poor', as Crabbe had earlier demanded, that picture is still limited in such a way that, whilst perhaps faithfully describing, as Hardy implied in his obituary article on his old friend (though see references to Snell's reservations about Hardy's own reliability, p.24 and p.77 above), many of the customs and habits of local life, it does tend towards a moral tale.

It is a tale of work seen as crucial to man for its own sake, for its benefits direct and indirect, and for its contrasting joys. Barnes could not have agreed with Bentham that work is 'a sort of desire that scarcely seems to have place in the human breast'. On the contrary, Barnes seems to have anticipated William Morris's view that 'worthy work carries with it the hope of pleasure in rest, the hope of the pleasure in our using what it makes, and the hope of pleasure in our daily creative skill. All other work but this is worthless; it is slave's work -- mere toiling to live, that we may live to toil'.

Barnes's prose writings tend to confirm his poetic image of work. He wrote in The Dorset County Chronicle that:

gardening is an occupation pleasing in itself, because it gives one those cheerful feelings of high health, which always arise from exercise; and because one has always the pleasure of finding the plot, the path or the border, visibly bettered by the shortest labour; . . . How much sweeter do things seem when they are the long-known produce of one's own soil . . . how pleasing it is to know that whether one prefers the red and juicy radish, or the cucumber that stretches its rough and bulky body on the warm earth; . . . all are within one's reach; and all one's own.

It is significant that Barnes is here describing work in the garden, and on one's own land. He is not referring in this instance to work for
someone else. And much of his poetry relates not to the economic necessity to work, to be employed, but to landwork for its own sake, as a part of a man's personal vitality, of his ability to take care of himself and thrive, and of his sense of continuity between generations. When work links up to the employer, it frequently does so in images which symbolise not the potential repressive power of that employer but the liberating influence which Barnes believed could exist in a stable social order and hierarchy.

Thus, 'Work an' Wait' (p.547) describes the efforts of a man to create, through work, the possibility of a future for himself. From clay he has made bricks, from dried grass he has made thatch: together these construct a home to which he can bring his bride. The cart he has constructed from 'liven timber', and the ploughshare he honed from rock, will make it possible for him to make a living for himself and his wife.

He will be able to do so efficiently because, as the poem 'Farmer's Sons' explains (p.212), Barnes believed that agricultural workers are strong, unlike 'the whindlen chaps in town'. And somehow Barnes equates physical strength with intelligence: he does not appear to be referring to the special 'world-knowledge' he so much admired in the countryman when he writes 'The smartest chap that I do know, / 'S a worken farmer's son', for the poem concentrates upon the man's ability to pitch and plough and jump and heave.

Work is a bond between the married couples of Barnes's poems, as it is between Hardy's Sue and Jude and between Giles and Bathsheba. Uncle and Aunt, in the poem of that name, share the responsibilities and the pleasures of work on their 'tiny farm' (p.108). Labour is equally crucial to the larger family unit's harmony, as it is in Wordsworth's 'Michael'. When father thatches the rick, his wife is below 'A-worken hard to cheer woone's tweil / Wi' her best feäre, an' better smile'. The children are equally involved, bringing 'thatch an' spars'. It seems crucial that work should take place near the family home for the security of that family unit.

A man at hwayne should have in view
The jobs his childern's hands can do;
An' groun' abrode mid teweke em all
Beyond their mother's sight an' call,  
To get a zoaken in a storm,  
Or vall, i'-may-be, into harm.  

Physical effort frequently connects in the poems with sociable 
activity. Collecting apples turns into horseplay in 'TeMken in Apples'  
(p.150). Courtship begins when men and women work side by side: 'When  
I do pitchy, 'tis my pride / Vor Jenny Hine to reMke my zide'.  

Entertainment appears closely bound up with work. There is a trio of  
poems in Barnes's first collection which marks the progression from  
effort in the fields, to traditional celebratory feast, to relaxation.  
('A-Haulen o' the Corn', 'Harvest Hwome (The vu'st Peârt, The Supper)',  
Harvest Hwome (The Second Peârt. What they did after Supper) (pp.136-  
139)). There may be a sense that relaxation is only really permissible  
after hard work: the poem 'Whitsuntide an' Club Walking' (p.16l) shows  
that club walking can only be enjoyed after the maids have 'Got up  
betimês to mind the deairy: / An' gi'ed the milken pails a scrub' --  
but then, this delay would have been a practical matter of fact.  

The regularity of this commitment to work evidently contributed to  
Barnes's sense of secure order. The poem 'Out Father's Works' (p.270)  
demonstrates that its results last from generation to generation, offer-  
ing a kind of stabilising perspective of past history and a comforting  
prospect of future continuity. The landscape is marked, like Michael's  
environment was marked with a kiln in Wordsworth's poem, by 'works that  
we've a-vound a-wrought / By our vorefather's ceMre an' thought'. And  
in order to safeguard the community's future, Barnes hoped that each  
member would be  

... faån to undertœke  
Zome work to meœke vor others' gaån,  
That we mid leHve mwore good to sheHre,  
Less ills to bear, less souls to grieve,  
An' when our hands to vall to rest,  
It mid be vrom a work a-blest.  

Of course the sense of continuity is reinforced because rural work  
naturally patterns itself according to seasonal cycles.
But Barnes's sense of order achieved through work is not confined to matters of time. It also links to his perception of an organic community based upon a social hierarchy -- the traditional class structure of rural society based upon the ownership of property in land and its cultivation by the labourer.

Although the city is geographically far away from the Vale, its alternative society and economy, and the effects of these upon the country, cannot be avoided. Nor are their efforts to be wholly rejected in Barnes's view. In the poem 'John Bloom in Lon'on' (p.473) a miller is eager to visit the Crystal Palace, impressed by its display of inventions and in particular by the train which carries him up to the city: after all, it is 'the road to hawl a lwoad' -- perhaps a load of rural corn. But this allegory of a fat man, well fed and contented in his 'worthy' Dorset life, but unable to squeeze in to a tiny London cab, indicates Barnes's preference for the country. He is aware in his poems that in a changing culture city and country cannot be kept apart. But frequently the link will be uncomfortable at best, destructive at worst. In poems like 'The Settle an' the Girt Wood Vire' (p.173) and 'Woak wer Good Enough Woonce' (p.179), changes in the production and construction of homes and their furniture are regretted: character and tradition have gone. And when Cousin Samuel comes down to the Vale from London he cannot adjust to country life: he hasn't acquired, in the city, the necessary skills or instincts to adapt.

There are restrictions in both spheres: both kinds of economy are regulated by masters whom labouring men must follow. But to Barnes, city employers are the 'peevish meas\(\text{sters}\)', referred to in the poem 'My Orcha'd in Linden Lea' (p.233). He has a different impression of the country landlord -- the old-fashioned landlord, that is.

The farmer of the new economy ploughs up every available bit of land. 'What's zwold an' bought / Is all that is worthy of thought'. As a result land is lost where flowers can grow, geese can graze, and children can play. The poem 'The Le\(\text{nne}\)' (p.306) shows that Barnes believed the consequences mar God's gift of 'fitness', upsetting the natural balance of the economy, and the health of the people who live by it. Deprived children 'wull have a thin musheroom fel\(\text{ce}, /Wi' their bodies so sumple as dough'. 
Furthermore, the new economists jealously safeguard their 'own' and take freedoms away from the land worker of the older organic community.

An' the goocoo wull soon be committed to cage  
Vor a trespass in somebody's tree.
Vor 'tis locken up, Thomas, an' blocken up,  
Stranger or brother,
Man mussen come nigh woone another.

Another man's land may now be crossed only in pursuit of the hounds.

But Barnes recalls with approval an earlier, different kind of authority, in the past tenses of the poem 'Herrenston' (p.340).

Zoo the lebdy an the squier,  
At Chris'mas gather'd girt an' small,  
Vor me' th avore the roarev vier,  
An' roun' their bwoard, 'ithin the hail; ...  
Zoo peace betide the girt vo'k's land,  
When they can stoop, wi' kindly smile,  
An' teMke a poor man by the hand,  
An' cheer en in his daily tweil.

He evidently cherished the old order: it appears that in dependence he found freedom, so long as that work took place in the rural tradition.

Let me work, but mid noo tie  
Hold me from the open sky. 120

He found the squire's benevolence perfectly acceptable: 'he that's vur above' will repay his labourers, stooping 'wi' kindly smile' to 'reward their love'. There is no suggestion, in any of the poems describing the feast given by farmers after work and enjoyed by their labourers, that Barnes would have understood Stephen Duck's feeling of deception when faced with a similar reward.

A Table plentifully spread we find,  
And jugs of huming Ale to cheer to Mind,
Which he, too gen'rous, pushes round so fast,  
We think no Toils to come, nor mind the past.  
But the next Morning soon reveals the Cheat,  
When the same Toils we must again repeat;  
To the same Barns must back again return,  
To labour there for Room for next Year's Corn.  

It is perhaps a result of Barnes's staunch endorsement of the landlord's role, and his firm belief in the benefits of work, that John Barrell finds his poems 'unserviceable', evidently meaning unrealistic and therefore irrelevant given the actual rigours and resentments of nineteenth century labouring conditions in general.

But Barnes himself would of course have insisted that his poems were above all intended to be serviceable. He wanted to place his landscape in the best, most good and loveworthy light possible. He did so, he said, out of love: in fact, he wrote that 'there can be no art without love'.

A feasible explanation of the gap between certain aspects of Barnes's vision and the realities of rural life may lie in R.A. Forsyth's suggestion that Barnes constructed a myth of a passing kind of agricultural existence. Barnes himself knew that elements of his writing were anachronistic. So many of his poems, like 'Herronston', quoted above, are set in the past, and written in the past tense, recalling the delights of his childhood. And the lines entitled 'The Happy Days When I wer Young' (p.171) clearly recognise changes that have taken place since that childhood, changes which Barnes believed were not for the better.

O grassy mel'd an' woody nook,  
An' waters o' the winden brook . . .  
I wish that you could now unvwold  
The peace an' ja'y o' times o' wold;  
An' tell, when death do still my tongue,  
O' happy days when I wer young.  
Wrom where wer all this venom brought,  
To kill our hope an' taint our thought?

This poem is referring particularly to changed attitudes which Barnes believed caused men to 'despise / The laws o' God an' man as wise'.
It is not surprising that he should reject such changes and choose instead to construct an image based upon the status quo. By the time of writing he was socially on a par with or above the farmer-landowner. He was a teacher exercising authority. He would eventually be a vicar offering good works to his parishioners. Just as his poems are unlikely to show the detail of the Georgics, since he had little first-hand experience of farm labour, they will inevitably, as the work of a man who saw himself as a Bard with a conservative duty to his community, use what he did know of labour and convert this into a moral tale, encouraging effort and contentment within the pattern of the status quo. His intention was not consciously to mystify his audiences thereby, but to offer a serviceable myth, a symbol of values which were, in his opinion, essential for the 'good continuance of the human race'.

Still, it may be debatable whether or not Barnes's avowed intention to be serviceable goes any great way towards refuting Barrell's charge of irrelevance in actual practice. I am reminded here of David Fussell's discussion of an ageing sign, hung outside a Dorchester inn in Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*. Hardy explains that its painting is warped by time, and through its faded image the actualities of the wood, its knots and graining, are visible. It has not been renovated because no local artist had been found who is prepared to retint these figures so 'traditional'. Barnes, the local Dorset Bard, was fully prepared to resurrect such figures now fading into the past. But as he resurrects them they may still not survive (if removed from the lines of his myth and placed against reality) the ravages of the changing times he partially acknowledges, since these personalities may not be fully equipped, in his imaginative reconstruction, with the necessary abilities to adapt to change, whilst yet preserving the best of the past.

The degree to which Barnes does acknowledge a need for adaptation is discussed immediately below.
THE COUNTRY'S HARDSHIPS AS A RESULT OF CHANGE

Barnes did not so 'lighten' rural conditions that he ignored their hardships altogether. Father is a casual labourer in the eclogue 'Father Come Hwome' (p.182). He can provide no fortune for his family. He has worked long and hard hours, 'a-fwoced to stan' / All's day in mud an' water vor to dig', and his wife regrets that she cannot revitalise him with meat but must do the best she can with 'teMties' and a 'little' apple-cake. The agricultural changes of enclosing and engrossing, and the solution to distress found in emigration, frequently increased the difficulties of rural life. Barnes describes some of the problems, and some of the labourers' responses.

Barnes had had personal experience of enclosure when his own father had lost commoners' rights. The eclogue 'The Common A-took In' (p.158) describes the consequences to labourers who no longer have grazing ground for their animals. One of them voices bitter resignation.

But I've a-zeed, an' I've a'zaid,
That if a poor man got a bit o' bread
They'll try to teYke it vrom en'.

'Two Farms in Woone' (p.160) deals with engrossing, and with increased mechanisation -- one of the rare poems in which Barnes refers to machinery on the farm. Both innovations limit the amount of work available to the labourer and the sufferers are scathing and angry. The employer responsible for the combining of farms is called a 'poor over-reachen man', and Thomas vows that 'he that vu'st vound out the way to meake machines , / I'd drash his busy zides vor'n if I could!'.

As for emigration, Barnes could see advantages in the solution to unemployment.

There are very many who, from various circumstances are faring badly in the competition for a livelihood in England . . . to propose emigration to such men, inasmuch as it would be likely to increase their happiness, or at least their elements of a happy life, would be only friendly and therefore christianly. 125

But his poem 'Rusticus Emigrans' (p.482) painfully acknowledges the distress of those who do fare so badly in England that they must go
overseas. They are parted from their cultural roots.

Here be the trees that I did use to clim in,
Here is the brook that I did use to zwim in,
Here be the ground where I've a worked and played;
Here is the hut that I wer barn and bred in;
Here is the little church where we've a prayed,
And churchyard that my kinsvolk's buones be laid in;
And I myself, you know, should like to lie
Among 'em too when I do come to die.

All these threatened images represent those aspects of life which Barnes believed to be 'good and loveworthy': freedom, family, work, and the continuing cycle of these in the benign light of the Church.

The irony to the eclogue speaker, Robert, is that England seems to him too rich to need her people to make such sacrifices.

'Tis hard a man can't get a luoaf to veed 'en
Upon the pliace wher life wer vust a gied 'en;
'Tis hard that if he'd work, there's noo work var'n,
Or that his work woon't bring enough o' money
To keep en, though the land is vull a carn
And cattle; and do flow wi' milk and honey.

The irony of Barnes's poetry -- and it seems to be an unconscious irony -- is that on the one hand it can show the impoverished, distressed rural family, whilst on the other it continues to emphasise the milk and honey. The explanation may lie in David Wright's comparison between Clare and Barnes. He observes that, although Barnes recognised and was saddened by matters like enclosure, his 'life was as tranquil as Clare's was tragic, and this is reflected in their verse; . . . Clare's desolate protests are a cry of anguish; Barnes's humble memorials of traditional rural life . . . remain its elegy'. 126

Yet the poetry is not simply an elegy. It does offer suggestions for combating agrarian distress. But for Barnes 'combat' could not include revolutionary response. As I explained above, he refused to
write poems with what he called a 'drift', evidently meaning an aggressive message of political propaganda. And his solutions to social unrest could not, in a man of placid temperament and faith in established tradition, advocate upheaval. Parins agrees that Barnes's sympathies were with the poor and that he was pro-reform of some kind, 'but he saw change best coming about through a system like Disraeli's Radical Tory position, rather than through organized labour. The Radical Tory program was to introduce orderly change in those areas where reform was needed, while preserving the best of the traditions and institutions of the past'. 127 Chris Wrigley suggests that Barnes's attitudes were close to Ruskin's, who claimed 'I am, and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school'. 128

So Barnes's solutions to the ironic contrast between rural poverty and the existence of milk and honey elsewhere, tended to be traditionally conservative. In the absence of immediate practical relief he turned to his 'parsonical' role. The eclogue speaker Robert, seeing his emigrating friend prepare for Dieman's Land, sighs,

Ah! we must stay till GOD is plieased to tiake us;
If we do do our best he woon't forsiake us.
Good bye, and if I shou'dent zee ye agaen,
GOD bless you, Richat, drough your life. 129

Elsewhere he suggests that God's care for the labouring people will be transmitted through the benevolence of the good squire: he 'mid be our friend'. 130

It is this kind of faith in the established order of God and the squirearchy which probably contributed to E.M. Forster's view of Barnes as a 'Yes-man'. Wrigley believes that Forster was mistakenly implying that Barnes did not even notice, in his poetry, the difficulties of rural life: Wrigley argues that he not only noticed but offered solutions which belie any implication that he lived in a pastoral and passive glow. 131 The examples given immediately above demonstrate that Barnes certainly acknowledged distress and difficulty. But the solutions he offered tend towards a kind of conservatism, on the whole, which might support a view of Barnes as a 'Yes-man', not because he accepts painful changes
unquestioningly (as Wrigley feels Forster is implying), but because the remedies he offers are generally those which could only have been appropriate in a past and different age.

Still, as Wrigley shows, even though Barnes in the last third of his life had veered towards the kind of Christian Old Toryism which looked for help to God and the squire, he had earlier in his life considered a more radical approach.

He certainly did so in his prose writings. For instance, thirty years ahead of Samuel Smiles's book *Self-Help*, Barnes was advocating a similar creed. An article in the Dorset County Chronicle supports the letting out of allotments:

There can be no doubt that the poor man who knows that he can gain additional good by extra labour — will work very hard and suffer many wants before he will give up his independence of spirit to the overseer.

In April and May of 1849 Barnes published a number of articles entitled *Humilis Domus* 'on the abodes, life and social conditions of the poor, especially in Dorsetshire'. Wrigley believes that in these 'Barnes's views came close towards arguing the right to work'. Barnes considered that the poor should be given relief, but they must be provided with the means to earn it.

Did the poor receivers of the four millions of pounds of poor's rate in the year 1848 do every conceivable bit of work by which their hands could have contributed aught to the welfare of their neighbours? Is the last church path in the kingdom gravelled and thoroughly clean? Is the last yard of parish road mended and drained? Is the last brook cleared of the last obstacle which drove its gritty waters needlessly wide over the fields?

Some of these articles were later included in Barnes's work on the economy, *Views of Labour and Gold*. Here it is not only the financial relief of the working man that is urged: it is also his self-respect and general well-being in the attainment of that relief that is recommended.

A weekly half holiday would be a boon for the health and happiness of a degenerating class of labourers . . . if all the tradesmen could restrain the tyranny of competition, and close the eyelids of their shops in earlier rest, none would lose any money by it . . . if all shops were closed an hour earlier, late buyers would be the earlier ones by an hour.
To some extent Barnes's poetry does echo the economic and social solutions suggested in his prose. There are hints of a kind of Christian Socialism, and Wrigley points out that 'paternalistic Conservatism and Christian socialism could come close, both emphasising a duty to the community, and both abhorring the making of money as an end in itself'. The eclogue 'The 'Lotments' (p.93) advocates 'letting bits o' groun' out to the poor'. 'Two Farms in Woone' (p.160) bewails the lack of opportunity, caused by engrossing, which prevents a young labourer from climbing the rural community's economic and social ladder: once, if he 'had any wit', he could have 'become a farmer, bit by bit'. And Barnes urges for the working men, as much as for his employers and the higher classes, the right to a dignified and full life. Though 'Rusticus Res Politicas Anidmadvertens' (p.487) outlines the view that the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 justly punishes those who have lacked the initiative and foresight to save against hard times, it also emphasises and abhors the degradation of those who suffer by it.

Th' tiake an' put en up into a cart,
An' car en out o' parish like a thief,
An' shove en in to bed an' tiable
Amang a house vull o' fresh fiazes,
Wi' scores o' volk vrom fifty pliazes
Like hosses in a common stable . .
Aye, they be guain, ya know, to kip asunder
The menvolk in the poorhouse, from their wives . .
They mid as well, I think each wi' his bride
Goo back to Church an' have ther knot untied . .
Thiese laes mid do some good; but volk mast show
Esteem var goodness if they'd zee it grow.
A farmer woulden git much vrom his zeeds
If they wer left to struggle wi' the weeds.

Barnes constantly deplored the lowering of the labourers' self-respect.

It would seem a rational rule that labours which are of most need or service to me should be holden in great honour; but nothing can be more needful or of more service to men's lives than tillage or farming . . and yet the labourers on the ground are usually classed very low in the scale of life . . that villain, villains, an old name for a serf labourer, is now become a word of stinging reproach.
It is surely for this reason that Barnes images Poll, in 'The Milkmaid o' the Farm' (p.80) as if she were a member of the nobility, carrying the pail 'as if she wore a goolden crown' and walking as she balances it with a 'leâdy's steâtely tread'.

But of course he is using here a metaphor derived from the social hierarchy of a passing age: as he grew older, Barnes's view settled more and more on the ways of the past. Even in his partially progressive Views of Labour and Gold it was still 'the squire and his lady' and 'the graceful pattern of Christian life' which appealed to him most.139 And though I have suggested above that Barnes was not stubbornly against change on principle, he was very disturbed by many of its consequences.

I believe that most of our so called improvements either displace a good, or bring in their train some evil, and that our true progress in well-being is only the difference of good between the good of the so called improvement and the good displaced by it or the evil which follows it. 140

And in the way that he returned from the edges of radicalism suggested in his early prose to a later kind of Christian Old Toryism, so the emphasis in the majority of Barnes's poetry is upon the kind of 'Yes-man' attitudes which though they need not be defined as a completely evasive flight from the harshness of reality are nevertheless an attempt to combat rural difficulties through a preservation of past and frequently outmoded, impractical, values.

The very fact that Barnes chooses to consider rural hardship largely through the eclogue form may be significant, because it calls for the presentation of two points of view and the poet may, if he so wishes, allow these two arguments to remain in conservative balance. For example, 'The 'Lotments' (p.93) describes the ideal situation of one speaker, and in this way approves the system of letting out allotments. But the hearer, John, is not in such fortunate circumstances: we recognise his disadvantage through the juxtaposition of the two labouring conditions. Yet Barnes allows no anger from John. Instead he displays a noble bravery: 'I'd keep myself from parish, I'd be bound / If I could get a little patch o' ground'. There is only a wistful plea that his local squire might, like the fortunate Richard's, let out land -- and a pitiful acceptance that there is little hope of this. 'I wish
the girt woones had a-got the greëce / To let out land lik' this in ouer pieëce; / But I do fear there'll never be nwone vor us'. Though Barnes puts his faith in the squirearchy to provide allotments, he seems to accept that not all landlords will be so benevolent: we are encouraged to be sorry for John, not to expect any real certainty of relief for him. 'The Common A-took In' (p.158) also shows the miseries of a labouring family, caused in this case through the policy of enclosure. Thomas sympathises with his friend's distress and hopes he may be given an allotment. John hopes so too, but shows no anger, only fear, if the opportunity is denied him: without a piece of land 'I must goo to workhouse, I do fear'.

In both these eclogues, then, Barnes appears to be encouraging faith in the existing system, in the patronage and paternalistic good will of the squire. There is no encouragement to the labourer to try to find other and more independent solutions. A further eclogue firmly argues against such initiatives. In 'The Times' the speaker, John, is critical of his friend's acceptance of the Chartists (p.226). John does not trust their representatives to be anything but self-interested. However, apart from this psychological observation he also makes economic and social points. He cites a law of supply and demand:

But, Thomas, you can't mellke
A man pay mmore away than he can telëke.
If you do mellke en gi'e, to till a yield,
So much ageëm as what the groun' do yield,
He'll shut out farmen . . .
Wages be low because the hands be plenty;
They mid be higher if the hands wer skenty.

And he seems to be suggesting that power should be kept within local society and not be transferred to distant -- and therefore emotionally disinterested and detached -- controllers.

'Tis very odd there idden any friend
To poor-vo'k hereabout, but men mus' come
To do us good away from tother end
Ov England!
In John's view that local power should remain in the hands of the squire or the parson whose duty is, he believes, to the poor man.

... they that got
His blessens, shoulden let theirzelves vorget
How 'tis where vo'k do never zet
A bit o' meat within their rusty pot.

John does not approve of the labourer taking responsibility for himself and being 'free / Ov other vo'k an' others' charity'. Above all he is afraid of the mob.

Ah! I do think you mid as well be quiet;
You'll me'lke things wo'se, i'-ma'-be, by a riot.
'You'll get into a mess, Tom, I'm afere;
You'll goo vor wool, an' then come hwoome a-sheur'd.

Barnes was against protest. 'The Times' might imply this through the words of John as we now have them, but this is confirmed by the poem's own history -- a history of Barnes's decisions to alter and omit. An earlier version was rather more vehement in its opposition to Tom, the new Chartist member. Its strength lay partly in a precise local reference. John tells Tom,

I think that thee midst larn a lesson
Vrom Mr. Pier's book o' Preson.

'Mr Piers' was the Rev. Octavius Piers whose son went to Barnes's school. In 1838 he had had two pamphlets printed in Dorchester: A few Hints respectfully addressed to Landowners and Farmers throughout the Kingdom, more particularly to those in the County of Dorset, and also An affectionate warning to the Agricultural Labourers in the parish of Preston-cum-Sutton in the County of Dorset. Barnes said that he regretted the 'drift' of the original version of the poem, -- further, it was the only one he had ever written with a 'drift'. It would seem then that he did not want his poetry to grapple openly with actual political facts. He preferred it to remain more abstract in this respect -- and, therefore, more bland. The original poem's reference to a 'civil war' is therefore
reduced in the published 1844 version to the milder mention of 'a riot': a potentially national and major upheaval is minimised into a local disturbance, and ugly possibilities of frightening chaos masked in the rather parochial, nursery-rhyme quality of the final version's closing metaphor.

You'll get into a mess, Tom, I'm afraid.
You'll go vor wool, an' then come hwoome a-she'd.

Barnes's severest critics might well extend the adjectives 'parochial' and 'nursery-rhyme' to their assessment of his work as a whole, largely because he did deliberately avoid an aggressive political 'drift'. I would prefer to argue that the parochial, in the pejorative sense, is rare, that he is instead a local man in a positive sense of the word. He may not have chosen a political drift that was obvious through an aggressive tone or strident calls for reform, but he did staunchly profess a belief in the dignity and importance of groups, of families and communities, and particularly of rural communities. And the quality of his vision of these groups, and his hopes for their future, is not naive in the dismissive nursery sense. It does hope that innocence might be preserved, but it is not itself innocent -- it is not shallowly naive for it acknowledges (as indeed do many nursery-rhymes) the challenge and disruption of experience, both perennial and peculiarly Victorian. Yet the belief in localness which pervades all Barnes's work is not in the end a complete triumph for the individual, the small man, or the local group existing and growing alongside the established order and encroaching capitalism. For his affirmation of the local -- each special culture of language, custom, work and domesticity -- is ultimately constrained. The local circle is valuable and rich (as I shall continue to demonstrate in Chapter Three and thereafter), and it has lessons to offer those outside who are prepared to look at it sympathetically. There is strength and wisdom -- the good and the loveworthy -- in community effort, in family life, in trust in God, in art, in the individual's hard work, and in his recognition of the beauty and energy of the natural world and of human beings. And that strength may acknowledge and survive challenge and disruption. But Barnes's localness may not, in the end, do more than survive: it may accept change, loss, and suffering -- as his religious faith demanded:
it may determinedly carry on, working and striving to endure -- as his belief in the importance of work dictated: it may optimistically look always to the light side of the landscape. But it is a survival which depends upon control, just as his landscape depends upon control and cultivation for its continuance from one generation to the next. The local circle must remain within the larger sphere: it must not grow and threaten to disturb the geometry of tradition. And so in the end Barnes's localness, though it is not so parochial and innocent as to be ignorant of the outside world, does not fully manifest its strength in the growth of adaptability, but remains static, accepting and restricted. It has a sense of its own dignity and beauty, but not of its full potential.

I think it is this entrenchment which accounts for Miles Barnes's assessment of his father as a man of 'passive courage'. Courage enabled Barnes to write poetry which proclaimed a value in the rural circle and which, as I argue again in the next chapter and subsequent chapters, encompasses suffering. But it was a passive courage in that the images and structures of his poems as well as his own stoic life led him to endure, rather than to challenge and to actively ameliorate the pain he acknowledged.

And yet, these images and forms also helped him to offer through the quiet medium of his art a vision -- like a Dutch painting, a vision of exquisite light and warmth which must, in its gentle vitality, partly compensate for the limits of his localness and the limits of his preference for acceptance rather than advancement. The vision has an energy -- a serviceability -- which may transcend the context of Barnes's Blackmore time and place.
CHAPTER THREE
LIKE A DUTCH PAINTING

Palgrave believed that Barnes's poetry put 'pictorial expressiveness' back into the 'literary language'. Barnes himself remarked that he wrote pictures which he saw in his mind. Hardy compared these pictures to the Dutch school of painting, a school whose 'beauty and truth of colour and action' Barnes himself admired.

I have explained above that these 'pictures' concentrate upon a peopled, worked landscape, and upon the creatures of a cultivated community: Barnes wanted his themes to concentrate upon the kind of 'world-knowledge' that he preferred to teach in his classroom instead of more abstract 'book-learning'. His themes also include those objects which were vital to a working population.

Adam Smith drew a distinction (one a modern technologist would no doubt find over-simple) between city and country workers which he centred upon their relationship with objects. 'The man who works upon brass and iron, works with instruments and upon materials of which the temper is always the same, or very nearly the same. But the man who ploughs the ground with a team of horses or oxen, works with instruments of which the health, strength, and temper, are very different upon different occasions.' Therefore, in Smith's view, the countryman's sensitive judgement and discretion is, contrary to popular impressions of his stupidity and ignorance, generally higher than that of his city cousin. 'His understanding ... being accustomed to consider a greater variety of objects, is generally much superior to that of the other, whose whole attention from morning till night is commonly occupied in performing one or two very simple operations.'

The machine-working character, Joe, in Charlotte Bronte's novel Shirley, would not have agreed. He too recognises the important relationship that exists between a manual workman and his tools, but argues that, in looking after machines, 'when I see an effect, I look straight out for a cause, and I oft lig hold on't to purpose'. Therefore he reckons 'at us manufacturing lads i' th' north is a deal more intelligent, and knaws a deal more nor th' farming folk i' th' south. Trade sharpens wer wits'.
The kind of perception Joe seems to be valuing sounds to be one of logic, of 'cause and effect', and of shrewd materialism.

On the other hand, a contemporary writer in the Dorset County Chronicle, whilst also assuming like Joe a rather limited kind of intelligence in the landworker, appears to be considering a different kind of perception: 'The Saxon race is not deficient in feeling, but unaccustomed to analyse their impressions, or expand them in the expression: dealing little in metaphor, they have only the eloquence of simplicity and truth'.

He seems to be arguing, with Adam Smith, for a sensitivity in the rural worker which, though he does not possess the kind of intelligence or vocabulary necessary to convert his observations of surface phenomena into metaphysical speculations, nevertheless enables him to perceive in the environment -- and to communicate -- qualities which Joe's sharp wits might pass over in his search for matters of fact.

It is these qualities upon which Barnes's own observations seem to dwell and which he transmits through his poems. (Although there is also use of the metaphor which the Chronicle felt was beyond the countryman: I shall discuss this feature in Part Two.) And it is his attitude to these qualities which may have contributed to C. Day Lewis's sense of the wholesome in Barnes, for Hardy approvingly comments that Barnes managed to avoid speculating on the 'mysteries' of things, mysteries which, in his introduction to Barnes's poems, Hardy suspects may be 'unworthy and disappointing if solved'. The point is of course that Barnes, convinced of God's existence, did not really recognise mystery in Hardy's sense: he did not need to probe the depths of his surface observations, but merely to declare his faith in their manifestation of God's power. Nor should 'wholesome', in the context of Barnes's perception of objects, suggest something plain and sterile. It is true that his responses to nature and to the people and objects of his landscape will never, as I have discussed above, carry the ecstasy of Hopkins's more visionary and transcendental perceptions. Nor will they struggle with the tragedy which shadowed Hardy's vision, or with the agonising darkness which sometimes overwhelmed Hopkins. But his perceptions do, in the warmth, clarity and energy of their particularity, sometimes elicit a specialness from the objects they concern, elicit that is, the kind of 'benediction' which Geoffrey Grigson considers the right 'objectifier' can recognise in what might otherwise
Barnes is this kind of objectifier because of his personal response to his subject matter. He is not, as Palgrave believed, 'wholly out of sight'. He is present in his poems despite their structuring around rural personae. As Hardy said, Barnes 'often used the dramatic form of peasant speakers as a pretext for the expression of his own mind and experience'. Barnes himself wrote, of poetic creation, '... my heart did kindle wi' the fleame o't, / Whenever I did zee a touchen zight. The flame of response within him extended from its immediate inspiration to a warm, benign view of most of his experience and to its imaginative recreation in poetry.

It is this 'benediction' which lifts Barnes's work out of its immediately contemporary relevance. The previous chapter has demonstrated his sometimes uneasy compromise between a knowledge of the labouring family's actual life and his needs to maintain a stable, conservative social structure which may not always in fact accommodate that family's real needs. But the special pictorial quality of many of his images, and in particular the affirmative feelings carried by those images, may bring to Barnes's poetry a value which transcends the immediately local and contemporary.

A discussion through the analogy of Dutch painting may clarify this value. (I must stress, however, that what follows is an analogy. I am making the comparison in order to emphasise and explain qualities in Barnes which are otherwise difficult to describe with a sense of their vitality. But of course I acknowledge that paint and language communicate in essentially different ways and I would not wish to over-extend the parallels I have drawn. Furthermore, I am looking here particularly at the arrangement and presentation of images pictorially, but I shall be extending some of these considerations, and adding to them, in Chapter Six which looks closely at Barnes's linguistic skill in communicating precise meaning.)

E.H. Gombrich remarks, 'it is a fair guess to say that any work which excels in the representation of the beautiful surface of things, of flowers, jewels or fabric, will be by a northern artist, most probably by an artist from the Netherlands; while a painting with bold outlines, clear
perspective and a sure mastery of the beautiful human body, will be Italian'. Such careful attention to detail, and a certain indifference to conventional beauty, stemmed from the time of Van Eyck. Then, with the Reformation, came Protestant objections to any exuberant church art which was regarded as a sign of Popish idolatry, and northern artists, with a restricted market for altar panels and devotional works, were therefore encouraged to develop their traditional skill in representing the surface of things.

There is here an echo of the distinction which I drew between Barnes's response to nature as the product of God and Hopkins's response to it as if imbued with His power. And there are resemblances between the Dutch representation of the surface of things and Barnes's word paintings of his 'good and loveworthy' observations. The poem 'Whitsuntide an' Club Walken' (p.101), focuses, as do the majority of his poems, upon clearly realised external details. In fact, Barnes wished he had painted a picture of the event: 'I wish my box, / 'D a-got em all in cepes an' frocks'. But his words do an equally effective job of suggesting the colour, noise, and movement of the event, through their observation of surface features.

Zoo off they started, two an' two,
Wi' painted poles an' knots o' blue,
An' gilt silk flags, . . .
While fifes did squeak an' drums did rumble,
An' deep belzoons did grunt an' grumble,
An' all the vo'k in gath'ren crowds
Kick'd up the doust in smeechy clouds, . . .
An' after church they went to dine
'In the long-wall'd room behine
The public-house, where you remember,
We had our dance back last December.
An' there they melde sich stunnen clatters
Wi' knives an' forks, an' pleâtes an' platters;
An' waiters ran, an' beer did pass
Vrom tap to jug, vrom jug to glass.
There need be nothing inherently trivial in these portraits of simplicity. Probably Barnes would have agreed with Hardy: 'An object or mark raised or made by man on a scene is worth ten times any such formed by unconscious Nature'. He wrote himself, 'Each mark ov things a-gone vrom view -- / To eyezight's woone, to soulzight two'. His imaginative recreations of such marks can be valuable, as George Eliot claims in her discussion of commonplace things which she relates to their representation in Dutch paintings.

I would not, even if I had the choice, be the clever novelist who could create a world so much better than this, in which we get up in the morning to do our daily work, that you would be likely to turn a harder, colder eye on the dusty streets and the common green fields -- on the real breathing men and women, who can be chilled by your indifference or injured by your prejudice . . . It is for this rare, precious quality of truthfulness that I delight in many Dutch paintings, which lofty-minded people despise. I find a source of delicious sympathy in these faithful pictures . . . All honour and reverence to the divine beauty of form. Let us cultivate it to the utmost in men, women, and children -- in our gardens and in our houses. But let us love that other beauty too, which lies in no secret of proportion, but in the secret of deep human sympathy . . . let us always have men ready to give the loving pains of a life to the faithful representing of commonplace things -- men who see beauty in these commonplace things, and delight in showing how kindly the light of heaven falls on them.

There is in Barnes's work as a whole that kindly light of warmth and mellowness, which releases what Grigson calls 'benediction' from the subjects of his poems. The whole landscape is serene with a homely and restful beauty. Its picturesque quality is more reminiscent of the simple serenity of a Vlieger or a Van Goyen who, as Gombrich points out, may be more responsible than Claude, with his lofty temples and alluring glades, for drawing attention to the beauty of unpretentious nature.

When vu'st the breaken day is red,
   An' grass is dewy wet,
An' roun' the blackberry's a-spread
   The spider's gliss'nem net,
Then I do dreve the cows across
   The brook that's in a vog
While they do trot, an' bleère, an' toss.
But it is the concentration upon the human within serenely picturesque landscapes which Tom Paulin believes attracted Hardy to the Dutch tradition. Yet Hardy links Barnes directly to the still-life genre within the school. In fact none of Barnes's poems concentrate upon landscapes or objects without relating them to human beings. (The compositions of his engravings also foreground a figure or animal. Their technique resembles that of Thomas Bewick who slightly lowered 'that part of a woodblock which was background, thus emphasising the central figures'.) Perhaps, then, Hardy had in mind compositions like those of Jan Vermeer Van Delft (1632-75): Gombrich describes them as 'really still lifes with human beings'. It is worth quoting in full Gombrich's assessment of Vermeer's work, since a comparison with so many features of the paintings may illuminate Barnes's technique and achievement in words, particularly his clarity and 'light'.

With Vermeer genre painting has lost the last trace of humorous illustration. . . . It is hard to argue the reasons that make such a simple and unassuming picture as [The Cook] one of the greatest masterpieces of all time . . . One of its miraculous features can perhaps be described, though hardly explained. It is the way in which Vermeer achieves complete and painstaking precision in the rendering of textures, colours and forms without the picture ever looking laboured or harsh. Like a photographer who deliberately softens the strong contrasts of the picture without blurring the forms, Vermeer mellowed the outlines and yet retained the effect of solidity and firmness. It is this strange and unique combination of mellowness and precision which makes his best paintings so unforgettable. They make us see the quiet beauty of a simple scene with fresh eyes and give us an idea of what the artist felt when he watched the light flooding through the window and heightened the colour of a piece of cloth.

Though Barnes's poems may not claim the same stature as a painting by Vermeer, nonetheless they display the same ability to combine the surface details of ordinary people and events with the mellowness of a special light bathing the scene, a golden light which seems to convey the artist's feeling about his subject and thus makes his poems valuable. As Alan Chedzoy remarks, 'Barnes is, above all, a celebratory poet who affirms the value and beauty of even the most commonplace of human experiences. It is interesting to note just how frequently the word "love" appears on his pages'. Interesting -- but not surprising, since Barnes himself declared that 'in all which he himself had written there was not a line which was not inspired by love for and kindly sympathy with the things and people described'.
I shall consider in a moment the mellow lighting of Barnes's scenes, and will look first at his loving selection of detail in his images. Perhaps surprisingly, since Barnes was a regular contributor to adult education classes on scientific and nature topics, and since he insisted that his art pupils paint the fine detail of their perceptions, his observations of rural life do not have the precision of a naturalist. They do not have the same kind of accuracy as the work of Gilbert White or John Clare, in their pictures of creatures and plants associated with his human subjects. White of course was writing predominantly in prose. The following example is packed with details which never become tedious because their description and assessment carries a strong sense of White's own personality.

The language of birds is very ancient, and, like other ancient modes of speech, very elliptical: little is said, but much is meant and understood.

The notes of the eagle-kind are shrill and piercing; and about the season of nidification much diversified, as I have been often assured by a curious observer of nature, who long resided at Gibraltar, where eagles abound. The notes of our hawks much resemble those of the king of birds. Owls have very expressive notes; they hoot in fine vocal sound, much resembling the vox humana, and reducible by a pitch-pipe to a musical key. This note seems to express complacency and rivalry among the males; they use also a quick call and an horrible scream; and can snore and hiss when they mean to menace. Ravens, besides their loud croak, can exert a deep and solemn note that makes the woods to echo; the amorous sound of a crow is strange and ridiculous; rooks, in the breeding season, attempt sometimes in the gaiety of their hearts to sing, but with no great success. 25

Clare's poem 'The Nightingales Nest' combines this kind of ornithological detail with yet deeper personal response and reflection, and offers an image which is thus more precisely drawn and far more complex in its emotional charge than anything by Barnes.

... I've nestled down
And watched her while she sung -- and her renown
Hath made me marvel that so famed a bird
Should have no better dress than russet brown
Her wings would tremble in her extacy
And feather stand on end as twere with joy
And mouth wide open to release her heart
Of its out sobbing songs ...
How curious is the nest no other bird
Uses such loose materials or weaves
Their dwellings in such spots — dead oaken leaves
Are placed without and velvet moss within
And little scraps of grass — and scant and spare
Of what seems scarce materials down and hair 26

Barnes's images are in a sense more impressionistic than White's or Clare's, in their suggestion of landscape, animals, objects and the people he places amongst them. That is, they appear to highlight, very selectively, a few features of an image which most impressed Barnes, giving rise to the pictures he saw in his mind, and evidently to the 'Westcountry instress' which Hopkins said that he sensed in the poems. 27

Hardy remarked, 'the poetry of a scene varies with the minds of the perceivers. Indeed, it does not lie in the scene at all'. Of his own poems he said, 'they are mere impressions of the moment'. 28

It is a concept of Barnes as an impressionistic perceiver — and organiser of perception — which explains Patmore's remark that 'there is not the slightest touch of "poetry" in the language itself of the rustics ... yet poetry has not much to show which is more exquisite in its way than these unconscious and artless confabulations of carters and milkmaids as reflected in the consciousness and arranged by the art of the poet'. 29

Barnes's 'arranged impressions' do not have complexity: they have (rather like the solidity and firmness of the Vermeer) a richness in simplicity. They do not, for instance, have the density which many of Clare's poems display. John Barrell's general thesis in The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place: 1730-1840, which he develops through close linguistic analysis and by comparison with Thomson, describes Clare's rapid accumulation of a large number of visual observations, without a clear pattern in their presentation. Barrell suggests that the technique reflects an eye born to a landscape of pre-enclosure freedom. The process of enclosure was drawing to a close in Barnes's early years, but in any case, whatever kind of landscape had confronted him, it is
likely, given his pleasure in harmony and his belief in its God-created origin, that he would have ordered his impressions into some kind of logical schema. That schema generally seems motivated by a desire for a simple distinctness which grasps the essence of a thing -- the inscape, perhaps.

Barnes's impressions of people and their environment have telling details, clearly placed, as they are in the poem 'Uncle and Aunt' (p.108).

An' then they stump'd along vrom there
A-vield, to zee the cows an' meHrre;
An' she, when uncle come in zight,
Look'd up, an' prick'd her ears upright,
An' whicker'd out wi' all her might;
An' he, a-chucklen, went to zee
The cows below the sheHdy tree,
Wi' leafy boughs a-swaHyen.

Here there is not the extensive detail of a Hopkins poem like 'Harry Ploughman', a description which Tom Paulin suggests offers religious quiddity but only a 'grotesque ... wickerwork' of a man.

Hard as hurdle arms, with a broth of goldish flue
Breathed round; the rack of ribs; the scooped flank; lank
Rope-over thigh; knee; nave; and barrelled shank -
Head and foot, shoulder and shank - 30

Barnes's impressions work more like Hopkins's poem 'Brothers' which picks up just a hint here and there of two boys' behaviour.

... wrung all on love's rack,
My lad, and lost in Jack,
Smiled, blushed, and bit his lip;
Or drove, with a diver's dip,
Clutched hands down through clasped knees -31

As Hopkins's own next lines explain, such hints of impressions -- 'tricks like these' -- are 'truth's tokens' and 'old tell tales'. Barnes's
image of Uncle and Aunt is similarly constructed. Their personalities and close relationship are perfectly conveyed in a small number of 'truth's tokens'.

Aunt is particular: she 'did pull her gown-tail drough / Her pocket-hole, to keep en neat', and it is time to go home when her husband holds up her shoe to show how wet it is with dew. Uncle is apparently more changeable and expansive in his moods: he is annoyed by fowls picking his seeds, pleased to see apple-blossom with its prospect of cider, and delighted by his horse's welcome. They are an inseparable pair: they 'walk' together, 'stump' together, 'toddle' together, 'eerrm in eerrm . . . about their tiny farm'.

Barnes is consistent in this kind of approach to description of his visual images. Bloomfield has a similar technique in 'The Farmer's Boy', carefully choosing telling and immediate detail.

    The clatt'ring dairy-maid immers'd in steam,
    Singing and scrubbing midst her milk and cream,
    Bawls out, "Go fetch the cows: . . ."

But he frequently reverts to a more mannered use of conventional adjectives and personification.

    Fled now the sullen murmurs of the North,
    The splendid raiment of the Spring peeps forth;
    Her universal green, and the clear sky,
    Delight still more and more the gazing eye . . .
    But, unassisted through each toilsome day,
    With smiling brow the plowman cleaves his way,
    Draws his fresh parallels, and wid'ning still,
    Treads slow the heavy dale, or climbs the hill.

Barnes on the other hand maintains the judicious selection of vivid detail which he displays in his treatment of people in 'Uncle and Aunt' and extends it to his images of animals, plants, landscape, homes, and the effects of weather.
Dogs are not simply 'brown-dappled' or 'russet-dappled'. They also sniff the ground with 'lowzet nose' and 'whinen sigh'. Horses are 'airy-headed', cows 'hump-back'd', pigs 'sniff-snouted'. The 'bull do hook, / An' bleare, an' fling the dirt'. Peewits are 'striden . . . O tip-tooe wi' their screamen cry' and there is a hornet that 'rose Up clwose avore my nose'.

The appearance, movement, and smell of plants are similarly clear. Autumn leaves are 'crumpled, daisies are 'huddled thick'. Apples have 'all a-happered down', the 'gil'cups quiver'd quick', and 'the long-slighted woodbine did nod / Vrom the wall, wi' a loose-hangen head'. And 'tho' the darkness then did hide / The dewy rwose's blushing bloom, / He still did cast sweet a'r inside / . . . and flung / His sweetness vrom his darken'd ball'.35 (I shall be looking in Chapter Six at the Dorset use of the personal pronoun.)

The landscape too is perfectly distinct. And since for Barnes it is heavily and actively peopled, its details often relate to their day-to-day practical experience of it. On one hot day the ground was 'white-soil'd', the road full of 'sweechy doust', between 'hedge-clim'd hills'. But in winter 'the vield' is 'a-vroze so white' that it is 'Too hard tonight to spweil your clothes. / You got noo pools to waddle drough, / Nor clay a-pullen off your shoe'.36

The changing weather alters this landscape before our eyes. The wind can gently 'huffle' or it can be 'wild-reaven'. And after the early-morning fog is dispelled, milkmaids are woken by a 'window-striken zun'. At midday it is so bright and hot that it is 'cheek-burnen'. Yet,

How sweet's the evenen dusk to rove
Along wi' woone that we do love!
When light enough is in the sky
To sheMde the smile an' light the eye. 37

Houses, and the furniture and objects within them, are clearly set against the landscape. The 'raIn- bred moss ha' staf'n'd wi' green / The smooth-feMced wall's white-morter'd streaks', and the persona remembers sitting amongst the logs on the hearth when he was young.
An' when I zot among em, I
Could zee all up age in the sky
Drough chimney, where our vo'k did hitch
The zalt-box an' the bel'con vlitch,
An' watch the smoke on out o' vier,
All up an' out o' tun, an' higher.
An' there wer bel'con up on rack,
An' plehtes an' dishes on the tack;
An' rou'n the walls wer herbs a-stowed
In pelpern bags, an' blathers blowed.
An' just above the clavy-bwoard
Wer father's spurs, an' gun, an' sword;
An' there wer then, our girstest pride,
The settle by the vier-side. 38

There is a folk-tale quality (to which I shall be returning in
Chapter Six) in the clear arrangement of simple detail. In particular
the folk tradition stresses simple, primary colours, and colour -- clear,
bright colour -- plays a vital part in the impressions conveyed by Barnes's
poems. It was also the 'truth of colour' which he so much admired in the
Dutch school of painting. 39

But Barnes's observation of colour, though in one sense personally
impressionistic, is linked to his sense of God-given harmony and order
in all things. As he explained in 'Thoughts on Beauty on Art' (to which
I referred in Chapter One), he believed that colours in nature were in a
balanced distribution: no discordant combinations were possible in God's
organised fitness.

In the forms and colours of objects in a landscape there is a fitness
and harmony of the good of God's formative will. The green of the earth,
and the blue of the sky, of which the world affords us such breadths,
are less wearisome and destructive to the sight than would be a world
of red or white, and blinds our eyes more slowly than would an earth
of silvery brightness, or a lasting vision of blood; and the effect
of long-beholden breadths of strong colour blunts our sight to the truth
of colour itself. . . .

Nature is very sparing of showy contrasts of warm and cold colours.
Red and blue are very rare, and of yellow and blue the cases are but
few; and black and blue are found in lepidoptera more often than white
and blue are seen in our Flora and Fauna.
It is not uncommon for one of two strong colours to be overcast with a tinge of its fellow, or for both of them to be reconciled by a common touch of black, or of some third colour; or of one of them to be lightened by a dash of white, while the other is lowered by as much black; and so red, offhued with black, -- russet and green upbrightened with white, -- often meet in the autumn in dead and dying patches of fading leaves. 40

His impressions of natural colour and form should then impinge -- naturally beautiful -- upon Barnes's passive eye, without any need for him to actively and artistically select and arrange. He is looking it seems for what Hopkins calls 'inscape', discovering a distinctive and beautiful pattern inherent in all things. In fact, Paulin suggests that in this respect Barnes is an influence upon Hopkins, and also upon Hardy in poems like 'Afterwards' ('the May month flaps its glad green leaves like wings, / Delicate-filmed as new-spun silk'), in which 'the act of observation becomes a kind of vision . . . deliberate scrutiny, the cold clear view of things, passes into a reverence for what is observed . . . [and] hidden, natural forms appear to be echoed in human designs'. 41

Poem after poem displays Barnes's use of colour, so that it is difficult to make one apt selection. But the following examples all demonstrate both the manner in which a single touch of colour quickly and clearly defines an image, and the way in which these colours complement each other, in the landscape Barnes perceives and in the poem he writes. There is nothing harsh in these colour combinations, just as there was nothing jarring in the contrasts of the Vermeers.

The burdock leaves upon the ledge,
The leaves upon the poplar's height,
A-bloom by wind all up on edge,
Did show their underzides o' white;
An' withy trees bezide the rocks
Did bend grey limbs, did swly grey boughs,
As there, on waggen heads, dark locks
Be-spread redcheHks, behung white brows. 42

My lofty elem trees do screen
  My brown-ruf'd house, an' here below,
My geese do strut athirt the green,
  An' hiss an' flap their wings o' snow. 43
Barnes even recognised deliciously complementary colour in the food on the table!

An' there, in platters, big and brown,
 Wer red fat be\=
con, an' a roun
0' beef wi' gravy that would drown
 A little rwoasten pig;
 Wi' belins and te\=
ties vull a zack,
 An' cabbage that would me\=
ke a stack,
 An' puddens brown, a-speckled black
 Wi' figs, so big's my wig. 44

My final example of colour-detail introduces a discussion of the impression of light shining upon Barnes's images.

Dear lilac-tree, a-spreaden wide
 Thy purple blooth on ev'ry zide,
 As if the hollow sky did shed
 Its blue upon thy flow'ry head;
 Oh! whether I mid shelire wi' thee
 Thy open aIr, my bloomen tree,
 Or zee thy blossoms vrom the gloom,
 'Ithin my zunless worken-room,
 My heart do le\=
p, but le\=
p wi' sighs,
 At zight o' thee avore my eyes,
 Vor when thy grey-blue head do sway
 In cloudless light, 'tis Spring, 'tis May.

'Tis Spring, 'tis May, as May woonce shed
 His glowen light above thy head --
 When thy green boughs, wi' bloomy tips,
 Did she\=
de my childern's laughen lips;
 A-screenen vrom the noonday gle\=
re
 Their rwoosy cheekks am' glossy he\=
ir;
 The while their mother's needle sped,
 Too quick vor zight, the snow-white thread. 45

Light pervades all of Barnes's work, shining as it does in this poem, upon the colours and shapes of his visual images, both in the present
and in his memories of the past. And, just as light seemed to both heighten and mellow the images of the Vermeer, so it contributes to the special sense of 'benediction' (to repeat Grigson's use of the word) which Barnes helps the subjects of his poems to 'elicit and exert'.

He was evidently fascinated by the effects of light. Throughout the poems there are references to the 'sheen' of glossy hair, of loving eyes, and also of polished furniture, affectionately cared for year after year. In all these respects light is the sign of human vitality and feeling. Then, Barnes liked May-time most of all, because it has a 'sparklen brightness' which means the butterflies can 'gleam the mowst by [its] gay light'. Clear light showed things to their best advantage. -- naturally.

But it will be remembered that it was also Barnes's deliberate intention to bring the 'light' of his own perceptions to his poems of community life: he set out to highlight all that in his view seemed best in the rural environment. So in Barnes's poems the working day is bathed in actual light and warmth from the sun. The heat does not -- in his imaginative impression -- draw sweat from the labourer's brow, as it does in Stephen Duck's, who wrote,

The Morning past, we sweat beneath the Sun;
And but uneasily our Work goes on.
Before us we perplexing Thistles find,
And Corn blown adverse with the muffling Wind.
Behind our Master waits; and if he spies
One charitable Ear, he grudging cries,
'Ye scatter half your Wages o'er the Land'.
Then scraperes the Stubble with his greedy Hand. 48

On the contrary. Barnes imagines,

An' when the zun, so low an' red,
Do sheen above the leafy head
O' zome broad tree, a-rizen high
Avore the vi'ry western sky,
'Tis merry where all hand's do goo
Athirt the groun', by two an' two,
A-reählen, over humps an' hollors,
The russlen grass up into rollers. 49

But Barnes does not always set his poems in a vigorous, cheerful light. Frequently the landscape is bathed in a peaceful, mellow glow. Tom Paulin notes the drowsy heat of the poem called 'The Clote' (p.125): a warm glow is suggested by the flowers' golden colour in combination with the sense of 'slow an' smooth' movement, bending, swaying, and floating, with the River Stour. Paulin relates these lines to Hardy's poem, 'The Musical Box', which also images lilies upon the River Stour. But there is a difference in the response of the two poems to the experience. As Paulin points out, Hardy is regretting that he has not fully valued the images and experiences the day brought him. For Hardy the heat is not soothing but enervating: 'the posts and walls and road / Flung back their sense of the hot-faced sun'. And the white-muslined woman waiting to greet him is not seen with, I would add, the valuing eye of Barnes, who pleasurably notices the maidens as they watch the clote floating along and draw it towards them with long-stemmed rakes. It is the kind of valuing eye which lights his scenes in the same way that Vermeer floods his paintings with a mellow glow.

Hardy regrets that he has not appreciated

. . . what the nonce outpours --
This best of life - that shines about
Your welcoming!

Barnes's poems appreciate not only the best of his present but also all that his present recalls of his past. His perceptions of his sunlit landscape are constantly -- and contentedly -- linked with memories of life that has gone. It is partly for this reason that Barnes's poems can seem anachronistic, bathing his images of rural life in a light that shone from a more stable past. Even the drowsy image of the clote is interrupted with the marvellously joyful memory of past activity that it triggers.

Wi' eärms a-spreaden, an' cheëks a-blowen,
How proud wer I when I vu'st could zwim
Athirt the pleâce where thou bist a-growen.
He is perhaps indulging a conscious practice, a deliberate lightening of the present through memories of the past. For Barnes wrote,

Though time do dreve me on, my mind
Do turn in love to thee behind,
The selëme's a bulrush that's a-shook
By wind a-blowen up the brook:
The curlen stream would dreve en down,
But playsome air do turn en roun',
An' meûke en seem to bend wi' love
To zunny hollows up above. 51

And the poem 'Lowshot Light' (p.562) suggests a way of seeing which is the very reverse of Hardy's visioning in 'Neutral Tones'.52 For Hardy 'keen lessons' have shaped a 'God-curst sun'. For Barnes the retrospective pictures in his mind shine as he believes they first shone, on a day lightened by sunshine and by a 'lovely feûce, wi' zunny brow'.

As I went eastward, while the sun did zet,
His yellow light on bough by bough did sheen

An' there, among the gil'cups by the knap,
Below the elems, cow by cow did sheen.

While after heûiry-headed horses' heels,
Wi' slowly-rollen wheels, the plough did sheen.

An' up among the vo'k upon the reûves,
One lovely feûce, wi' zunny brow, did sheen.

An' bright, vor that one feûce, the bough, an' cow,
An' plough, in my sweet fancy, now do sheen. 53

It is this determination always to see things in their best light which may leave Barnes open to John Barrell's charge of a 'hopeless' nostalgia and artificiality.54 I mentioned above that Barrell identifies in certain paintings by Constable a similar evasion of the real condition of the rural worker. Interestingly, Lucy Baxter recalls her father's
patronage of a local artist named John Thorne. She thought his work resembled Constable's in its 'happy treatment of rustic subjects' -- and was therefore a fitting illustration for Barnes's poems.

There are qualities in Barnes's work which might be seen as evasive. There is for instance a use of comedy which may be distancing. A comparison can be made here between the poems and the paintings of an early Dutch painter, Peter Bruegel the Elder (1525-69). I do not think that either Hardy or Barnes had his work in mind when they referred to the Dutch school: they appear to be referring to the kind of later paintings which have been helpful in my discussion so far. Nevertheless, Bruegel's concentration upon the humour of peasant life is a helpful analogy.

There are marked similarities between his famous picture of a country wedding, and some of Barnes's images. In the wedding painting a great many people and things are packed into a small space and moment of time with the impression of energy and good humour. The same is true of Barnes's poem, 'Hay-meaken' (p.114).

'Tis merry ov a zummer's day,  
Where vo'k be out a-mëhken ha'y;  
Where men an' women, in a string,  
Do ted or turn the grass, an' zing,  
Wi' cheemen va'ces, merry zongs,  
A-tossen o' their sheenen prongs  
Wi' eHrms a-zwangen left an' right.  
In colour'd gowns an' shirtsleeves white;  
Or, wider spread, a-reëken round  
The rwosy hedges o' the ground,  
Where Sam do zee the speckled sneëke,  
An' try to kill en wi' his reëke;  
An Poll do jump about an' squall,  
To zee the twisten slooworm crawl.

'Tis merry where a gay-tongued lot  
Ov Hay'-meakers be all a-squot,  
On lightly-russlen ha'y, a-spread  
Below an elem's lofty head,
To rest their weary limbs an' munch
Their bit o' dinner, or their munch;
Where teothy relics do lie all round
By picks a-stuck up into ground.
An' wi their vittles in their laps,
An' in their hornen cups their draps
O' cider sweet, or frothy ale,
Their tongues do run wi' jokes an' teale.

The light-hearted treatment of similar moments of work, play and drama, figures in poem after poem, including 'Gay Faux's Night' (p.157), 'Bees A-zwarrnen' (p.131), and 'Polly Be-en Upzides Wi' Tom' (p.127). All, like the Bruegel, pile detail upon detail, indicating sounds, movements, objects, colours, enthusiasm and excitement.

Gombrich suggests that Bruegel's work types his peasants as figures of fun, though he believes there is no malice in their representation. There is certainly nothing cruel in Barnes's near-equivalents: each image is treated with the affection he said he brought to every other element of poetry. But he also vowed to exclude anything that he considered to be crude or vicious. This may mean that some of his comic scenes stop short of human reality. For instance, his eclogue, 'The Best Man in the Vield' (p.117), leaves the reader with an impression of verbal badinage, amusing in its choice of epithets. 'You yoppen dog!' 'Do shut thy lyen chops!' 'You snub-nos'd flopperchops!' 'You grinnen fool!' The final line reads, 'Come on then, Samel; jist let's have woone bout'. But we never witness the actual bout with its heaving bodies, bitter taunts, and likely spilling of blood. Spite, irony and sarcasm, are also missing from Barnes's good-humoured humour. But intellectual or black comedy can hardly be expected from a poet who deliberately sets out to highlight all that he considers good and love-worthy. The result may be seen as evasion -- or concentration, depending on one's judgement of this basic aim.

But there is also a kind of evasion of tragedy. For instance, 'The Wife A-lost' (p.333), written some time after Julia's death, shows the persona deliberately avoiding all contact with places and objects that might remind him of her in life. If he does not protect himself
from the beech-tree they both knew, the dining-table they shared, the summer heat in which they once walked together, he risks the triggering of remembered love -- inevitably followed by anguished grief at her loss.

Yet this attempt to avoid the triggers of pain does not mean that Barnes did not understand or convey a sense of suffering. On the contrary, it suggests he understood it only too well. And there is no need for him to spell out that suffering for his readers. His poems can, like 'The Wife A-lost', be occasional 'tokens' to its existence, just as grammer kept her wedding shoes and gramfer's stockings and a lock of his hair, but locked them away to be looked at only rarely -- with tears and shaking head, but without comment. The stoic acceptance of grief and the determination to carry on with life in face of difficulty is again part of Barnes's Christian determination to concentrate upon the good and the loveworthy.

She'd a gown wi' girt flowers lik' hollyhocks,
An' zome stockens o' gramfer's a-knit wi' clocks,
An' a token she kept under lock an' key, --
A small lock ov his he'air off avore't wer grey.
   An' her eyes wer red,
   An' she shook her head,
When we'd all a-look'd at it, an' she did use
To lock it away wi' her wedden shoes. 58

This concentration includes stress upon those brightest memories and happiest feelings which are firmly carried and triggered by visible objects. Every place and object retains its old aura.

The squier's house, an' ev'ry ground
That now his son ha' zwold, 0,
An' ev'ry wood he hunted round
'S a ple'ice a te'le's a-twold o'. 59

And, as the poem 'Our Fathers' Works' (p.270) explains, each man's permanent contribution to the life of his community preserves continuity between past, present, and future generations. 'Zoo now mid nwone ov us vorget / The pattern our vorefathers zet.'
Barnes's poems are his own 'good works' to the memory and preservation of that traditional pattern. They cannot, given his own calm personality and his orthodox faith, represent the transcendent vision of Hopkins. They will not carry the doubt of Hardy or the sadness of Clare. Instead, they affirm a life on earth which in its richness must, for Barnes, confirm the existence of God its maker. That richness of human life in nature is augmented for Barnes by the objects of the landscape which retain a vitality bestowed upon them by the people who have used them: on occasion the quality of light and colour and movement in his poems energises them with that original life-force.

Tom Paulin draws attention to 'The Wold Clock' (p. 548). It is, he says 'both Dutch and visionary', transforming the ordinary objects 'into something quite extraordinary'. If Barnes has evaded some realities, he has released from others the kind of 'benediction' which Grigson identifies, and which can be compared with the 'combination of mellowness and precision' that exists in Dutch paintings like those of Vermeer.

Whilst considering Barnes's subjective impressions of the objects and experiences of his landscape, I would add that there is a sense in which, far from being evasive of reality, his poems offer him a personal confrontation with anguish and a possible release from it in consequence. It bears comparison with a vanitas in a Dutch still-life.

It is obvious that even the material drawn directly from a labourer's experience is coloured, despite Palgrave's belief that Barnes is out of sight in the poems, by Barnes's own personality. But there are also a number of poems which apparently have a much more directly personal basis. For instance, the poem 'The Music o' the Dead' (p.207) was written in response to the death of Barnes's friend, Edward Fuller. And 'John Bloom in Lon'on' (p.473) was written out of an incident which occurred when Barnes took his wife and family to the Crystal Palace shortly before her death. But there is too an interesting cluster of poems about a figure called 'JeMne' or 'Jenny'. (Jenny is evidently a diminutive of JeMne as the same persona bears both names in 'Hay Carren' (p.115).)

Lucy Baxter believed that many of these poems, and some of those
concerning a Mary, were inspired by her mother, Julia. But, as I shall show, the details of JeMne's history vary and sometimes even conflict. Yet there does seem to be a kind of common denominator between the group of poems in that they all carry deeper emotions than those rather more superficial figures, Poll, Fanny and sometimes Mary. It may be that Barnes used the figure of JeMne less as a moving study of an integrated personality, and more as a focus and outlet for some of his deepest personal feelings, not all of them triggered by Julia herself. Possibly JeMne carries traces of other real women actually known to Barnes, including perhaps his aunts at Pentridge. (Though there is no suggestion in any records that Barnes had any love-relationship other than his marriage with Julia, and my correspondence with the' Dorset Barnes society has not elicited an actual person named JeMne who seems relevant.) But origins are of less importance than the existence, in the imaginative medium of poetry, of such a figure. The attachment of expressions of profound feeling to the fictional JeMne may imply that Barnes found his writing an effective outlet for private emotion. (There is a similar figure called Jane or Jenny in the standard work.)

Frequently the JeMne poems carry a sense of loss, either experienced by her or caused by her. There is attendant anguish or nostalgia. Barnes was in reality separated from his fiancée for a long period whilst he began his teaching career in Wiltshire, and it may be that this parting affected him more deeply than his rather prosaic love letters, written at the time, would indicate. And Parins draws attention to another actual and very likely traumatic loss in Barnes's life. His mother died whilst he was very young. Parins notes that the poem 'My Mornen Moon' (p.512) describes a tension between the affection a persona feels for his mother and the love he has for his wife: he vows that his love for his wife will never obscure the memory of his dead mother. That memory is also preserved in 'Mother o' Mothers' (p.510) which is based upon both a mother and a grandmother before her. And motherly characteristics in all the women figures in Barnes's work are always praised.

In this connection Parins also considers the standard poem 'My Dearest Julia' (p.703), written after the death of Julia Barnes. He
suggests it reflects an overscrupulousness of mourning for his wife: Barnes writes that when he is momentarily distracted from her memory he seems to hear Julia's voice admonishing him for forgetting. Parins wonders if this apparent guilt stems from Barnes's inability, given that he had been very young, to adequately mourn his mother's early death.

At any rate, whatever the precise psychological background, the early loss of his mother may well, together with distress at his separation from Julia whilst they were engaged, have contributed to the large number of poems of parting, particularly those clustered around the figure of Jeēne, who is certainly not always a specific representation of Julia Barnes. (Julia's own death cannot account for all the loss poems: many had been written long before she died in 1852.) That is, whatever lay behind them, feelings of painful separation and loss were evidently clearly understood by Barnes and seem to have passed through his imagination into poems which may be distanced from the precise biographical events of his life. And though the feelings of loss may frequently centre upon a relationship, this same insecurity is also related in the poems to the changing culture as a whole.

Of course Barnes did not lose the real Julia, but in 'Jeēne, O' Grenly Mill' (p.219) a nightmare that bears comparison with his actual life is realised. Julia's parents had objected to Barnes initially on financial grounds, and in this poem the lover is actually forsaken for another and wealthier man. In 'Sweet Music in the Wind' (p.107) the persona takes a lonely walk to places he had visited with 'dear Jenny'. Jenny has gone now, and yet the 'playvul aTr . . .

Do seem, - as I do hear it pass, -  
As if thy vaice did come to tell  
Me where thy happy soul do dwell,  
   Sweet music in the wind!

The poem does not say that Jenny has died: it is possible that she has simply gone away (particularly in view of the poem 'Jenny Out From Hwome' (p.145) to which I return below). And, if we were to conclude that Julia Miles was the model for all these poems, it should be noted that this poem appeared first in an edition published before her death.
(There is an ironic contrast between this poem and the one Barnes certainly wrote with his wife in mind, after she died: 'The Wife A-lost' (p.333) makes it sadly clear that the persona can no longer bear to walk in places he has visited with his beloved.) But Julia could not have been the only model for these lines: the woman was apparently a milk-maid -- 'Wi' pa'rl a-held avore thy knee' -- whilst Miss Miles was the daughter of an excise supervisor. At the very least, then, Barnes has transmuted his feelings for Julia into an image which fits in close detail the labouring context of his Dorset poems. 'JeeHe Wedden Day in Mornen' (p.111) also seems to place Jenny in a rural context. Here the losers are her parents, the speaker's aunt and uncle. Perhaps they are smallholders, for JeeHe sets off to her wedding in the new light cart, pulled by uncle's mare. As she goes 'two tears run down / Aunt's feHece, uncle 'stump'd off wi' his stick, / Because did touch en to the quick / To peHrt wi' JeeHe thik mornen', and Tom muttered, 'Now JeeHe's a-gone . . . we / Shall mwope lik' owls 'thin a tree'. But here Jenny is only partially lost. In 'The Dree Woaks' the parting is sharper.

Zoo happy wer we by the woaks o' the green,
Till we lost sister JeeHnet, our pride;
Vor when she wer come to her last blusheH teen,
She suddenly zicken's an' died.

But, as is usual in Barnes, faith -- and the resolution of the poem -- make sadness bearable. For the girl's mother believed,

... that hereafter she knew she should zee
Why God, that's above,
Vound fit in His love
To strike wi' His han' the poor maHd . . .

(I have referred above to these concluding stanzas which, being 'parsonical', irritated Hardy, and I shall be considering them again in Chapter Six.)

However, yet another history is attached to a girl named JeeHe in 'Week's End in Zummer in the Wold Vo'k's Time' (p.120). Again, she is lost to her family, and this time evidently by her suicide. But she has died because she too has suffered separation. The speaker remembers,
In fact, the figure of Jenny is frequently not, through her going away, the cause of suffering to the speaker. Quite often it is she herself who bears the burden of separation. The poem 'Jenny Out Vrom Hwome' (p.145) carries a potent feeling of loss endured by Jenny. It expresses the sense of vast distances between those who are apart, and conveys the persona's overwhelming desire to try to cover those distances, to have news of her loved ones, or simply to know that people left behind are thinking of their Jenny though she is 'out vrom hwome'.

O wild-weven winds I do wish I could vlee
Wi' you, lik' a bird o' the clouds, up above
The ridge o' the hill an' the top o' the tree,
To where I do long vor, an' vo'k I do love.

Perhaps by this imaginative means -- which is distanced, through the suffering Jenny, even further from Barnes himself than the various stories of a man and his family experiencing the loss of a young woman -- the poet could express an emotion personally and painfully known. An ex-pupil, C.J. Wallis, doubted that passions were known to Barnes. I suspect he underestimated Barnes's inner feelings and reacted only to his restrained outward demeanour. For though this impression of serenity might be substantiated by a superficial reading of the poems, it may be challenged by reference to the figure of Jenny and also by attention to the sense of painful cultural loss which is present, just beneath the surface, in many other poems. It is present as I have explained in Chapter Two but, as I shall suggest immediately below and again in Chapters Five and Six, stoically controlled.

For, in 'The Rwose that Deck'd her Breast' (p.198), Jenny loses Robert after two years of marriage. Her happiness in marriage had been symbolised by the rose she wore. But now, bereaved, flowers only sadden her.
...columbines an' hollyhocks;
The jilliflow'r an' nodden pink,
An' rwose that touch'd her soul to think
Ov woone that deck'd her breast.

And yet, Barnes does not permit the poem to end in sadness. Jenny's cheek is still pale with grief, 'pehle's the milk-white jessamine'.

But Robert have a-left behine
A little bebbby wi' his feAce,
To smile, an' nesle in the pleAce
Where the rwose did deck her heart.

This poem, in company with so many others, does not ignore shadows, but is determined to trust in God and in the security of stable community, family life, and cyclical nature, and thus to bear and ultimately lift the darkness.

And of course it is the light which ultimately triumphs in Barnes's work. Dutch paintings frequently include a vanitas, some reminder that though the vision they present is delightful, it can be transformed. Perhaps the presence of a clock will warn that the still-life does not in reality last for ever and may perish. The warnings are ever-present in Barnes. Christmas is celebrated in a number of poems, but still 'The Vier-zide', amidst its delight in the comforts of home, remembers,

An' Chris'mas still mid bring his me'th
To ouer he'th, but if we tried
To gather all that woonce did wear
Gay feaces there! Ah! zome had' died,
An' zome be gone to le've wi' gaps
O' missen laps, the vier-zide.

And 'Hallowed Pleaces' (p.285), which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six, mingle the delight of family gatherings and reminiscence, with hints of disquiet in chilly winds and dark and leafless trees. 'The Happy Days When I wer Young' (p.171) freely admits that times have changed.
O valley dear! I wish that I
'D a-liv'd in former times, to die
Wi' all the happy souls that trod
Thy turf in peace, an' died to God;
Or gone wi' them that laugh'd an' zung
In happy days when I wer young!

Those happy days are of course preserved in and largely dominate the poems. Their imagined glow may allow Barnes's art to transcend its immediate historical context and be valuable not as an evasive escape but as an optimistic vision.

For Jeâlne is not always lost. In 'Martin's Tide' (p.156) she is the persona's wife: there is warmth, peace, and harmony to be enjoyed within their family. Preservation of groups, of the family and the community and indeed of class, is as always Barnes's major theme. And preservation is, in a sense, also the central issue of Part Two of this study, in which I consider Barnes's respect for dialect and his consequent awareness -- and skilful use -- of its rich semanticity which, in another way, affirms for him the value of the local community. Nevertheless, the countering touch of darkness prevents Barnes's work from being a completely unbalanced, unreal and shadowless, image. Perhaps he could not articulate fears and pain in his day-to-day communication: but through his poetry, and particularly through the figure of Jenny, he was able to express his fear of loss and separation in personal relationships and in cultural identity, and also to underline his need to try to maintain a glowing rural vision since he was fully aware of the challenges to its existence both from perennial day-to-day rigours and from the upheaval of the century. The poem simply titled 'Jeâlne' (p.213) ends on an optimistic note -- the note which dominates all his work -- but it makes plain that life is not easy: it implies years of strain, though these are now passed so that 'We now mid hope vor better cheer, / My smilen wife o' twice vive year'. Yet the last stanza of this poem is specially interesting. For it implies secret feelings hidden from all but the beloved Jeâlne: that is, Barnes may have hidden much of himself and of his recognition of insecurity from his actual loved ones, but he was perhaps able to reveal a more uncertain, more emotional side of his personality to the imaginary Jenny of his art.
An' nwone but I can ever tell
Ov all thy tears that have a-vell
When trials mead thy bosom zwell,
An' nwone but thou o' mine, Jeâne.

* * * * * *

In Part One I have been exploring Barnes's motivations as an artist and describing the ideas which, as a result, dominate his poetry and communicate an image of a courageous and largely contented local circle. In Part Two I turn to the language of his art, to what Hardy called 'the closeness of phrase to his vision'. I shall be explaining in Chapter Four the linguistic theories which lie behind Barnes's use of dialect, and in Chapters Five and Six will discuss both the possible limitations consequent upon confining poetry to a particular circle of language and also the skill and subtlety with which Barnes used the advantages of concentration upon the Dorset speech to communicate a rich impression of his imagined rural community.
PART TWO

Part One has examined Barnes's artistic theme: that is his image of all that he valued in the local community and family circle. Part Two now discusses the linguistic 'circle' through which he expressed his vision.
CHAPTER FOUR

A CIRCLE OF LANGUAGE

Part One has considered the question of 'serviceability' in Barnes's themes. Whilst this issue has received some attention, the subject of Part Two — Barnes's use of language — seems to have caused little dissent amongst critics. Feingold admires the 'graceful strength' of his verse. Sisson. applauds his 'lucidity and variety in dramatic dialogue', his 'sweetness of refrain' and 'sheer verse-craft'. And Grigson has remarked:

Perhaps neglect of Barnes has been proportional to neglect of poetry as an art of wholes in speech, an art of words, and to the exalting of poetry or the poem as a congeries of images. When other major-minor poets of the nineteenth century wrote a token of language of devitalised romanticism, Barnes wrote out of speech.

However, I am not aware of any extensive examination of Barnes's work as 'an art of wholes'. The remainder of the dissertation sets out to deal with this aspect of his poetry. It will discuss the reasons behind Barnes's use of dialect, and the consequences of his choice: I shall be suggesting that his imaginative use of the local speech limits him in certain ways, but in other respects extends his capabilities as an artist. The remaining Chapters will also consider Barnes's handling of words, be they part of a local or a national vocabulary, with the kind of 'fitness', and the kind of 'skill that conceals skill', in which he delighted.

I shall be examining Barnes's poetry with the help of descriptive linguistic techniques. He was himself a linguist, whose theories of grammar affected his art, so that a linguistic approach is specially appropriate in criticism of the poems. It seems particularly fruitful to look at his work via two major linguistic concepts: that is, the notion of the model, and the dichotomy of competence and performance.

Barnes's model of the Dorset dialect is contained in his Dissertation on the Folk Speech, which accompanies his first collection of Dorset poems,
published in 1844. It is appropriate to call the contents of this work a model since, like all linguistic models, it is a description of language which is motivated and shaped by a particular interest in, and set of assumptions about, that language. The essential terms are 'description' and 'motivated'. Like all models, linguistic and otherwise, Barnes's description (of Dorset dialect) is essentially a partial description, for the directing motivation of a model leads to a concentration upon certain aspects of its subject to the necessary exclusion of others. A map, designed to describe/clarify the possibilities for road transport in a particular country, will not obscure its drawing with information on other aspects of that country — the presence of ancient monuments, say, or the location of wildlife sanctuaries — unless these details affect transport conditions. The same kind of limitations are present, by definition, in linguistic models. Thus, Chomsky's transformational-generative model of language, inspired by his particular interests in language acquisition and the description of structures underlying utterances, postulates the existence of both deep and surface structures and models the development of a sentence between these points. His model does not take particular account of the relationship between a sentence and the situation in which it is used. Halliday, on the other hand, concentrates upon this functional aspect of language, and describes — models — language from the point of view of a correspondence which he finds existing between its structures and the social situations it serves.

Barnes was apparently particularly interested in the semantic potential of the Dorset speech in actual performance in the local context. (I shall be defining the paired terms, competence and performance, more specifically, below.) It is this basic interest in performance which generally shapes his model of the dialect.

His academic interest in language had been encouraged when, whilst a young man, a visit to Wales had given him 'a yearning to know more of the Welsh people and their speech'. It is significant that he was attracted to the two things in combination — the Welsh language as he heard it, not in abstraction, but in the context of Welsh life.
However, Barnes began his linguistic studies in the field of philology. His library ticket used whilst a part-time theological student in middle age at St John's, Cambridge, suggests that he maintained this approach, for it includes French, Egyptian, German, Armenian, and 'Japonica' grammars. Ultimately he came to have a working knowledge of over sixty languages, and published a number of articles and books concerning the origins and development of language.

His methodology was descriptive and analytic, following the taxonomic tendency of many nineteenth century scientists in trying to organise carefully collated material into basic classes or categories. Yet even these basic classifications show, in Barnes's case, an interest in semantics and in language in context, since their definitions are largely notional and functional. For example, he labelled verbs time-words, because in his view 'every case of being or doing is a taking of time'. It followed logically that he should describe active verbs as time-giving, passive verbs as time-taking. He preferred to label an intransitive verb an unoutreaching time-taking because 'it must or may end with the time-taking thing', and he therefore called a transitive verb an outreaching time-taking.

Clearly, in the light of modern linguistics and developments over the last ten or twenty years, Barnes's ideas will often seem odd, controversial or definitely wrong. His way of defining 'language', for instance, is extremely vague. He recognised as 'language' a wide range of semiotic systems, including any 'mode of betokening facts and ideas' so long as the mode 'may be perceived by three of the senses -- hearing, sight, and touch'. Amongst these he defined as 'half-languages' symbols like hand-shakes, flag-waving, bell-tolling. But he was most interested in what he called the 'full' language of 'breathsounds'. 'Full' evidently denotes the greater semanticity of a form of language which works with fully developed phonological and morphological systems operating in combination, though Barnes does not give very close attention to the implications of language structure.

However, it was the spoken and not the written version of 'full' language which really concerned Barnes. That is, he was particularly interested in language which communicated -- in performance -- directly
between people, without the mediation of pen and paper.

Speech was shapen of the breath-sounds of speakers, for the ears of hearers, and not from speech-tokens (letters) in books, for men's eyes, though it is a great happiness that the words of men can be long holden and given over to the sight; and therefore I have shapen my teaching as that of a speech of breath-sounded words, and not of lettered ones. 13

Behind this teaching -- and particularly behind Barnes's model of the Dorset dialect, found in his Dissertation on the Folk Speech -- lie five special areas of interest arising from Barnes's preoccupation with language in its social context and spoken performance. These are:-

1) The essential, traceable, 'purity' of individual languages.
2) The possibility of infinite creativity, to be developed out of a language's essential 'purity'.
3) The special message of an individual language: the linguistic circle.
4) The subtlety of meaning, and the facility of language to 'mean' through syntactic form as well as quasi-pictorially through the lexicon (and through rhythm and rhyme achieved by syntax and lexicon in conjunction).
5) The belief that poetry, particularly poetry spoken aloud, is a vital aspect of language in performance.

The first four of these interests are discussed immediately below: they amount (A) to the essential motivations behind the shape of Barnes's model of the Dorset dialect. (During the discussion of (3), the linguistic circle, I have taken the opportunity to consider general Victorian interest in dialect.) An explanation of Barnes's dialect model follows (B). It concludes with an examination of (5) Barnes's conception of poetry as an aspect of vital linguistic performance. The final third of this Chapter, (C), looks at some broad issues involved in the practical application of the dialect model in the poems themselves, that is, the connections between Barnes's linguistic interests and his imaginative art.

It is the existence of these connections which justify a linguistic approach to Barnes's poetry. It is not the concern of this dissertation to analyse his art as a source of philological information about nineteenth century Dorset speech. Rather, it is hoped than an examination of Barnes's
theories of language will help to draw attention to, and to evaluate, both the limitations and the riches of his poems.

As a very young man, Barnes had written verse in standard English. It displays some verbal talent: there is evidence of a fine ear, of experimentation with versification, of image-making, and of a sense of humour which hints at a sensitivity to audience response. But a self-conscious conventionality of poetic diction and theme prevents these poems from achieving any great distinction. The transition into dialect, however, and with it a tendency to shift the poetic persona away from Barnes's own self and towards the life and personality of a Dorset labourer, appears to inspire the development of that early, restricted talent. The use of a more natural speech increases the verbal strength and range of the poems in an apparently unforced way, and also seems to encourage Barnes to experiment with the fresh sets of themes, contexts and perspectives which are appropriate to his newly assumed voice.

It is therefore essential, if they are to be fully appreciated, to view Barnes's poetry as 'an art of wholes in speech'. In order to do so it will be necessary to examine, as closely as possible, both the language of the poems and the linguistic assumptions which lie behind it. I begin with the linguistic assumptions.

* * * * * * *

A 1) Barnes's concept of purity in language

To Barnes, a language may be called 'pure' if it is largely developed from its 'roots' or 'primitives'. He believed that these essential roots could be found by tracing each language back to its origins. In this respect he echoes an eighteenth century fallacious belief, linked to the notion that Hebrew, being the language of the Bible, must be the original base of all Indo-European languages. Barnes had faith in origins because he believed in the unsurpassed goodness of God's original creation in all things. He was convinced of a rightness in what he took to be the results of 'God's first forming will', untainted by the alterations of
man's 'falsehood of ornament'. To Barnes, original languages must have been the indirect products of God's first forming will, not because he saw grammars as innate linguistic structures (in the modern Chomskyan sense), but because he believed they arose -- through a kind of spiritual behaviourism -- in 'conformity' with a man's particular God-given environment.16

Even so, Barnes's theory of language acquisition seems to incorporate the beliefs of both the primitivist and the evolutionist. He appears to endorse the views of his predecessor, Lord Monboddo, whose 'theory of language is remarkable', in the opinion of S.K. Land, 'for its resolute inclusion of both the debated alternative genetic hypotheses ... [believing] language to have been founded twice in human history, first as a natural development from the inarticulate cries of man's primal condition and secondly by a deliberate convention replacing over a period of time the outworn language of the first stage'.17 To Barnes this gradual development did not constitute 'falsehood of ornament' so long as it grew directly from a language's original roots: his theory is described in Tiw: or a View of Roots and Stems of the English as a Teutonic Tongue.18

However, Barnes deeply regretted what he took to be a deterioration of the English language, through a loss of its original 'purity', via the addition of obscuring Latin, Greek and French modifications -- that is, infiltrating false ornaments. 'I cannot believe', he said, 'that the word "port-feuille" expresses (to an Englishman) the use of the thing better than the word "papercase". English had become to Barnes a language 'fit only for learned people to converse with each other in, being no longer one in which the more learned can easily teach the less so'.19

He offered two solutions to the problem. In the first place he wished to encourage the use of those dialects which he saw as direct descendants from Anglo-Saxon: his writing of dialect poetry translates his own theory into practice. But of course, the purity -- in Barnes's sense -- of even these dialects is questionable. As his contemporary, Professor Skeat, explained in a discussion of dialects from the eighth century onwards, 'the purity of the dialects from contamination with
foreign influences is merely comparative, not absolute'. Even Barnes's Blackmore dialect speakers would be familiar with the word 'beef', yet it is of Norman origin and not Anglo-Saxon: 'sugar' is a descendant of Sanskrit: 'tea' is Chinese.

Barnes's second solution aimed to purge of foreign contamination all versions of English. He would substitute words of foreign origin with Anglo-Saxon based equivalents, usually -- as he explained in a number of articles, particularly in the Gentleman's Magazine -- through a process of compounding out of existing 'pure' roots. Thus;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Word</th>
<th>New Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>riding-bag</td>
<td>portmanteau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>build-cutter</td>
<td>sculptor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out-taking</td>
<td>exception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fore-speech</td>
<td>preface</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again he put his own theory into practice. He relied heavily on compounding in his poetry, as I shall demonstrate below, used these kinds of substitutions in his sermons, and in later life wrote some of his linguistic work in what he took to be a 'pure' English.

In these respects Willis D. Jacobs, who has written the most extensive discussion of Barnes's linguistic beliefs, finds him 'a fierce revolutionary', attempting to retrieve English for the English, and determined to stand up for the speech of the less educated. 'Fierce' is not an appropriate description for any of Barnes's behaviour: he was always calm and quiet, however strong his determination. But it must be emphasised that whilst he was content to accept a hierarchical class system he did want each division to be respected -- and self-respecting, proud of its own special attributes including its own language. His theories of language are in a sense divisive: he wished each linguistic group to preserve (as I shall explain in more detail below) its own distinctive speech and thus its own particular identity as a separate group. But he did not encourage such separation as a means of keeping certain kinds of people, speaking less modified English, in their lowly place. To Barnes the preservation of a local linguistic identity was a matter of excellence and self-respect:
Hardly any Latin or Greek word is of the very width of meaning as the English one, that is in the main taken to match it ... It is much to be wished that our boys could be well grounded in Saxon-English, the pure old English of our forefathers, without a knowledge of which our English is never fully understood in its truth of meaning and will never be wielded with half its might as an instrument of thought ... [It should not be imagined that] 1st, We have not English equals to the words borrowed: or 2nd. That the borrowed words are more meaning or more elegant than the English equals, or, 3rd. That the use of Latin or Greek English distinguishes the learned from the ignorant. 24

His approval of English for the English should not, however, be taken to mean a rejection of other languages or other peoples. Barnes abhorred arrogant dismissal of other nations and taught geography, history and languages with an emphasis on the individual value of every kind of community.

Nor should it be imagined that Barnes's determination to preserve what he took to be 'purity', in everyday communication or in his poetry, meant that he advocated a static language. Purity did not go hand in hand with lack of creativity.

2) The possibility of infinite creativity, to be developed out of a language's essential 'purity'

Barnes believed, like other Victorians including Gerard Manley Hopkins and Frederick Farrar, in an onomatopoeic origin and development of language. It is a theory which he argues in Tiw, and its belief in a small number of basic words out of which all others have grown has analogies with present day generative semantics, (propounded by, say, Katz, Fodor, and Fillmore), which sees the lexicon as being derived from a small number of basic 'atomistic' concepts.

Barnes isolated forty-nine 'roots' of the following pattern: B*ng, H*ng, Thw*ng. He argued that a first consonant formed an unchangeable root, retained in all words derived from it. The asterisk indicated a changeable vowel sound. The ending given as ng would change to produce, from the roots, what he called 'root forms', or (if markedly different from the original root) 'stems'.

He believed that all other words could be syntactically derived from such roots. 'Fifty primary roots may yield 15,000 forms and stems, of one or two vowel sounds, from which again, an almost endless supply of words may be made by composition.' The semanticity of these basic words could then, Barnes argued, be augmented by the addition of what would be called today a bound morpheme. (For example, the word hang might be augmented by the suffix morpheme ing to produce hanging.) Or, additional concepts could be labelled by the combination of two roots. (For example, the word hang might be augmented by man to become hangman.) Always a man striving for precision and clarity, Barnes used mathematical formulae to express his ideas.

If we take 1 for the noun-root, 2 for the adjective-root, 3 for the verb-root, 4 for an adverb, and 5 for a preposition, we may form a set of handy expressions for the formation of compound words: thus, (1+1) would mean a word of two nouns, as railway; (2+1) a word of an adjective and nouns, as blackbirds; (5+3) a word of a preposition and verb, as overcome. 27

(This formulation has something in common with Otto Jespersen's use of mathematical symbolism in his Analytic Syntax, published in 1937, but though it anticipates his presentation by a century it does not have all the implications of Jespersen's work which models functional properties of words as well as their formal composition.) 28

Barnes was convinced that it was possible to create new words for every new need, out of this principle of compounding; there should be no need to borrow from foreign languages.

It may be said with safety that good English compounds might be made for every case in which they might be needed ... We enrich and purify our speech by the inbringing of words of forms already known and received. Of the verb-form (2+en) we may take 'greaten' (instead of the borrowed to exaggerate); of the noun-form (5+1) we may take 'foredraught', a programme; and of the adjective form (3+some) we may have 'bendsome' for flexible. 29

The method should also, in Barnes's view as an educationalist, be helpful to the child acquiring language: a language which borrows from another 'causes great toil and constriction to the teacher of youth, and keeps the pupil from learning words, when he should be learning facts'.
English writers have lately shown a disposition to slight the formation of the noun (1+1), and to take in its stead the noun and a mongrel adjective, in imitation of the Latin idiom, and write 'tid-al wave' for tide-wave, and 'postal regulations' for post-office regulations . . .

To substitute a few expressions of (2+1) for nouns of the form (1+1) will be to puzzle learners and speakers of English for a useless end; since, while we find that we must say 'tidal wave' for tide-wave, we do not know whether tide-water should be 'tidal-water', or whether 'postal-regulations' is a pattern for postal-office, and postal-boy, and postal-horse; or how many or few of our nouns of the form (1+1) are to be broken up; and thus we may wrongly take or leave the expressions teaal-spoon, sugaral-tongs, bedal-stand, lapal-dog, inkal-stand, buttonal-hole, shiral-sleeve, mousal-trap, and pinal-cushion.

The bizarreness of these compounds might cause Barnes to be dismissed as well-meaning but impractically eccentric. However, his belief in language creativity and potential -- he spoke of 'growing limbs', of 'free action', 'increasing strength', 'vigour and growth' -- encouraged him to experiment with compounding in his dialect work. The result is, as I shall suggest again later (Chapter Six), an enrichment of his poems with lovely and apt phrases like 'worold-hushen night', 'cheek-burnen seasons o' mowen' and 'the moon-clim'd height o' the sky'.

3) The special message of an individual language: the linguistic circle

I have touched above on Barnes's ideas of language acquisition. He implies a belief, in some senses, in a universal grammar.

The formation of language is always a conformation to three things in nature: (1) the beings, actions, and relations of things in the universe: (2) the conceptions of them by the mind of man: (3) the actions of the organs of speech: and inasmuch as the beings, actions, and relations of things, and the mind and the organs of speech, are the same in kind to all men upon earth, and a need of conformity to them is itself a law, so far it is clear, that some common laws must hold in the formation of languages, and the science of these laws, when they are unfolded, is Grammar.

However, although Barnes believed in a common origin to all language, he had a very special regard for the power of the individual languages which he imagined grew out of this initial grammar.
In this respect he echoed the relativist theory of the eighteenth century scholar, Johann Gottfried von Herder, which was subsequently developed by Wilhelm von Humboldt. Humboldt, a nineteenth-century German philologist, anticipated the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis. He believed that 'each language draws a magic circle round the people to which it belongs, a circle from which there is no escape save by stepping out of it into another'.

Barnes himself implied that a language expresses the personality of its speaker. He approved of an Arabic proverb that 'a man by learning a second language becomes two' (presumably meaning that he thereby gives himself an opportunity to step from one magic circle into another). To Barnes, the headmaster, it was important to step from one circle into another and so learn about contrasting ways of life.

Personally he was always respectful of another man's opinion, his individuality, his way of life. As a result he inspired regard from his pupils, treating them with 'a consideration which at times seemed almost to border upon deference . . . yet there was never seen to mingle with this uniform lenity the slightest affectation of familiarity'. And though Barnes had recognised difficulties of comprehension in the classroom more than a century ahead of Basil Bernstein, he had also anticipated Bernstein's critic, William Labov, by placing the blame for the difficulty of communication upon the teacher's determination to use his own form of speech and his refusal to recognise a rich -- if different -- language in his pupil: English had become that language 'fit only for learned people to converse with each other in, being no longer one in which the more learned can easily teach the less so'.

Furthermore he disapproved of those who, knowing 'little or nothing of others, from the Chinese to the Esquimaux, are apt to fancy themselves and their ways the wisest of the world'. So he opposed the Utilitarians who dismissed classical learning and Anglo-Saxon as useless: for Barnes it was not education's purpose merely to train young men for special professions. But he also objected to traditional teaching in the classics: mechanical translation and learning by rote was for him 'only the giving and taking of head-knowledge'. Instead he taught languages in his own classroom for the insight he felt they could give into the
'magic circles' of other ways of life. That insight might afford those 'good and loveworthy' models of behaviour and thinking which he wished to offer to his pupils and thus play a part in their 'life-shaping -- a shaping of the man's life of a form, good and happy for himself and his fellow-men'.39 Thus, at different times in his teaching career, he offered his pupils Latin, Greek, Anglo-Saxon, French, German, Danish, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish, Hebrew and Hindustani (from the sixty language with which he was personally familiar).40

And, of course, as a Bard with a wider audience to teach, he offered readers of his poetry the circle of Dorset rural life, expressing the best he believed it had to offer through its own special language.

Yet to have been a successful school-teacher -- successful in the sense of attracting to his school those pupils whose middle-class parents would have most likely wanted education to eradicate what Hardy ironically termed in The Mayor of Casterbridge the dialectal 'mark of the beast', Barnes must have taught standard English, and spoken standard English, to his boys. Bernard Jones believes that after he left the farming world of his boyhood, Barnes spoke largely in 'common' English, except when he 'performed' his poems.

The memories of a number of people who heard him speak, [show] that he spoke common English, though most of those who . . . remembered his voice recall that the sound of the letter 'r' was lightly trilled . . His accent certainly did not upset Miss Miles. 41

When Barnes used dialect in his poems, then, he was not using his own inherited magic circle -- except in so far as the dialect belonged to his youth. He is therefore stepping himself into a circle of people to whom he no longer really belongs: he neither works with them, nor chooses to speak their language in his daily life. The personae of his poems are in this sense distanced figures, directed by the Bard.

At this point it will be useful to define a number of modern linguistic terms which will be helpful in describing Barnes's use of language in his poems. These are the related terms, competence, performance, and communicative competence. It will also be relevant to
clarify precisely what is indicated, in this thesis, by the notion of **dialect** and, at this juncture, to detail Victorian interest in dialect speech.

I am using the paired terms **competence** and **performance** in the Chomskyan sense. The distinction lies between what a native speaker 'knows' and what he actually utters. The former is termed **competence**, the latter **performance**. Frank Palmer defines the concept thus:

According to the theory, the native speaker of a language has 'internalized a set of rules' which form the basis of his ability to speak and to understand his language [that is, his 'competence']. . . . the sentences he actually produces, . . . are a matter only of 'performance'. . . . [and] merely form part of the evidence for his competence. 42

The concept closely resembles Saussure's two fundamental linguistic dimensions: that of **langue** and that of **parole**. Terence Hawkes explains that Saussure used the analogy of chess to clarify his meaning.

Saussure's own analogy is the distinction between the abstract set of rules and conventions called 'chess', and the actual concrete game of chess played by people in the real world. The rules of chess can be said to exist above and beyond each individual game, and yet they only ever acquire concrete form in the relationships that develop between the pieces in individual games. So with language. The nature of the **langue** lies beyond, and determines, the nature of each manifestation of **parole**, yet it has no concrete existence of its own, except in the piecemeal manifestations that speech affords. . . . **Parole**, it follows, is the small part of the iceberg that appears above the water. **Langue** is the larger mass that supports it, and is implied by it, both in speaker and hearer, but which never itself appears. 43

In these terms then (competence/performance, **langue**/**parole**) it would be true to say that Barnes had absorbed, as he acquired language as a child living a Dorset farming life, the competence of Vale of Blackmore speakers. However, he ceased to use that competence in actual performance at some time after he left the agricultural world and entered the professions of teacher and vicar. When he uses Blackmore competence in his art, his poems, generally speaking, resemble the kind of linguistic performance which might be expected from a Dorset labourer-poet and not from the kind of man Barnes had become.
In other words, by the time he is writing poetry, Barnes has acquired a wide and varied communicative competence (to use Hymes's term) which he can freely adapt to a number of registers. The term communicative competence covers 'a person's knowledge and ability to use all the semiotic systems available to him as a member of a given socio-cultural community'. That is to say it involves all methods of communication, including grammatical competence, which a member of a group can use meaningfully. Their appropriateness and effectiveness will depend to a large extent upon the user's correct assessment of the context of his communication: if he assesses accurately, for instance, his particular role in a situation and the consequent degree of formality he should adopt, the recipient of his communication is likely to receive it with maximum attention, due weight, and comprehension. In other words communicative competence depends upon the appropriate use of register according to situational context.

In his daily life Barnes could evidently step freely from one group/circle to another, adapting his linguistic behaviour -- utilising communicative competence to the full -- appropriately and effectively. He could adopt an appropriate register to talk to his labourer-parishioners, to his school-pupils, to his adult evening classes, to his literary friends (although Tennyson was disappointed that Barnes did not choose to enter into subtle and intense argument with him). I shall be suggesting in Chapters Five and Six that stepping into the register of the Dorset labourer's everyday communicative competence limits Barnes's artistic and imaginative power in some ways, whilst liberating it in others.

The basic linguistic competence with which he works in the dialect poems is of course that internalised by people brought up in his immediate locality: he explains at the end of his 'Dissertation on the Dorset Dialect' that it is Vale of Blackmore speech. It will be helpful to clarify precisely what is being indicated by the term dialect, used to label this speech type throughout these pages. Basically it implies Smith and Wilson's definition of dialect as 'a variety of language typical of a particular region or class . . . the standard language is merely one dialect among many'; this definition is expanded in their discussion of language variation in the community.
variety/dialect used by Blackmore people draws, in Humboldt's terms, a
circle around their group and expresses and signals their corporate
identity.

Consistency of form separates a genuine dialect variety from a
random idiosyncracy ('form', in this sense, including the three aspects
of speech, phonology, the lexicon, and syntax). Dialect is of course
not simply a matter of accent but is also identified by the use of
special regional words and by local patterns of syntax.

The local variations have synchronic consistency of form (by
definition), but of course diachronically they alter and develop, so that
the earliest preserved texts of 'Old English' include the four dialects
of Northumbrian, Mercian, Wessex or Anglo-Saxon, and Kentish speech, but
these oldest groups broke again and again into sub-groups.48

All dialects have of course equal semantic, communicative potential
in their combined phonological, lexical, and syntactical systems. But
this potential will develop according to the needs of the regional
circle -- according to local requirements of communicative competence.
And Barnes, whilst standard English had by historical accident come to
be regarded as the most prestigious dialect, literally spoke out on
behalf of Blackmore people, demonstrating through his art the rich
potential of their particular speech variation and at the same time
establishing their group identity -- and, through articulating 'good
and loveworthy' themes in that art, endorsed the value he placed upon
their community circle.

He was not alone in Victorian society in acknowledging the existence
and worth of local forms of speech. At this point it will be appropriate
-- having established Barnes's belief in the special nature of individual
speech forms, and considered the concepts which will be useful in
discussing the consequences of that belief -- to look at the more general
Victorian interest in dialect, since this clearly affected the acceptance
of his work outside Dorset, and since it is marked by the two major tenets
of Barnes's own particular endorsement. That is, (a) there was some
Victorian encouragement towards the preservation of local dialects because
this was linked with the maintenance of local identity and (b) this
encouragement frequently took the form of the collation of highly accurate records of the sounds, vocabulary and syntax of those regional variations.

Interest in dialect was not of course new. Folk poetry had naturally always used local speech forms. And literary attention had been paid to them for centuries. Spenser uses an impression of dialect in his Shepherds Calendar, and Shakespeare's Fluellen approximates a Welsh variation. The appearance of Bishop Percy's Reliques, in 1765, testifies to an awareness of linguistic possibilities in poetry, other than those of eighteenth century literary diction. There were also a number of imitators, sometimes forgers, of an earlier speech, for example Lady Wardlaw's 'Hardyknute', and Chatterton's 'Ossian'. Then, in 1785, the Rev. William Hutton, Rector of Beetham in Westmoreland, wrote 'A Bran New Wark' and implied that its author was a local man named William de Worfat. The use of dialect, without this kind of pretence, becomes marked in literature in the second half of the eighteenth century with the work of Robert Burns. Then came an upsurge in literary dialect usage, for example in the writing of Clare, Eliot, Tennyson, the Brontës, Mrs Gaskell, and Hardy.

But interest in speech variation was not confined to the literary world. The systematic study of modern dialects had begun in the seventeenth century. John Ray, Fellow of the Royal Society, published his Collection of English Words not generally used in 1674, and the late eighteenth century saw attempts at dialect dictionaries. But progress was really made in the nineteenth century. By this time the science of philology had increased in importance, encouraged by interest in the East. In 1786, Sir William Jones had delivered a paper to the Royal Asiatic Society in Calcutta, suggesting that Sanskrit shares a common source with Greek, Latin, and the Germanic languages. A number of early historical linguists were Sanskrit scholars, and amongst them Friedrich von Schlegel encouraged comparative grammatical studies to establish the structures of variations. The subsequent works of Rasmus Rask and also Jacob Grimm in comparative Indo-European linguistics were pioneering attempts in continental philology. Benjamin Thorp and John Mitchell Kemble had studied with these men in Europe and they introduced the new doctrines and methods into England. In 1842 the Philological Society of London had its origins in a meeting convened by Edwin Guest, whose
influence was followed by Frederick Furnivall and James A.H. Murray. The Society initiated the compilation of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which adopted the methodology of the current philology in defining words on historical principles. Interest in comparisons between variations within the major languages — in their dialects — as well as between them was also increasing. The English Dialect Society was founded in 1873 by Professor Skeat, whose *English Dialects*, eventually published in 1911, drew on its researches. The Society also contributed to Dr Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* which appeared between 1889 and 1905.51

Interest in international philology might be linked to Victorian nationalism and to the era's preoccupation with evolution: theories of evolution might also have encouraged some interest in the local dialect. But these would not be Barnes's motives. He shared philology's methodology of comparison and accurate description, and was no doubt encouraged by the general trend. But he was not exactly nationalistic. He was in a sense patriotic, explaining that he loved his country — because it contained his county, which in its turn contained his local community and home, the real focus of his life. But, as I have explained is implied by his school teaching, he accorded equal respect to other cultures. As for evolution, he felt current thinking on the subject was 'venomous' and (as I have explained in Part One and in earlier paragraphs of this Chapter) chose to rest his faith in God's original creation. However, the reasons which did lead Barnes to support local speech forms, and which I have been explaining above, were similar to those of other nineteenth-century scholars interested in the careful comparison and recording of internal — rather than international — variations.

Reactions to the century's developments, particularly in industrial and educational changes, certainly contributed to this interest. In 1870 W.A. Wright, calling for the foundation of a dialect society, remarked 'In a few years it will be too late. Railroads and certificated teachers are doing their work'.52 Hardy's Tess of course spoke two forms of English ('The dialect was on her tongue to some extent, despite the village school'), because she had received 'trained National teachings and Standard knowledge under an infinitely Revised Code'). Yet the railway, though it played its part in the new mobility which helped to
break down local communities, paradoxically contributed also to the preservation of dialect. Increased travel must have increased awareness of speech variants, and A.J. Ellis, who compiled a book entitled *On Early English Pronunciation*, actually employed a book-keeper in the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway offices to gather phonetic records of local speech heard as he travelled up and down the country on railway business.  

The value placed upon threatened dialects may stem from a romantic desire to preserve the past, and from a glorification, in the 'noble savage' tradition, of the unsophisticated. But Professor Skeat, justifying his *English Dialects*, spoke of the potential he found in dialect words to enrich standard English. Using a phrase drawn from Professor F. Max Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, he talked of 'dialect regeneration' and said 'We shall often do well to borrow from our dialects many terms that are still fresh and racy, and instinct with a full significance'. He is speaking then not so much of preserving group identities, but of sharing, across the country, the most 'significant' lexical items. As he is evidently referring to older forms of speech, he must also be implying rural variations, and, in recommending these, he is in addition affirming a value in rural life.

In fact, urban dialects were not so admired. A.J. Ellis, whilst referring to the particular language of a manufacturing community, remarked that the 'real dialect' was to be heard only in the surrounding villages. Barnes himself -- understandably, given his views on language purity -- could not accept new urban varieties as genuine language. He wrote that 'in the towns the poor commonly speak a mixed jargon, violating the canons of the pure dialect, as well as those of English'. Rural terms might be valued for their connection with scenes and objects cherished for their long existence and for their link with the concept of a pastoral purity: urbanisms, on the other hand, tended to develop around things and ideas of less beauty and less permanency, given transient populations, industrial environments, and rapidly changing manufacturing processes. The music halls probably contributed a sense of the comic to the urban dialects: their rapid expansion and consequent demand for performers meant that they became stages for indigenous performers, speaking in their local variations.
Nevertheless, local speech was preserved in its new, city kinds through the industrial ballad which expressed the solidarity of new social groups. And the sociologist, Henry Mayhew, chose to record his case histories in the Cockney speech of the people he was investigating. The importance of language as it was 'really' used was evidently recognised, as an indicator of personality, outside the literary world of men like Wordsworth and Barnes. The reading world too seemed ready to accept those personalities in art -- there had evidently been a change of heart since an early reaction to Wordsworth in the *New London Review* which objected to his 'simple' style.

We may distinguish a **simple** style from a style of **simplicity**. By a simple style we may suppose a colloquial diction, debased by inelegance, and gross by familiarity. Simplicity is a manner of expression, facile, pure, and always elegant. 58

By now, not only fellow poets were disposed to accept Barnes's use of actual, local speech (Palgrave was pleased that he avoided 'coloured diction', and Hopkins approved the 'spontaneousness' that dialect implied) but the *Dorset County Chronicle* applaudsed him for 'perpetuating the many existing Saxonisms in the dialect of our country', and another reviewer appreciated their 'pleasing garb'. 59

That 'pleasing garb' appears, as I shall be demonstrating in more detail, to be a highly consistent rendering of a form of Vale of Blackmore speech. Such accuracy, first achieved in the work of the philologists, was not confined, in Victorian art, to Barnes's poetry.

It is true that Wordsworth's 'language of men' warrants the description more through its contrast with the conventions of markedly poetic diction than through its close rendering of one particular speech form in daily, local use. And although Bloomfield had used some Norfolk dialect in his work, poems like his ballad 'The Horkey' display only an approximation of the provincial dialect through the occasional local lexeme and the occasional phonetic suggestion. The following extract from the ballad indicates Bloomfield's own italics and footnotes as they appeared in 1806 in his collection *Wild Flowers: or, Pastoral and Local Poetry*. 
Sue round the neathouse* squalling ran,
Where Simon scarcely dare;
He stopt, — for he's a fearful man —
'By gom there's suffen+ there!'
And off set John, with all his might,
To chase me down the yard,
Till I was nearly gran'd++ outright;
He hugg'd so woundly hard. 60

*Cow-house +Something ++Strangled

However, — although Professor Skeat was 'not aware of any recent
important work in the Southern dialect . . . other than the Poems of
Rural Life, in the Dorset Dialect, By William Barnes' -- his English
Dialects from the 8th Century to the Present Day includes a number of
examples of dialect work which demonstrate a more consistent rendering
of apparently local phonological, lexical and syntactic systems. There
is an extract, also purporting to be in Norfolk speech, from Erratics by
a Sailor printed in 1800. Rabin is describing Ursula, the collar-maker's
daughter.

She's a fate mawther, but ollas in dibles wi' the knacker and
thackster; she is ollas aating o' thapes and dodmans. The fogger
sa, she ha the black sap; but the grosher sa, she have an ill dent.

A Wiltshire poem, written in 1853 by J. Yonge Akerman, begins:

A harnet zet in a hollur tree —
A proper spiteful twoad was he;
And a merrily zung while he did zet
His stinge as shearp as a bagganet;
Oh, who so vine and bowld as I?
I vears not bee, nor wapse, nor vly!

Other examples, from rather later in the nineteenth century, include work
from Sussex, the Isle of Wight, Shropshire, Sheffield and Cheshire.
Cockney writing was also acknowledging diachronic changes in the language. Literary Cockney dialect maintained earlier conventions of phonemes and syntax (those used by Dickens) well into the mid-nineteenth century. And Henry Mayhew's sociological record of Londoners' own stories, although it stressed idioms and slang terms which appear to have been authentic, still used the older phonology of literary convention. But then Andrew W. Tuer's Old London Street Cries which came out in 1885 does use the newer dialect, and, according to William Matthews, Anstey's Cockney writing in Punch, mid-century, also appears to have been fairly modern. So do Barry Pain's 'Tompkins' verses in the Daily Chronicle. And Bernard Shaw claimed that the speech he used in Captain Brassbound's Conversion was 'up to date'. He was well aware of a distinction, for he wrote,

> When I came to London in 1876, the Sam Weller dialect had passed away so completely that I should have given it up as a literary fiction if I had not discovered it surviving in a Middlesex village and heard of it from an Essex one. 61

However, Matthews argues that by the end of the century it would seem that the

philological purpose which is evident in the work of Tuer, Shaw, and even Barry Pain had been modified for literary purposes, and the Cockney pronunciations, although of the new school, are symbolic [in, say Pett Ridge's Mord Em'ly of 1898, and Richard Whiteman's No.5, John Street, 1899] rather than exhaustive. 62

Hardy too used an approximation of local dialect rather than an exact rendering (as I shall be discussing below). And of course it is approximation rather than high accuracy which has persisted. Anthony Burgess argues that nowadays the reading public demands that writers 'leave well alone . . . do not distort and divert (from the speaker's meaning) with Barnesian and Tennysonian diaeresis and strange-looking digraphs'. 63

I have been suggesting of course -- and will be demonstrating the point further in subsequent paragraphs -- that in Barnes's view the use of dialect, and its accurate phonemic representation on the page, is no
 diversion but integral to the speaker's meaning. In America, James Whitcomb Riley held a similar view: 'never -- on penalty of death! -- must any word not in the vocabulary of the unlettered be used. Their vocabulary must do their thinking, in its place'. And in France, Frederic Mistral, and the Felibrige group formed by him in the early nineteenth century, worked with Provence dialect, believing in the importance of its local expression of local character, despite accusations of a regionalism prejudicial to the unity of France.

Although, as I have been explaining, Barnes received literary and philological encouragement for his own experiments, he too faced some contemporary criticism. The Hampshire Advertiser included in its pages an example of Barnes's dialect poetry but remarked, 'we cannot so far prefer our native "Doric", to what we must with all deference call good English, as to give more than one specimen of the modern West Saxon'. Lucy Baxter believed that her father expected more resistance of this kind and therefore prefaced his first collection with an explanatory linguistic 'Dissertation' and 'Glossary'.

He certainly did fear, as I explained in Chapter One, that those who had 'had their lots cast in town-occupations of a highly civilised community . . . could not sympathise with the rustic mind', but I do not believe the prefatory 'Dissertation' was included primarily in a spirit of self-defence. Its appearance seems part of Barnes's determination to preserve Dorset speech and to do so with the maximum linguistic accuracy. These motivations -- which anticipate by several decades Wright's fear of destructive change and Skeat's belief in the riches of local speech -- are stressed in the 'Dissertation's' introductory paragraph.

As increasing communication among the inhabitants of different parts of England, and the spread of school-education among the lower ranks of our population, tend to substitute book-English for the provincial dialects, it is likely that, after a few years, many of them will linger only in the more secluded parts of the land, if they live at all; though they would give valuable light to the antiquary, as well as to the philologist, of that increasing class who wish to purify our tongue, and enrich it from its own resources.

I have so far considered Barnes's concept of purity and of local uniqueness. The immediately following pages discuss his belief in the
semantic potential of each individual language, the linguistic riches, that is, of each local 'magic circle'.

4) Barnes's conception of the subtlety of meaning, and the facility of language to 'mean' through syntactic form as well as quasi-pictorially through the lexicon (and through rhythm and rhyme achieved by syntax and lexicon in conjunction).

Barnes wrote that,

People frequently think they understand what they read or hear, when they do not . . . if they conceive from a sentence any idea, however indistinct or false it may be, they believe they understand it . . . if I were to say to one knowing too little of language and geography to understand it thoroughly, 'A band of Bedouin Arabs plundered a caravan of Mahometan pilgrims,' and were to ask him if he understood the sentence, he would most likely say he did; thinking so, because it would have given him some notion - such perhaps as that of robbers plundering people riding in a large carriage. Thus he might have the wrong notion of caravan, and none of the Bedouin Arabs in distinction from others: and though he might have some conception of pilgrims it might be a false one; and he might neither know the place of the object of the Mahometan pilgrimage, if he might know anything of Mahomet. 68

So Barnes stressed the need, in his classroom and beyond, for the exact expression of subtleties in meaning. He campaigned constantly for a clear definition of lexical terms in mathematics, science and the arts.

For instance, the meaning of the verb colo is commonly said to be 'to till, to deck, to worship, to practice' . . . how are these different meanings to be reconciled? Why by giving the real meaning of colo, namely 'to give much attention to': example, to give much attention to the land - to till it, to one's person - to deck it, to God - to worship Him, to music - to practise it. 69

However, Barnes seems to have advanced beyond what S.K. Land sees as an eighteenth century notion of meaning, based upon 'the sum of individually meaningful words'. 70 Instead he approaches the (in Land's view) more nineteenth century notion of semantic formalism in which meaning is seen as the product of words in combination. However, his
concept of the relationship between language and thought remains superficial and loosely expressed.

Thoughts are thoughts of things, with their qualities, and beings, and actions, and relations; and words are of different kinds, as tokens of the qualities and beings, and actions and relations of things . . . 71

Organising words to achieve their full semantic potential within the sentence. Barnes called 'speech-trimming'. 72 He seems then to have conceived of thought as prior to its linguistic expression, a view which is apparently also implied in Hardy's observation of Barnes's 'closeness of phrase to his vision'. 73 Though 'speech-trimming' seems to refer to the more modern notions of language used appropriately in performance, to achieve effective communicative competence. Speech-trimming appears to take place, in Barnes's opinion, through careful syntactic choices and also through the full utilisation of linguistic resources found in sound and rhythm.

His work on case endings demonstrates his belief in semantic formalism. Briefly it implies that syntactic patterns in the form of case endings had originally been dictated by considerations of meaning, although time had often eroded exact correspondence. He also defined two distinct kinds of words purely according to their semantic reference: notional words 'betokened being or action' (nouns, adjectives, and verbs) whilst relational words (limiting pronouns, adverbs, and prepositions) betokened relations of these beings and actions. 74

There might have been early hints here of the kind of functional approach to language used currently by M.A.K. Halliday in his systemic model of grammar: (it should be noted that the term grammar refers in this thesis to its contemporary technical usage, covering not only morphology and syntax but also phonology and semantics). 75 But they are merely hints, suggested by Barnes's preoccupation with language as behaviour: his ideas do not become fully developed and rigorously articulated theories. Nevertheless, I shall be considering the results of Barnes's approach, described in his 'Dissertation', as a model; for it is a description of Dorset grammar which has a kind of coherence and rationale that is motivated by certain linguistic notions, however vaguely these are worked out.
Further, a belief in the semantic, functional potential of sound and rhythm -- evidently two other aspects of Barnes's notion of speech-trimming -- is implied partly in his 'Dissertation' and partly in his *Philological Grammar*. In a sense these too contribute to his model of grammar and will be considered in detail below. Briefly, Barnes maintained that sound and rhythm could contribute semiotically to the communication of emotional implication and to ideational content. (I am using the term *ideational* in Halliday's sense of linguistic 'potential for expressing a content in terms of the speaker's experience and that of the speech community'.) They might contribute also, in Barnes's view, to the aesthetic function of language. And they could have psychological functions in that they could aid memory, concentrate the imagination, and imply the stability of balance and harmony.

I have been explaining then (A) Barnes's main linguistic pre-occupations, those motivations which led him to describe and to use language in a particular way; these are, his belief in linguistic purity, creativity, local uniqueness, and semantic potential. His description of language, arising from these interests, can be seen -- as I explained in my preliminary remarks for this Chapter -- as his model of *grammar* in its composite sense of morphology, syntax, phonology and semantics.

What follows, (B), is a discussion of that model, of Barnes's description of the Dorset dialect in particular. It is accompanied by a consideration of his conception of the fullest possible utilisation of this dialect, meaningfully and artistically, through poetry. (Chapters Five and Six will then demonstrate the results of his own personal application of his model in poetry.)
(B) Barnes's description of the Dorset dialect

Barnes's model and description of the Dorset dialect in no way achieve the sophistication — in terms of rigorous methodology or intellectual abstraction — of recent twentieth century models of language, concerned as these frequently are with deep underlying syntactic and semantic structures, or with systemic functionality. Nor does his work display the kind of quantity of evidence for his deductions which is demonstrated with phonetic and morphemic precision by Harold Orton and Eugen Dieth in their recent Survey of English Dialects. Furthermore, as well over a century has elapsed since Barnes offered his description of Blackmore speech, in his 'Dissertation of the Dorset Dialect', it is difficult to confirm the accuracy of his linguistic observations.

However, this thesis is not primarily concerned with Barnes's language model from the point of view of its intellectual quality. Nor does it focus upon the degree of accuracy displayed in Barnes's linguistic methodology: it does not aim to assess, for instance, the precise accuracy or otherwise of the dialect's representation in the poems, because (unlike Philip M. Tilling, whose essay on Tennyson's Lincolnshire poems debates their value as linguistic source material) my interest in Barnes's model lies not in what it does or does not reveal about actual nineteenth century speech, but in what it can confirm about Barnes's personal interest in language in so far as this is relevant to an understanding of his poetry.

It can be assumed nevertheless that Barnes did intend to be accurate, given both his acquaintance with current philological methodology and also his educational philosophies which demanded careful perception and clear communication. This intention will itself be of importance in an examination of his poems.

Otherwise, his model of dialect, found in his 'Dissertation' (and supported by broader theories in Philological Grammar) is of interest in that it bears out the kind of motivations for linguistic research which I have been describing above. That is, it confirms Barnes's preoccupation with his concept of linguistic purity, with creativity out of that
so-called purity, with the special social and psychological significance of local dialects, and with the semantic potential of local 'circles' of language, (in so far as their competences are utilised in performance to achieve appropriate registers).

************

Barnes begins his 'Dissertation', preceding the 1844 edition of his poems, with a signal of his interest in language purity in an account of the dialect's origins. He believed that the Dorset language was much the same as that of Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, parts of Somerset and Devon, all of them derived from a Saxon form of speech used in 'what is now Holstein'. He argues that the speech of some counties, which had formerly been the kingdoms of the East and Middle Angles, the Mercians and the Northumbrians, might have been derived from the Angles of Slesvig who founded them.

It is not only credible, but most likely, that the Saxons of Holstein and the Angles of Slesvig might speak different dialects of the common Teutonic tongue . . . [but it seemed to Barnes] that Dorsetshire fell under the power of the West Saxons, and received their language, the venerable parent of its present rustic dialect . . . in 552.

Barnes goes on to argue for the continuing purity -- in his sense of the term explained above -- of this Dorset form of the original Saxon language. Although the Norman conquest had brought French into England, the 'wood-girt and hill-sheltered' Western areas 'were still vocal with the purest Saxon, in which the Norman conquest itself was recorded in the Saxon Chronicle'. He believed that a subsequent English desire for elegance -- in Barnes's view a mistaken desire -- had caused the rejection of some Saxon expressions and the substitution of others of Latin, Greek, or French derivation. For example, I expected you, made up of ex, out, and specto, to look, replaced, suggests Barnes, I looked out var ye. The common is inclosed -- inclosed being 'from the compound includo, to shut in' replaced The common is a-took in.
There follows a reiteration of his arguments (discussed earlier in this Chapter) against such borrowing from other tongues, and a demonstration of the semantic possibilities of compounding from 'pure' atomistic bases.

The following compound words from the German, one of the richest of tongues, show how easily words might be formed from our own primitives, and that they may be sufficiently expressive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German</th>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>English equivalents, generally borrowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baumwolle</td>
<td>tree-wool</td>
<td>for cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reise-sack</td>
<td>riding-bag</td>
<td>for portmanteau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herrlichkeit</td>
<td>lordliness</td>
<td>for magnificence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bildhauer</td>
<td>build-cutter</td>
<td>for sculptor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menschwerdung</td>
<td>man-becoming</td>
<td>for incarnation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But Barnes argues that Dorset speech had managed to maintain purity to a large extent. He demonstrates that many Dorset peculiarities of speech are not, as critics of rural dialects might claim, the result of the slovenly pronunciation of more standard forms, but, in his view, follow a regular pattern which is frequently akin to an earlier Anglo-Saxon or German syntactic convention. There is nothing syntactically incorrect, for instance, in the Dorset preference for the past tense blew, instead of blew, or caught instead of caught, or grewed instead of grew. Dorset speakers are simply sticking closer to the basic rules than standard English speakers by using weak endings for the verbs, rather than the strong, national equivalent. Nor is the affix a (a-lost, a-hang, a-sing) used to accommodate a lazy tongue. As Barnes rightly explains, it is a construction to be found in German and Anglo-Saxon. Both have the prefix ge, which by 'aphaeresis of the g, become y or i in the transition of the Anglo-Saxon into English'.

It is not, insists Barnes, that he dislikes the 'pretty daughters of the Latin' language, which have ousted certain purer descendants of Anglo-Saxon. It is rather that he admires 'the expressive features' of his 'mother-tongue' (italics his). It has a broad and bold shape . . . is rich in humour, strong in raillery and hyperbole; and, altogether, as fit a vehicle of rustic feeling and thought, as the Doric is found in the Idyllia of Theocritus.
And the 'Dissertation' goes on to substantiate this claim for a local personality, richly expressed through the semantic potential of its -- pure -- local circle of speech.

Lexically, for instance, Barnes argues that Dorset speech is 'richer inasmuch as it has distinctive words for many things which book-English can hardly distinguish but by periphrasis'. He gives as his example the Dorset nouns moot, mock, strawen and wide; 'for all of these, English can hardly afford any substitute but its single and inappropriate word, root'. The precise meaning of mock is not defined in his own glossary, but moot refers to 'the bottom and roots of a felled tree' according to this, and strawen means a 'strewing . . . all the potatoes of one mother potato', whilst wide is 'the set of stems or stalks from one root or grain of corn'. (It is possible that mock is a misprint for more which the glossary gives as meaning a root.) He does not debate the possibility of an equal richness to be achieved through periphrasis, at least in the semantic sense: perhaps 'richer' in this instance hints at the value of a local speech form as an identifier of local life-style and personality.

Because Dorset speech had retained certain syntactic patterns, which had been to a large extent eroded in national English, argues Barnes, the local language also had at its disposal a wider selection of certain derivative lexemes. For example, Dorset 'retains more abstract nouns than the national speech of the pattern of growth and dearth, formed from verbs and adjectives by shortening their long vowels and affixing th or t to them'. He suggests the examples 'blowth or blooth, from blow, the blossom of trees'.

He finds the Dorset lexicon, patterned on local syntactic conventions, frequently more meaningful than its standard alternative. For instance, he suggests that the suffix morpheme en is used more frequently in the dialect to end adjectives, 'meaning made of the noun to which the en is put on; as leatheren made of leather'. Such formations are therefore, in Barnes's view, more accurately meaningful than certain alternatives.

For a paper-bag is rightly a bag to put paper in, as a wood-house is a house to put wood in: a bag made of paper is a papern bag, not a paper-bag; and a house built of wood is a wooden house, not a wood-house.
Words formed on the Dorset pattern, noun + some, could also be more meaningful than those English alternatives which had been derived from foreign languages, particularly Latin. He preferred then, heedsome to attentive. And he argues that winning (a winning smile) is a bad substitute for winsome since winsome does not actually mean winning but likely to win.

Other syntactic patterns, although found in standard English, seemed to Barnes to be used more extensively in some dialects, including the Dorset speech. 'From verbs, by the addition of the ending l, or l with a vowel before or after it, have been formed the names of things by or to which the actions are done.' National English used girdle formed from gird and shuttle formed from shoot. Barnes suggests that rubble originates in Dorset, coming from rub and meaning 'what is rubbed into small parts'. And the Dorset word drashel meaning a flail, or what threshes, apparently comes from the Dorset drash, meaning to thrash. The standard morpheme ock, suggesting a diminutive (hill-ock, bull-ock), also had its local Dorset usage. A huddock meant, according to Barnes's definition, 'a small hood or covering for a sore finger', and the reddock or reddick was 'the little red bird; the robin redbreast'. He notes that 'the Dorset dialect has [too] its full share of a class of words which seem to be common only in the Teutonic languages, -- rhyming or alliterative compounds; as humpty-dumpty, fiddle-faddle. In his list of examples Barnes includes expressions now nationally familiar. There is, for instance, roly-poly and harum-scarum (which he conjectures relates to 'like hares scared'), and hum-drum (which Barnes most ingeniously explains as 'dull, like one who hums, drumming upon objects before him'). But some of the compounds are in less general usage. As local expressions Barnes suggests snipper-snapper, referring to a 'little and insignificant' person, and tisty-tosty, a toss-ball made of cowslips. And the poems refer to the hum-strum, or hum-scrum, an instrument having 'a long wooden body and four wires strained by pegs over a canister or bladder at one end, and a bridge at the other, and played with a bow'.

Barnes goes on to argue that Dorset makes selections from its syntactic competence with particular delicacy: that is, its speakers have a particularly sensitive communicative competence in some instances. Take the possessive. Dorset uses -- in certain cases -- of (o').
'Look at the lags o'n' would commonly intimate to a second person that they presented something to laugh at; whereas, if there were in them anything to excite admiration or pity, from their being wounded for example, we should most likely say, 'Look at his lags'.

Nor, according to Barnes, is the suffix y used randomly to satisfy a liking for childish rhythms. On the contrary, it is carefully selected in certain communicative contexts, rejected in others. Thus, 'the verb takes y only when it is absolutive, and never with an accusative case. We may say, 'Can ye zewy?', but never 'Wull ye zewy up this zeam?''.

Pronouns may be used differently too, according to the degree of meaningful emphasis called for by the occasion. Unemphatically a Dorset speaker would say 'Gi' e me the pick'. But emphatically he would prefer 'Gi' e the pick to I, not he:', using nominatives rather than accusatives and achieving emphasis by giving equal syntactic prominence to both agent and recipient of the pick/action. Barnes explains too the Dorset habit of using the auxiliary verb do, da, and the subtle implications of its use. A Dorset verb is evidently conjugated with the auxiliary in present tense. But it is only used to denote past time when an action is continuous. Thus Dorset distinguishes 'He walked to work (on that day)' from 'He walked to work (every day)' by saying on the one hand 'He walked to work (on that day)' and on the other 'He did walk to work (every day)'.

Barnes's special interest in language in performance is confirmed not only by this close attention to the lexicon and syntax of Dorset dialect as these are carefully -- that is, meaningfully and appropriately -- used in the social context, but it is also underlined by the attention he gives in his 'Dissertation' to locally significant phonemes.

He insists that English had no more elegant a sound than Dorset speech. In his view, many of the standard speech's Latin infiltrations 'have no better sound than the [original Anglo-Saxon descendants] of which they take the place'. In fact, he apparently felt able to evaluate these sounds qualitatively: he found Dorset speech using 'smoother' vowel and consonant sounds than the 'rough' national English equivalent, so that it had 'a mellowness which is sometimes wanting in the national speech'. He explains what he means by mellowness with some precision.
For instance, instead of what he terms the 'lip kinsletter' p, as in pin, this so-called 'rough' phoneme is replaced by what, in Barnes's opinion, is the smoother b, as in bin. In the same way, the 'teeth kinsletter' th as in thin is replaced by th as in thee. (I am, of course, adopting Barnes's own orthography.) As for vowel sounds, a more open phoneme was apparently substituted for a closer standard English one. 'In the Dorset dialect a is frequently substituted for e; as in bag, beg; bagger, beggar; kag, keg; agg, egg; lag, leg.' Diphthongs frequently added length, and thus, in Barnes's view, mellowness to a word. Dorset would have leəd instead of lead, and biakə instead of bake. And sometimes, also lengthening and thereby, in Barnes's view, softening pronunciation, a vowel sound was inserted between two consonants. 'The liquids l, at the end of a word, are sometimes parted by a vowel; as in elem, elm.' Finally, Barnes believed that the affix a, in participles of verbs, may also contribute to that peculiar 'mellowness' of local speech.

Not only does Barnes find this mellowness attractive, he also makes a claim for its appropriateness in terms of the particular personality he recognised in the local community. It was, he thought, 'a good vehicle for the softer feelings, as well as for the broader humour of rural life'.

Moreover, Barnes claims in his 'Dissertation' that not only have Dorset speakers a communicative competence which is particularly effective for the needs of the local community, but the special lexical, syntactic and phonological features of their language may also encourage a more meaningful performance than national English habitually achieves.

[He] is not ashamed to say, that after reading some of the best compositions of many of the most polished languages, he can contemplate [Dorset's] pure and strong Saxon features with perfect satisfaction, and has often found the simple truths enunciated in the pithy sentences of village patriarchs only expanded, by the weaker wordiness of modern composition, into high-sounding paragraphs.

It sounds then as if Barnes, with his acute awareness of the subtleties of language in performance, was anticipating in this remark some twentieth century research in sociolinguistics. The two phrases, 'weaker wordiness' and 'pithy sentences' appear to relate to the more
recent concept of restricted and elaborated codes. Bernstein has
associated the former with certain kinds of family types and particularly
with a lower income, less formally educated, group; the latter he has
linked with middle class, more formally educated, and professional groups.
Labov has responded to these distinctions as they apply to the educational
environment. He argues that restricted codes are in no way inferior to
elaborated codes: the latter may expand unnecessarily -- from the point
of view of meaning -- upon the former. However, teachers habitually
using elaborated codes may confuse pupils who are unfamiliar with what
amounts to a different kind of language: teaching might be more effective
if the teacher recognised -- and used in the classroom -- the equally
rich language of his pupil. The point seems close to Barnes's argument
that English had become a language 'fit only for learned people to
converse with each other in, being no longer one in which the more
learned can easily teach the less so'. Furthermore, Barnes's respect
for local speech variations, and his conviction that these express local
cultural differences, are echoed in Labov's work with the languages of
ethnic groups living in New York. Labov concludes that 'if semantic
integration [through linguistic uniformity] takes place, it must be by
a social process in which extreme variants are suppressed in group
interaction at the expense of central or core values'. Barnes's
critics who imply that his idyllic pastoral themes discount the reality
of the agricultural family's existence, must weigh against their
criticism, Barnes's determination to preserve another kind of reality of
the labourer's life: by using their local speech variation in his poetry
he is recognising at least this actuality. Stressing a difference of
language naturally underlines the separation of the labouring family
from other groups. But this divisiveness was never intended to separate
the rural family into an inferior bracket: Barnes's insistence throughout
his 'Dissertation' upon the richness of the dialect (particularly in
comparison to standard English and its frequent 'weaker wordiness') and
his use of the dialect in a mode of performance -- the poem -- for which
he had high regard (as his discussion of the art form in his Philological
Grammar implies), must discount any suggestion of this kind. His use of
the dialect gives, as I shall demonstrate, a kind of 'serviceability' to
his poems which the criticism of Barrell and Bull (referred to above)
does not fully appreciate.
I want to turn now, therefore, from a consideration of Barnes's model of Dorset's everyday communicative competence. (as it is described in his 'Dissertation'), and look instead at his description of one special aspect of language in performance, that is, his description of poetry which can be found at the end of his Philological Grammar. 82

That Barnes conceived of poetry as a particularly vital mode of linguistic performance -- vital in that it could fully utilise linguistic resources of meaningfulness and engage closely with the reader -- is emphasised in his discussion of its potential which he has added to his Philological Grammar. The very fact that Barnes should include, in his book describing linguistic competence, a section on its use in poetry underlines my argument that the prime motivation for his interest in language (and his consequent models of grammar) was a sharp awareness of the practical social and psychological implications of speech. It also bears out my suggestion that Barnes saw art not as some rarified form of expression, closed to all but the highly educated or socially superior, but the province of all kinds of people and a crucial element in their existence.

Whilst the 'Dissertation on the Dorset Dialect' models Barnes's view of the local form of speech (and the Philological Grammar models a less specifically contextualised language), the section in Philological Grammar which discusses poetry describes -- and in this sense 'models' -- his personal conception of the art form. As the following paragraphs explain, this description is consistently motivated by Barnes's particular interest in language in performance.

Evidently he conceived of poetry as language in vital performance, a performance involving both its artist-creator and its audience. His description of that performance seems to anticipate the distinction made by De Groot in his so-called 'law of two strata', which distinguishes the emotional expression of language from its communication of logical thought. 83 Barnes recognised, for instance, a potential emotional weight in what he termed clipping rhyme, that is the matching of consonants, particularly in its Welsh (cyngghanedd) and Persian (tujnis-i-nokis) patterns, where 'some same clippings are brought into two lines, or in two halves of a single line'. He demonstrated with the following lines.
The seaman
By heaven's stars h,v,n,s,t,r,s
To haven's steers h,v,n,s,t,r,s

And Philological Grammar also quotes in Hebrew 'The cry of Reuben, on his missing of Joseph', and argues that 'with its clipping rhyme of 'n', [it] is very touching'. The n is apparently repeated five times in the line and perhaps implies an unrelenting anguish in its keening sound. Barnes also sensed emotional implications in root-matching, which he defined as 'the matching of words from the same root', for example:

... did not dream it was a dream (Tennyson)
... without fairness she was more than fair (Crabbe)

He disagreed with Addison who had thought such rhyming merely 'a kind of jingle' (particularly in Paradise Lost). Barnes believes that, especially in Hebrew, 'this figure . . . is sometimes very striking, as shown in the spontaneous language of mental emotion'.

In other references to Hebrew, Barnes displays an awareness of a logical meaning as distinct from an emotional implication. He was particularly impressed by the patterning of Hebrew poetry 'formed on rules of parallel predicates or figures'.

The great rule of Hebrew poetic parallelism is, that in a distich or couplet the first line shall have at least two members, and that the other shall have two more members, answering them, so far as that they give the same members under other names, or other members of like speech-kind.

For example:

They were swifter / than eagles:
They were stronger / than lions.

In this respect Barnes seems to be implying semiotic significance in the syntactic and semantic 'shape' of poetry. He approved of 'the touching harmony of its twin ideas', evidently indicating here an emotionally significant overtone in the patterning. But he was particularly attracted to the related features of balance and twinned ideas in Hebrew poetry because he felt these could be imitated in any
language so that Hebrew wisdom could easily be transmitted.

[Hebrew poetry, unlike] the charming skill and sweetness of Greek and Latin feet of long and short breath-sounds, and ours of sharp and grave ones, with the end-rhyme, sound-rhyme, and clipping-rhyme of other nations... can leave its own language, and tune the psalm and the prophecy... to every man in his own language.

Its 'excellence of markworthy fitness' was, in Barnes's opinion, highly appropriate 'for the word which was to be published to all nations'. It would seem that he wished his own work to combine both this 'charming skill' (which could lead to emotional resonances and thus add to the individual message that he wanted his poetry, as a voice speaking primarily for Blackmore people, to carry), and also the universal potential of Hebrew verse (whose patterning according to the logic of its content could extend its capacity to communicate).

The shapes of poetry impressed Barnes for other reasons, all connected with language in performance. He remarked that prosody was 'of much utility, not only for the wording of poetry, but also for the reading of it with advantage and pleasure, as well as for the true pronunciation of words'.

He described the patterning which he believed structures blank verse. 'Although blank verse is free of rhyme, yet it seems holden by another rule, - that every verse should end with an important or emphatic word.' And this, and other instances of patterning, seemed to him to be of help to both the artist and his audience.

The poet himself might benefit by concentrating his energies upon a chosen metrical pattern or rhyme scheme, and then within this secure framework allow his imagination to work freely. Or he might, according to Barnes, 'impose upon himself any task, as that he will introduce some fore chosen word into every distich or line, or exclude it from his poem; or that every line shall end with a noun; or that his poem shall take a chosen form to the sight; or he may bind himself to work out any unusual fancy'. Such fancies included word-matching involving 'every word of a line... answered by another of the same measure and rhyme in the other line of the distich'. Or the artist might choose the Irish rhyme scheme called rīnn, requiring 'that the last word in the second and fourth lines
of a quatrain should have one more syllable than that of the first and third'. Or he might experiment with union rhyme, relating the last word of one line with the middle word of the next, or cymmeriad in which each line has the same initial sound. Barnes had always admired the kind of poetry which displayed 'the skill which conceals skill'. His appreciative comment seems to imply pleasure not only in the results of versification but also in the actual construction and use of symmetrical and intricate arrangements. That is, Barnes is evidently a craftsman enjoying his craft, when it comes to translating the theories he describes in Philological Grammar into their practical application in the lines of his own poems. It is hardly surprising that he should have enjoyed the meticulous observance of such poetic 'tasks'. He was a man of habit in his personal life, carefully organising his working day into parcels of time, so much for teaching, so much for study, so much for music, so much for his family.

However, he found patterning practically effective in another sense, helpful to both poet and audience. As a teacher he seems to have encouraged his pupils to use mnemonics. A former pupil wrote from university, 'I received your kind letter with the Mnemonic verses last month, for which I have to tender you my best thanks, for indeed I have found them of great use'. He may also have produced his own Mnemonical Manual. The 'new and simple system' it described has not survived, but one of Barnes's Scrapbooks, now in the Dorchester Museum, includes a title-page recommending it to 'the notice of teachers and readers of history, and all who would recollect Numerical Facts'. He encouraged his boys to sing their lessons. C.J. Wallis, a former pupil, recalled that 'the "central notes" were repeated or restricted according to the length or complexity of the definition which the word to be learnt happened to represent'. Barnes referred to this kind of memory aid as a 'word-lock'. And he appears to have believed that the patterns of versification could act as similar 'locks'. He remarks in Philological Grammar that 'we are told by Caesar, that the young bards of Britain learnt large stores of verse by rote; and clipping-rhyme' (and presumably, by analogy, other regular patterns) 'seems an excellent device to warn a bard or singer of a wrong or forgotten word'.

But for Barnes skilful versification was not only a craftsman's tool, not only a means to a psychological end, not only an aid in the classroom.
It was also intrinsically aesthetic. He was particularly attached to the sonnet, 'a perfect little poem on one subject', and found the Petrarchan version especially 'pretty'. His article on 'Harmonic Proportions', as well as references in his 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', emphasise Barnes's pleasure in harmonious shapes of all kinds. He compared musical chords and scales with primary colours and the half tones between, and then applied the same principles to physical forms.

To find the harmonic 3rd to two given numbers, multiply the 1st by the 2nd, and divide the product by twice the 1st minus the 2nd . . . Now I mostly have my books bound thus, with six spaces off-marked by bands on the back, and the lettering piece on the third space from the top; thus I have six spaces, three below the lettering piece and two above it, a harmonic triad. I feel that if the lettering piece is shoved up above that place the book looks hunch-backed . . . You understand that nothing of harmonic proportion is mine, but these and such like uses of it. 89

When Barnes writes, then, of giving Dorset people a poetry of 'their own' which is both 'sound' and 'high-toned', he is evidently referring not only to its 'good and loveworthy' thematic content, but also to his judgement of the dignity and beauty of its form.

I have been demonstrating in these immediately preceding paragraphs that Barnes's appreciation of poetry is closely linked to his conception of poetry as language in vital performance. That is, he apparently saw the poem as an opportunity to utilise the communicative competence of a language to a high degree. Further, he believed a poem could be a kind of signal of the personality of the community habitually using (living within the magic circle of) that local language: a poem could in this sense be 'their own'. At the same time it could be a testament to the worth of that local personality. And it could preserve, for subsequent readers, the 'purity' of local speech forms. In these respects Barnes's own poetry may be profoundly 'serviceable'.

To what extent these attitudes, theories and models of language, discussed in the preceding pages, actually appear reflected in the practice of Barnes's own dialect poetry is the subject of the rest of this Chapter and also the following two Chapters.
I have already indicated, above, that my interest in Barnes's representation of the Dorset dialect is not connected with an attempt to judge its accuracy as a source of knowledge about the precise way in which the speech was actually used, day to day, in Blackmore. Unlike Tilling, who looks at Tennyson's dialect poetry with this kind of historical linguistic purpose in mind, I am more concerned to examine Barnes's theories of language in order to assess the effects these have upon his art.

Therefore, an assessment of the 'purity' of the dialect he uses (in so far as 'purity' in Barnes's understanding of the term is at all possible) is only relevant to this dissertation in that it helps to demonstrate the effects of Barnes's desire to achieve such purity in his poetry.

Furthermore, it is difficult to prove just how faithful to actuality Barnes's representation of local sounds, words, and syntax really was, since it is difficult to judge the poems by comparison with any other examples of Blackmore speech. Professor Skeat was 'not aware of any important work in the Southern dialect' after the fourteenth century writing of John Trevisa -- until the appearance of Barnes's work. He may not have been familiar with the writing of Robert Young, living and writing near Barnes, in Sturminster Newton, in the 1860s: or he may have considered his poems unimportant. In any event, their speech is dissimilar to Barnes's dialect in a number of ways. For instance, phonetic discrepancies are implied in the following extract from Young.

My head is splitten droo and droo;  
Here Thomas, do ye let's zit down,  
Var I be lik to vall to groun'.  
Let's line my head agign theMse post,  
Ar I sholl soon gie up the ghost.  

Barnes would have been more likely, if he followed precisely the phonetic system adopted in his own poems, to render the same lines in the following way. The point is true of the majority of his work.
(However, earlier poetry had, as I shall explain in Chapter Six, a rather different phonology.)

My head is splitten drough and drough;
Here Thomas, do ye let's zit down,
Vor I be lik to vall to groun'.
Let's lẽn my head agẽn thẽse post,
Or I shall soon gie up the ghost.

Because significant phonemes can differ strikingly within a very small area it may be that Young and Barnes heard such different sounds in the different localities upon which they chose to concentrate. Or it may be that one or other of them did not have a particularly sharp ear. Or the symbols they are using to convey sounds are inaccurate. In any event, Young's work does not help to check the accuracy of Barnes's dialect representation.

A.J. Ellis's *On Early English Pronunciation* might be taken as an aid to confirming phonological features but Dieth, joint editor of the recent Leeds University survey of dialect, found Ellis's work 'a tragedy . . . a huge store of information which every dialectologist consults, but, more often than not, rejects as inaccurate and wrong'. Martyn F. Wakelin disputes such a harsh judgement, but accepts that Ellis's work had severe drawbacks: Ellis had derived much of his evidence via postal questionnaires which he had sent to intermediaries who may not have had the special linguistic expertise necessary to correctly interpret or to communicate back to Ellis the sounds they heard but did not personally use. 91

It is true that Hardy implicitly corroborates Barnes's accuracy when he remarks that the dialect used by the poet was changing even in Hardy's lifetime: he seems in this respect to be working on the assumption that Barnes had tried to exactly imitate what he had heard. 92 But Hardy is not a particularly authoritative witness to accuracy since he was not a trained philologist himself and, in his own writing, he preferred (as will be discussed below) an approximation of local speech rather than an attempt at a precise reproduction.
All that can be judged with any certainty, then, is Barnes's intention to be consistent in his rendering of a speech variation. The phonological, lexical, and syntactic systems of his poems do appear to be consistent, and their consistency is in line with the model of Dorset speech he describes in his 'Dissertation'. The fact that he chose to be consistent is significant in ways that I shall demonstrate in Chapters Four and Five: in some ways his consistency limited Barnes's art, in other respects it allowed his work a special richness.

It can be confirmed, literally at a glance, that Barnes set out to achieve a kind of phonological purity: that is, his phonemes consistently match those he describes as local in his 'Dissertation', and it will be remembered that Barnes considered all that was local to be a direct descendant of an originally pure form of speech. His orthography, for example, indicates the kind of local 'smoothness' and 'softness' to which he refers in his 'Dissertation'. The poems have wind for standard find, zong for song, han' for hand, drough for through: (again, note Young's rendering of through, given above as droo). And the more open vowel a is substituted for e as in 'crow's aggs'.

But it is not necessary to rely on the eye alone, to confirm Barnes's use of a consistent phonology. Attendant rhythms and tones help to prove this kind of consistency. For example, the feel of Barnes's lines suggests that his rendering of a split vowel was not specially marked. If the following lines are read with a marginally split vowel sound, they maintain a regular and easy stress pattern -- the kind of smooth regularity which Barnes, given his pleasure in harmony and the 'skill that conceals skill', would wish to achieve. But, if a strong emphasis is used, distinguishing each part of the vowel sound distinctly, then this smooth flow is destroyed.

An' there, in lefftter years, I roved
Wi' thik poor ma£d I fondly lov'd;
The Ma£d too£f£hir to die so soon. 93

The diphthongs used here, therefore, seem to affect time values only minimally. The same is true across the range of the poems. It may be assumed, then, that Barnes was hearing, and maintaining as he wrote, the
same -- marginally split -- diphthongs.

On the other hand, his habitual parting of the consonants *lm* by a vowel, *lem*, seems more marked. The rhythm of the following seems to take account of such a marked extension: if it did not, the line's flow -- always important to Barnes -- would be disrupted noticeably.

The Leyton road ha' lofty ranks
Ov elem trees upon his banks,
The woone athirt the hill do show
Us miles o' hedgy meâds below. 94

That this kind of time value is consistently accorded to words in which consonants are parted by a vowel can be confirmed by checking them against the over-riding rhythm set up by a poem as a whole. And Barnes's 'Dissertation' describes this, as well as the diphthong, as a local speech characteristic.

Local syntactic variations, also recorded in the 'Dissertation', appear with the same kind of regularity and consistency in the poems as do phonological features. The affix *a* was discussed below. It appears in constructions like the following.

'Tis merry ov a zummer's day,
When vo'k be out a-haulen hay,
Where boughs, a-spread upon the ground,
De meâke the staddle big an' round. 95

The use of *did* in the following quotation implies that Barnes was also attempting to use faithfully certain Dorset conventions whose semantic subtlety he indicates in his 'Dissertation'. He explains in his model that *did* seemed to him to be used in the past tense only to indicate continuity of past action: it is therefore appropriate in this extract because Barnes is here describing not a single occurrence but the atmosphere of the whole month of May. There may be a sense of permanence and constancy encouraged by the verb auxiliary.
'Twer May, but ev'ry leaf wer dry
All day below a sheenen sky;
The zun did glow wi' yellow gleëre,
An' cowslips blow wi' yollor gleëre.

Barnes apparently tried in his poetry to remain faithful to his
description of the Dorset lexicon, as well as to its phonetics and syntax.
The published collections of his poems are followed by a glossary. It
is fairly lengthy, but not exhaustive: some lexical items are used in
the poems whose meanings have to be inferred from the surrounding text.
But the very existence of a glossary, and even a brief examination of the
poems, suggests that Barnes was consistent in his attempt to work with
Dorset speech rather than standard English words. Thus, the mantel-shelf
of national English is always the clavy-bwoard, the wild hyacinth is the
graegle, the scarecrow a mammet, and a peacock a parrick or parrock.
A number of verbs which differ from the standard also appear with
regularity, and include hele, to pour out fluid, and plim, to swell up.

It would seem, then, that Barnes tried to apply his theory of local
linguistic purity to his use of the dialect in his poems. But in what
respects was he creative, through the processes of compounding or the
application of existing morphemic patterns which he recommends in his
writings on linguistic theory?

His article 'On English Derivatives' describes a number of patterns
from which English words are derived, and argues for increased sensitivity
in the extended application of certain existing formulae. He writes that
'the adjective endings, some and ful, as in frolicsome, merciful, &c. have
been neglected, confounded, and abused'. Barnes believed that some, by
reference to the German, means strictly apt to do or promote the thing
denoted, whereas ful means full of, or having much of a thing. Therefore
in Barnes's view delightful, spoken of music, or a fine morning 'or any
other charming thing', is incorrect, whilst delightsome, 'as it is some-
times shaped by the vulgar', is acceptable, on the grounds that 'a morning
or music cannot have, or be full of, delight itself, but is apt to delight
man, or to promote delight in his mind'.

Barnes's reference to delightsome as 'shaped by the vulgar' may imply
that it was a normal construction in Dorset vernacular, and a reference
to the word in his 'Dissertation' appears to confirm this. But it is only, according to the 'Dissertation', 'sometimes' so shaped. Therefore it is impossible to be certain just how far Barnes was extending the usage of this pattern in his poems. It is certainly used in an appropriate fashion in poetry like 'Fair Emily of Yarrow Mill' (p. 265), as I shall explain in Chapter Six. Nevertheless, I have no source of evidence to confirm whether Barnes was using the construction because Dorset would allow no other, or because he was drawing on an existing pattern which he had then chosen to sensitively and creatively develop.

Further, although it is possible to identify words in Barnes's writing, particularly in his prose, which are now unfamiliar and therefore may seem to be his original creations, it is not always easy, as Willis D. Jacobs points out, to be certain just how many of these words really are neologisms. He believes that some merely restored neglected terms. However, he lists a number of words as likely Barnes coinages. These include birdstow (aviary), Englandish (book English), folkdom (democracy), lawcraft (jurisprudence), loremote (meeting of learned societies), tastecraft (aesthetics), sundersome (separable), soaksome (bibulous). But none of these terms, apart from those constructed on the pattern (noun or verb + some) belong to the kind of communicative competence which Barnes uses in his poems. They are words found in his factual prose writings, and do not belong to the kinds of themes dealt with in his poems, themes apparently chosen because they were of the kind Barnes felt appropriate to the Dorset personae he imaginatively recreates.

It would seem, then, that Barnes did try to work in his poems with the model of 'pure' local speech which he describes in his 'Dissertation': and he tried to develop this local linguistic competence creatively, with a sense of appropriateness in terms of local performance. I will be arguing below that this use of local dialect -- apart from the speech's intrinsic strengths -- helped Barnes to realise in a number of ways his potential as a poet. For example, the assumption of an authorial voice other than his own, in the persona of the Dorset labourer or a member of his family, contributes to a distancing between Barnes and his art which I believe overcame the self-consciousness that marks some of his early standard work. And, speaking as a Dorset raconteur in many of the poems gave him an opportunity to develop his feel for conversational
rhythms (present, but not so adeptly handled in the very early poem 'Destiny' (p.25)). I shall be explaining that Barnes's determination to recreate with accuracy the Dorset Labourer himself, by using the language which he (rather than Barnes, or the literary poet) spoke, may mean that the poems are less the representation of Barnes's own character, and more the expressions of a communal personality. To this extent the poems are a demonstration of the local magic circle of language which Barnes, writing in the role of community Bard, would wish to use. However, Hardy implies, in his introduction to his own edition of Barnes's work, that because Barnes was identifying the community circle and its speech from the exterior -- from the standpoint of professional, educated, vicar and teacher and philologist -- he sometimes allowed his poetic voice to step outside the community ring and used language unlikely to be heard in everyday performance. The possibility is examined in the following Chapters.

What follows immediately, however, is a brief, rather schematic example of language habitually used in the dialect poems. It serves to draw together the threads of this Chapter and is intended to provide a clear base from which to discuss these consistently found features, in depth, in Chapters Five and Six. The example draws attention then to the following persistent aspects of Barnes's dialect work:

1. The consistent attempt to use 'pure' dialect, as Barnes heard it, in sound, syntactic, structure, and vocabulary.

2. Creativity from this pure speech, particularly through compounding.

3. The presence of the local, frequently conversational, voice and persona - the local 'I'.

4. The occasional sense of a persona behind this voice which may seem to the reader to be nearer to Barnes himself.

5. The supporting of meaning through the skilful handling of sound, rhythm, and form.

6. The achievement of harmony and balance through the use of intricate verse patterns and refrains.

7. Clear syntax.

8. Marked temporal and spatial deixis.
9. The language frequently takes the form of story-telling. Furthermore, although these stories are mostly contented and optimistic in tone, nevertheless there may be underlying hints of the threat of change and shadow.

10. There is frequently a moral, social observation, or specifically Christian comment, made about the content of the poem.

The numbers of the bracketed sections in the poem below, and the comments pertaining to these brackets, are linked to the numbers in this list.

(However, before making these comments, I would stress that I do not wish, despite the focus in these Chapters upon linguistics and the use of allied descriptive techniques, to underestimate in any way Barnes's capacity for spontaneous, imaginative creativity: the linguistic approach is intended to explicate Barnes's academic, sociolinguistic, motivations and particularly his related artistic creativity. On the whole I would accept Hardy's assessment of Barnes's blending of the scholarly with the spontaneous: 'primarily spontaneous, he was academic closely after'. The resulting use of local speech generated a freshness which pleased Hopkins:

He comes like Homer and all poets of native epic, provided with epithets, images, and so on which seem to have been tested and digested for a long while in their native air and circumstances and to have a keeping which nothing else could give; but, in fact they are rather all of his own finding and first throwing off. And I have argued that the poems tend to be bathed -- like a Dutch painting perhaps -- in a warm light and a gentle, sometimes anxious, energy, both of which must prevent any hint of academic dryness. And although it would be possible to generate, incorporating those habitual features listed above, a poem which might bear a strong resemblance to those authentically by Barnes, it is less likely that it would carry, created so mechanically, the warmth of his appreciation of rural life, or the sense of his anxiety at its disruption: this genuine warmth, and anxiety, were at the heart both of Barnes's sociolinguistic motivation and the art which stemmed in part from its inspiration.)
When 'tis the breaken day is red,
       An' grass is dewy wet,
      An' roun' the blackberry's a-spread
   The spider's gliss'nen net,
Then I do dreve the cows across
   The brook that's in a vag,
While they do trot, an' bleat, an' toss
   Their heads to hook the dog;
Vor the cock do gi'e me warnen,
       An' light or dark,
So brisk's a lark,
I'm up at break o' mornen.

Avore the maiden's sleep's a-broke
   By window-striken zun,
Avore the busy wife's 'tis smoke
   Do curl above the tun,
My day's begun. An' when the zun
   'S a-zinken in the west,
The work the mornen brought's a-done,
   An' I do goo to rest,
Till the cock do gi'e me warnen;
       An' light or dark
So brisk's a lark,
I'm up ageän nex' mornen.

We can't keep back the daily zun,
   The wind is never still,
An' never ha' the streams a-done
   A-runnen down at hill.
Zoo they that ha' their work to do,
   Should do't so soon's they can;
Vor time an' tide will come an' goo,
   An' never wait vor man,
As the cock do gi'e me warnen;
       An' light or dark
So brisk's a lark,
I'm up so rathe in mornen.
We've learned where the air do blow,
An' meh'ds wi' deay'ry cows,
An' copse wi' leath an' she'lede below
The overhangen boughs.
An' when the zun, noo time can tire,
'S a-quench'd below the west,
Then we've, awere the bleazen fire,
A settle vor to rest,
To be up agen' nex' momen
So brisk's a lark,
When, light or dark,
The cock do gi'e us warmen. (p.147)

Bracketed section 1, referring to point 1 listed above

The underlined portions of these lines indicate the presence of apparently local phonemes, syntactic structures, and words: similar local features are used consistently throughout the poems. The effects of their consistency -- and a mingling of some features of the local circle with standard ones in the national English poems -- are discussed in detail in the following Chapters.

Bracketed line 2, referring to point 2 listed above

The line includes an example of the creative compounding which frequently occurs in the poems. Since window and strike are presumably everyday words, found in common, separate, use, and since the idea of light on glass is not complex, this is an example of the many simple compound epithets in the poems which do not have a specially poetic ring about them. However, apparently more complex compounds may be found in the poems. The implications of both kinds of compound will be discussed in the following Chapters.
Bracketed stanza, numbered 3 and 4, and referring to points 3 and 4 above

The images of the poem as a whole, and in this particular stanza, of work in a rural setting, imply that the 'I' rising 'so rathe' in the morning is a local labourer. And the intonation of rhythms of the poem suggest a casual conversational tone. Mingled with the working persona's everyday linguistic performance is, however, a phrase from a different register, echoing the quotation 'Time and tide wait for no man'. But since this is such a well-known quotation, and since the moral observation surrounding the remark as it is used here, is not remote from any labourer's daily experience, the impression of the local voice is not markedly affected by a specific sense of Barnes's own thoughts behind it. However, the possibility of a stronger suggestion of Barnes's own voice, present behind the labourer-persona's mask, is considered in the next Chapter.

Bracketed lines, numbered 5 and 6, and referring to points 5 and 6 listed above

The relatively long line 7, together with the falling intonation of lines 7 and 8, are appropriately soothing, bearing in mind the notion of relaxation that they express. The three following lines are shorter, with on the whole a more rising intonation: these features, together with sharp g, k and t consonants, contribute a sense of brisk, morning energy. There may be another kind of appropriateness, between content and sound, rhythm or form, in the use of the couplet which is substantially repeated in lines 10 and 11 of each stanza: its repetition, brevity, rhyme, and skipping rhythm, are reminiscent of a folk song which might belong to the performance of a labouring community which, Barnes claimed, as I have said, would enjoy 'a course of jokes, anecdotes, and songs, in some of which the whole company joined' during their celebrations at the end of an arduous working day.

These lines are frequently surpassed, in other poems, in their metrical complexity. Nonetheless, they still display variation in line length and foot which is handled with a skill that blends them into a harmonious pattern. I have marked the metrical features -- basically iambics in four, three, or two feet lines, with the occasional extra unstressed syllable or an incomplete foot. (The intonational pattern,
referred to above, is not marked, since this is relatively simple and indicating it might confuse the metrical symbols.) However, I shall indicate tone boundaries and nucleii, where appropriate, in subsequent Chapters. The rhyme scheme of the stanza displays a similar amount of variation, also handled with dexterity: a b a b c d c d e f f e: the e f f e rhymes are heard at the end of each stanza. The rhyme sounds are not intrusive -- except in the song-like 'lark/dark' couplet -- because run-on lines and variation in the placing of caesuras draw attention away from their emphasis. It is the subtle use of these features -- the caesura and the run-on line -- which contributes greatly to the sense of the conversational in the poems (an aspect which is discussed in the subsequent Chapters, together with other matters, including the counterpointing of rhythm and intonation, briefly mentioned here).

Points 7 and 8, illustrated by the poem as a whole

This poem is set in the present tense, but I shall demonstrate in Chapter Six that the past tense, used rather more frequently by Barnes, has a firm sense of continuity, linked in to the present. (references to the future are infrequent). The merging of past and present is partly effected by very specific deixis, orientating the persona and his hearer in the moment of speaking and in its relationship to the past. Syntactic structures are thus frequently simple clauses of action (less of mental process) or attribution, linked clearly to place and/or time. This poem is thus, roughly speaking, based on the simple pattern of when (or while, avore, till, as) then I . . . or, it (the day, the grass . . . ) is . . . Temporal deixis is supported by spatial reference: the persona goes across the brook, the smoke is above the tun, the leYzes are where the air do blow, and there is a settle avore the bleMzen vire. The syntax -- and the image -- is therefore straightforward and unambiguous: nothing less could satisfy Barnes who, as a teacher, insisted on verbal clarity and, as an advocate of the country, needed to precisely delineate and locate the way of life he wished could persist from past on into the present.
Point 9

This poem is not a fully developed story, with an unfolding narrative drawing to a climax. Some of Barnes's poems do take such a form, frequently, it is implied, told 'avore the bleazen vire', resting on the settle, after a hard day's work, all of which are indicated in these stanzas. Nevertheless, even this poem is a descriptive tale of sorts. And it is, as are so many of the poems with their 'good and loveworthy' themes, full of a 'brisk', energetic and optimistic commitment to the routines of rural life. Even so it has -- if especially mildly in this particular poem -- a hint of disturbance which frequently, though discreetly, touches much of Barnes's work. Here the touch of tension rests merely in the urgent need to complete work on time: in this case the familiarity of the 'time and tide' proverb probably dilutes an implication of strain, but elsewhere Barnes hints at anxieties attendant upon greater changes than those merely of day to night, season to season, changes created by the cultural challenges of an industrial century.

Point 10, illustrated in stanza 3

Barnes frequently made pointed moral and social observations in his poetry. Often they have a specifically Christian element. The issue, together with Hardy's dislike of the practice and his consequent dilution of some of Barnes's strength in his own edition of the work, is discussed in the following Chapters.

* * * * * *

Chapter Four has, then, explained Barnes's particular linguistic motivations and indicated, in general terms, their likely effect upon his art. Chapter Five discusses particularly the restrictions placed upon Barnes by his chosen use of the dialect, restrictions which I argue are not necessarily weakening limitations. Chapter Six describes the artistic effectiveness open to Barnes in his use of the local speech and implicitly emphasises the rich creative potential available in any dialect.
CHAPTER FIVE

A SMALL THING WELL DONE

In choosing to write in the Dorset dialect, usually through the persona of a Dorset labourer or a member of his family, Barnes has, in a sense, imposed upon himself the kind of 'task' which, as I explained above (p.160), he enjoyed as part of a poet's craft. He defined as a task any self-imposed limitation, upon theme or form, which would help the poet to hone his concentration but not prevent his imagination from moving freely within its confines. A task is not, then, a negative restriction; it is not necessarily a weakness. In fact, Barnes's chosen limits seem to have encouraged Coventry Patmore to remark that 'He has done a small thing well, while his contemporaries have mostly been engaged in doing big things ill'.¹ I would suggest that the task of the dialect results in certain very specific limits, each of which is highly appropriate to Barnes's motivation for writing: that is, these limits may strengthen the effect of his poetry and, though they arise from the assumption of a poetic voice which is not strictly speaking Barnes's own, they nevertheless confirm the attitudes of the authorial voice behind the mask of the Dorset speaker. Barnes's later standard English poems do not of course work within the limits of the dialect. But their voice is still largely that of a countryman, frequently a labourer. In a way it is as though Barnes is making use of the facility that many rural people -- like Hardy's Tess -- possessed. Tess could switch from local dialect into the national English she was being taught at school, and the persona of the standard poems might well be doing something similar.² The standard poems may still be largely restricted to the kind of registers appropriate to a rural worker, although, as I shall explain later in this Chapter, they display clearer signs of the teacher, vicar, and man of wider horizons that Barnes had become, than those identifiable in the dialect work.

This Chapter examines the limitations inherent in Barnes's choice of the dialect and, or, the rural voice. These include the suggestion of a hypothetical labourer, who has uncomplicated perception, and restrained emotion. Such limits may be explained by contrasting Barnes's work with examples from Clare, Hardy and Hopkins. The comparisons are not intended, through illustrating limitations, to be detrimental to
Barnes: they are used merely to illuminate the existence of these limits, and the subsequent Chapter Six will discuss Barnes's considerable achievements within -- and perhaps because of -- his chosen confines. Critics have drawn attention to some of the contrasts that I shall be citing between Clare and Hardy on the one hand, and Barnes on the other; however, they have not always gone on to associate the limits with the achievement.

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Chapter Four explained that Barnes worked, in his dialect poems, with what he took to be the linguistic competence of a Vale of Blackmore speaker. In choosing that competence, and adhering closely to it, he left behind poetic diction and also set on one side the competence he had acquired, since leaving the farm of his birth, in standard English. John Clare, on the other hand, appears to have been more eclectic.

Barbara Strang writes:

[Clare's] punctuation, spelling, sound-patterns (including rhythm and metre), diction and grammar combine to make a single impression, of a quality of language artfully composed, like the early Spenser's, from the most diverse elements, literary, archaic, elevated, borrowed, familiar, dialectal and invented. These elements, however, are fused into something unique and instantly recognizable as Clare's alone. 3

The balance between these elements may vary from poem to poem. They seem 'foregrounded differently to different tastes'. 4 Thus, in Strang's view, The Rural Muse may exemplify the most literary of Clare's language, The Midsummer Cushion the most personal. Nevertheless, a mixture of kinds of language, though it may vary in its composition, is always present, selected and arranged according to Clare's feeling about the theme he is considering and, perhaps, the needs of his audience.

Barnes, on the other hand, left behind the elevated and the literary when he passed from his early standard poetry into his dialect work. Lines like the following extract from an early poem are no longer heard.
Venus, the fair Adonis is no more.
No more bewail him in the sylvan shade. 5

Barnes's appreciation of pure language caused him, as explained in the previous Chapter, to reject all borrowing: he would have accepted the archaic and the invented only if these two categories of speech could be traced to the same origins as the language of current Dorset competence.

This is one reason, therefore, why Barnes would not have chosen to offer, in his dialect poems, lines worded like the following example from Clare's, 'The Blackcap'.

When one small bird of saddened green,
Black head, and breast of ashy grey,
In ivied oak tree scarcely seen,
Stopt at once and flew away;
And since, in hedgerow's dotterel trees,
I've oft this tiny minstrel met,
Where ivy flapping to the breeze
Bear ring-marked berries black as jet;
But whether they find food in these
I've never seen or known as yet. 6

_Dotterel_ is a dialect word meaning a cut or pollarded tree. But, _I've oft this tiny minstrel met_ has an archaic poetic flavour in its choice of _oft_ and _minstrel_. The arrangement of the words is unusual here too -- unusual, that is, for the everyday register -- with the postponement of the verb _met_ until the end of the utterance. Furthermore, although _saddened_ and _green_ are, individually, in common use, together they form an unusual collocation: semantic-lexical restrictions of everyday performance discourage the personification of colour. Barnes, wishing to remain in his poems within the Dorset linguistic circle, would avoid the mannered and the semantic extension of words beyond the usual. (I shall be considering the question of semantic extension in performance, in the following paragraph.)
Parins remarks;

Much of the power of Clare's poetry lies in the fact that he is able to depict country life realistically; much of the effect of this realism is achieved by his use of a rustic diction, a vocabulary dependent at least to some extent on his local Northamptonshire dialect. 7

I agree that the use of dialect, even occasionally, must add to a rural 'flavour'. However, I would suggest that Clare's realism is not confined to the rustic air, but extended to an impression of a 'real', substantial, individual behind the poems. For the combination of all three kinds of language in 'The Blackcap' -- the inventive, the dialectal, and the poetic -- mixed with standard English, seems to me to amount, in their fusion, to a very personal idiolect. (I am using the term idiolect in the same sense in which it is normally used by linguists. It has the added implication explained by John Lyons as follows:

The synchronic language-system is a theoretical construct of the linguist; and it rests upon the more or less deliberate, and to some degree arbitrary, discounting of variations in the language-behaviour of those who are held, pre-theoretically, to speak the same language. If pressed, we have to admit that there is a somewhat different language-system (a different idiolect) underlying the language-behaviour of every individual.) 8

Clare's use of idiolect in 'The Blackcap' seems to me preparation for the almost palpable closeness and openness of the final simple statement of self:

But whether they find food in these
I've never seen or known as yet.

But in Barnes's case, if his poetic language -- in his dialect poems -- is consistently closer to a generalised local speech than it is to his idiolect (and it will be remembered that Barnes's idiolect was not habitually spoken with a Dorset accent, and its lexicon became more and more an amalgam of standard English, dialect words, and neologisms with Anglo-Saxon bases) then that language is likely to be more the expression of a kind of communal rural personality, and less the representation of the individual, William Barnes. (Strang's paper
raises a related issue. She observes that Clare does not press upon the reader any particular dialectal phonology: though his words and syntax may represent a particular idiolect, their accent is open to reader interpretation. Barnes of course directs his reader -- as well as his hearer -- to a specific accent.) However, I do not accept Gitting's feeling that since Barnes is writing in a 'calculated dialect, observed by him as a philologist . . . his Dorset poems, even at their best, have something of the air of an academic exercise'.9 On the contrary, I shall be arguing, particularly in Chapter Six, that, as Edmund Gosse insisted, 'In his hands the Dorset tongue becomes no mere philological curiosity, but a living language, producing living verse'.10 Nevertheless, it is true that the sense of an individual self cannot be conveyed to a high degree unless an idiolect is discernible, and, in his determination to recreate a local performance, in poetry 'of their own', Barnes must sacrifice that which is linguistically idiosyncratic to himself: the impression of a local labourer, standing between the poet and his words, is increased.

A number of critics have considered some of the consequences of this restriction within the local circle of Blackmore speech. Harold Orel makes the obvious point that the size of Barnes's audience is likely to be reduced through the difficulty of understanding a wholly unfamiliar speech. But this is a comment which of course relates more to the unwillingness of readers to step in to fresh 'magic circles' than to the quality of Barnes's art. Yet Orel also makes the related point that the exclusive use of dialect may 'direct attention away from human nature and the meaning of a speaker'.11 (He is contrasting Barnes's practice with Hardy's more selective use of local words and phrases, within otherwise standard English utterances.) There is perhaps an echo here of Hopkins's feeling that Barnes's dialect -- though he generally approved its use -- was sometimes a 'kind of unfair play', lending an interest of its own to otherwise conventional content.12

Barnes's conscious intention was actually the very reverse of Orel's suggestion. His poems were, as I explained in Chapter One, a deliberate attempt to direct attention towards local human nature. However, Chapter Two went on to discuss the high degree of thematic selectivity in his work: the reader is to be directed only towards certain facets of
that local nature. The local persona is speaking only the ideas of which Barnes, the poet behind the mask, approves. But if the use of an unusual speech draws attention to itself, it may distract the reader from recalling that its author is not himself local. Its wholesale usage allows Barnes to avoid declaring, through the signal of his own idiolect, that the vision of the poems has been seen at least as much from the vicarage and schoolroom as from the labourer's standpoint. In consequence his verse is strengthened as an image of the good and loveworthy and largely happy way of life that is enjoyed by the labourer who apparently describes it. But, in achieving this desired end, Barnes may also weaken his art in other senses.

Samuel Hynes, Donald Wesling and Paul Zietlow, observed this aspect of Barnes's poems, may see it as a weakness, and contrast it with Hardy's different achievement through his more selective use of dialect. Although Hynes remarks that his observation 'is not necessarily pejorative' he draws attention to Barnes's 'narrowness of vision': in contrast, Hardy's Wessex 'like Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha, is a self-made reality, precise in definition, but ruled only by the laws of the artist's imagination . . . Barnes was a provincial, Hardy was not'. Yet the point becomes pejorative if it is assumed that a rural labourer inevitably has little to say of significance. John Lucas has described the manner in which, during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, 'provincial' came to be a derogatory term. But this dissertation rests of course upon my belief that Barnes himself wrote not out of guilty compensation and thus tacit acceptance of -- an increasing disparagement of the provincial: he wrote to deny the very implication.

Wesling makes a point which relates to Hynes's view.

Hardy, wanting a larger innovation than Barnes', determined to combine dialectal and standard registers so that each would be the implicit comment on the other. That way dialect would become a graph of class in a novel written about the countryside for a readership in the city.

Barnes did not primarily aim at city readership. And he certainly did not want a comparative graph of class. Whilst he may have wished the status quo of hierarchy to remain, he wanted -- as I explained in Chapters One and Two, and, as his linguistic theories, explained in Chapter Four imply -- each class section to have its own particular worth recognised and dignified.
Still, although his own objective may have been achieved to some extent through his concentration upon local speech, there could be a consequent sacrifice of depth in the poems: the complexities of multiple perspectives, and the tensions which can exist between these, may be missing.

Paul Zietlow draws attention to a contrast between Hardy and Barnes in this respect. He suggests that Hardy recognised a certain shallowness in Barnes and rectified it in his own work: Zietlow argues that a number of Hardy's poems are in a sense direct 'answers' to some of Barnes's work. That is, not only does Hardy achieve multiple perspectives by using multiple personae, indicating them by their different idiolects, but he also allows the individual rural persona to reveal contradictions within himself, or within his situation, which Barnes's good and happy countryman does not betray.

Zietlow cites three poems which Hardy chose to include in his selection from Barnes's work: 'The Motherless Child' (p.251), 'Went Hwome' (p.392), and 'The Milk-Maid o' the Farm' (p.80). He believes that Hardy's 'The Motherless Child', 'Welcome Home', and 'The Milkmaid', written later than Barnes's poems, are clearly and consciously connected to the latter through similarity of content. Hardy's implied attitude to that content is, however, different. For instance, whilst Barnes's speaker in 'The Motherless Child' finds perfect comfort in his daughter's face, which, so like her dead mother's, seems to bring his wife back to him ('The mother's in her daughter's face'), Hardy's persona cannot find similar relief. The daughter is quite obviously not the mother: her face cannot be an effective substitute for the woman who still fills his mind with memories. I would accept that Hardy's poem probably is a commentary upon Barnes's earlier work: the inclusion of the word mindsight, Barnes-like in its creation of a word on an existing pattern (for example, like eye-sight), and the knowledge that it bears relation to a word used in Barnes's own poems, that is, soulsight, appears good supporting evidence. But the fact that Hardy highlights pain, whilst Barnes describes comfort, does not necessarily -- if Barnes's own philosophy is accepted -- confirm a greater depth in Hardy's perception: Barnes would have argued that the soul's potential for happiness and optimism was equally strong and profound -- and much more valuable. Furthermore, if
Barnes's poem is placed alongside others in the canon, it then becomes perfectly clear that his concentration upon the mother's features in the child's face is unlikely to have been an unthinking evasion of the realities of loneliness and insecurity in separation. Zietlow himself refers to Barnes's *The Wife A-lost* (p.333) and accepts that this poem is poignant in its attempt to focus away from areas of pain whilst yet being fully conscious of the ploy.

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Since I noo mwear do zee your feNce,
Up steMirs or down below,
I'll zit me in the lwonesome pleNce,
Where flat-bough'd beech do grow;
Below the beeches' bough, my love,
Where you did never come,
An' I don't look to meet ye now,
As I do look at hwome.
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But Zietlow's concentration upon Hardy's complexities, by contrast with three apparently less complex poems by Barnes, obscures the fact that Barnes is perfectly capable, within the rural persona he imagines, of suggesting at least some tensions in other examples of his work. It is a matter of his choice.

A similar point may be made about Zietlow's comparison of Hardy's poem about a milkmaid with Barnes's 'The Milk-maid o' the Farm'. Barnes's maid is wholly virtuous and industrious. Hardy's is frivolous and self-consciously sexual. The contrast is certainly present between these two works. But it should not be forgotten that Barnes's poems include other, rather less 'perfect' maidens. 'A Bit o' Sly Coorten' (p.127) depends entirely on the highlighting of a flirtatious streak in Fanny, the 'teazen maid'. And the humorous tone of this particular example, which does help to reduce the sense of complexity or tension, is quite erradicated from 'Week's End in Zummer in the Wold Vo'k's Time' (p.120). This poem recalls the tragedy of a young woman whose sexuality brought pain and ultimately death.

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An' blushen JeMne so shy an' meek,
That seldom let us hear her speak,
That wer a-coorted an' undone
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By Farmer Woodley's woldest son;
An' after she'd a-been vorzook,
We voun' a-drown'd in Longmeđd brook.

Therefore, again, isolated examples of poems with a very simple perspective should not be taken to prove that Barnes was incapable of, or totally avoided, the recognition of greater complexities.

In fact, Zietlow's third example, of a Hardy and a Barnes poem each describing a home-coming, does not itself clearly support his case for simplicity in Barnes. Zietlow believes that Barnes's persona comes home to a warm and unclouded welcome, whilst Hardy finds that he is no longer so well remembered. But in fact I would suggest that there is a hint of disappointment in Barnes's recollection too. There are signs that the community was not so stable as Zietlow feels Barnes is implying. There is a suggestion certainly of pleasure at the visit, in the stress upon the delightful images to be seen in the area -- 'charlock patches, yellow-dyed' and 'hedge-climb'd hills, a-spread wi' flow'rs' -- but this is tensed against a note of poignant disenchantment: there are no longer so many friends here as once there were. Barnes is recognising, as clearly as Hardy, the instability of the rural community in the following lines.

An' I did tramp ...
To zee a wold friends, about
Wold Meldon, where I still ha' zome ...
I pass'd the maid avore the spring,
An' shepherd by the thornen tree;
An' heśird the merry drever zing,
But met noo kith or kin to me,
Till I come down, vrom Meldon's crown
To rufs o' brown, at Meldonley.

Metric stress falling upon zome draws attention to the word and appears to imply that there are only a few, not many, left. Perhaps it is just because there are so few that none happen to meet the persona as he walks on. En route he comes across three unfamiliar figures -- the shepherd, the maid, the drever -- and it is odd that these are the only
'labelled' villagers: the fact that the reader meets only the relatively unknown, never those last few remaining friends, seems a hint of sad recognition that the population has irrevocably changed.

Therefore, though it is certainly true that Barnes does not use a standard English speaker to comment, within his dialect poems, upon the situation of his dialect persona (unlike Hardy in, say, 'The Ruined Maid' which debates the existence of pleasures as well as pitfalls in a city that has tended to be seen from the country as grim and wicked); it is not accurate to suggest also that his local speaker does not, alone, imply certain complexities and depths of issues.

It is, on the other hand, true that the indication of these tensions is a matter of choice and Hardy chose, of course, far more frequently than Barnes, to emphasise the stress of complexity. But Barnes's alternative avoidance was an equally deliberate and meaningful choice. As Hardy himself remarked of his friend,

The assumed character of husbandman or hamleteer enabled him to elude in his verse those dreams and speculations that cannot leave alone the mystery of things, - possibly an unworthy mystery and disappointing if solved, though one that has a harrowing fascination for many poets, - and helped him to fall back on dramatic truth, by making his personages express the notions of life prevalent in their sphere. 17

Those 'notions of life' were evidently, in Barnes's perception, inclusive of strain and shadow, but these tensions should be dealt with, in his view, with the stoic dignity and determined optimism which pervades the three poems discussed immediately above and also most of the remainder of the canon. (I shall be referring to this issue again in Chapter Six.)

A final point should be made before leaving this aspect of Barnes's use of the Dorset speech in a performance of deliberately limited perspective. Hardy's edition of Barnes's poems may itself have contributed to the impression of narrow simplicity in the work. For Hardy makes very significant editorial cuts, and some of these narrow the vision of the poem in question. For example, Hardy leaves out an entire stanza from the poem 'Hay-carren' (p.115): it is a verse departing from the simple
issue of industry and dwelling upon the labourer's relationship, developing whilst he works, with Jenny Hine.

When I do pitchy, 'tis my pride
Vor Jenny Hine to rëlke my zide,
An' zee her fling her rëlke, an' reach
So vur, an' tëlke in sich a streech:
An' I don't shatter hay, an' mëlke
Mwore work than needs vor Jenny's rëlke.

Hardy also leaves out a number of lines earlier in the poem. These extend Barnes's image of the labourer from a simple, hard-working, single-minded individual to one more robust and vital.

Aye; let me have woone cup o' drink,
An' hear the linky harness clink,
An' then my blood do run so warm,
An' put such strangth 'ithin my eûrm,
That I do long to toss a pick,
A-pitchen or a-mëlken rick.

This kind of cut is the subject of a paper by W.J. Keith. However, I shall not consider its effect in any more detail here since it is not the edition itself which is the focus of my attention. I merely wish to emphasise the point that Hardy's own assessment of Barnes as a man avoiding complication need not lend incontrovertible weight to the related arguments of others that Barnes did a small thing -- and sometimes did it badly. (I shall, however, be returning to the issue of these cuts in Chapter Six.)

Besides, Hardy did not himself claim that Barnes always evaded the complex perspective. In fact, he remarked that he often used the dramatic form of peasant speakers as a pretext for the expression of his own mind and experience . . . and often in his aim at closeness of phrase to his vision strained at times the capacities of dialect, and went wilfully outside the dramatization of peasant talk. 19

Hardy is suggesting here that, in order to offer a wider point of view, Barnes abandons adherence to the dialect as it is used in everyday
performance by the countryman. But he defends this so-called abandonment thus:

What is the use of saying, as has been said of Barnes, that compound epithets like 'the blue-hill's worold', 'the wide-horn'd cow', 'the grey-topp'd heights of Paladore', are a high-handed enlargement of the ordinary ideas of the field-folk into whose mouths they are put? These things are justified by the art of every age when they can claim to be, as here, singularly precise and beautiful definitions of what is signified.

Barnes would have agreed that precision and beauty were excellent reasons for choosing a phrase: I have explained above his insistence upon clarity and his love of harmonious sounds and forms. But his attendant belief in the need to preserve dialect purity would of course have prevented him from deliberately 'straining' the capacities of the speech. And he would no doubt have argued that Hardy's examples of 'enlargement' were perfectly legitimate extensions, acceptable within his model of the grammar; he had not, that is, lapsed from the generalised circle of local dialect into personal idiolect.

That is, Barnes would accept any 'enlargement' as locally legitimate, by the standards of his own linguistic theories described in Chapter Four, so long as it is constructed out of existing elements in the language, and constructed according to established pattern. If it is so enlarged, out of existing morphemes and syntactic rules, it is then within the linguistic competence of any person speaking that language. In this case Hardy is considering a kind of compound, made out of the rule adjective + noun + ed. The pattern is a common one in standard English and its dialects. The individual words used in the phrases Hardy cites are also very common and certain to be in the Dorset lexicon. Therefore the constructions do not violate any rules of competence. (Barnes's view of language is thus apparently more generative, in the Chomskyan sense, than Hardy's, which appears to assume that a word cannot occur if it has not yet done so.)

Nor, I think, do Hardy's examples suggest an unusual kind of performance. There does not seem anything particularly strange in the concepts the phrases describe. There is nothing specially literary, metropolitan, or highly educated beyond the likely level of a rural
worker, in epithets like 'wide-horn'd', or 'blue-hill'd', or 'grey-topp'd'. In these instances at least, Barnes did not go beyond the likely performance of the Dorset labourer: apparently he was merely fulfilling his intention, discussed above, to bring to the surface what he believed were 'the frequently overlooked sources of nature within their own sphere of being': he was trying, that is, to allow 'their own' poetry to come to the surface. And, if Hardy is implying, in his reference to 'enlargement', that the labourer had no such poetry in him, then Hardy is guilty of demeaning the labourer to a Hodge-like figure in a way which Barnes would never have condoned.

However, because Barnes did apparently try to limit himself to everyday performance, and because he had certain personal criteria for acceptable language, there are some limits imposed upon the syntactic structures of his poems, however articulate and sensitive he believed their imagined labourer-personae to be. Compounds were acceptable -- even, as I explained in Chapter Four, to be encouraged. Greater complexity of syntax was a different matter.

The point may be emphasised through a comparison of Barnes's creative use of language with that of Gerard Manly Hopkins. I think, despite the fact that they are clearly very different artists, the comparison is useful: critics have noted connections (for instance in the use of Anglo-Saxon derivatives) between the two, but, leaving aside these similarities, it is a contrast between their uses of syntax which helps me to make a linguistic point about Barnes.

Hopkins rarely writes as a plain man might speak (except of course that his sprung rhythm approximates more closely to natural speech than does metrical rhythm). On a first reading some of his vocabulary may seem meaningless, the product of arbitrary coinages. His grammar may seem so strange and incomprehensible that it may be labelled incorrect. But he is not, of course, meaningless. The strange words and unfamiliar syntax are surprising just because they are not part of everyday performance. But they are within an English speaker's competence. For, like Barnes, Hopkins appears to have been working on a principle of generative creativity out of a shared basic competence. Strangeness is the result of Hopkin's desire to 'heighten' language, so that, far from
being incomprehensible, it may 'explode' into meaning. He insisted, 'Obscurity I do and will try to avoid so far as is consistent with excellences higher than clearness at a first reading'. Hopkins seems, that is, to have exploited to the full the existence of a deep structure lying behind the surface utterance. (The linguistic terms deep and surface refer to the derivation of utterances. The distinction between them expresses 'the view that superficially distinct sentences and phrases may be derived from the same underlying structure and conversely that superficially identical sentences and phrases may be derived from distinct underlying structures'. Although it is a theory which is basic to Chomsky's transformational-generative model of grammar, it is also a view which, to a point, has been held by more traditional linguists.) On a second reading the English speaker may fathom the deep structures, thereby clarifying ambiguities and grasping the full import of the surface utterances. Moreover, the suggestion of ambiguity, in Hopkin's complex sentences, allows for the richness of alternative meaning. And the strange constructions may themselves have a special energy or semiotic implication.

These advantages are, however, closed to Barnes. For it will be realised, from my earlier discussion of Barnes's teaching principles and his determination to achieve linguistic clarity at all times, that Barnes would not tolerate obscurity on any reading, including the first. He would have fallen short of his own standards for art and for teaching if his creative linguistics were anything but immediately precise in the communication of meaning.

Take for example the Hopkins line, 'Though words of wanwood leafmeal lie', from his 'Spring and Fall'. Barnes could have accepted the phrase wanwood leafmeal as an adjectival followed by a compound noun, something like bronzed leafmeal. But, according to Hopkis, wanwood is a compound coinage itself. There is something not quite usual about this. If compounds, constructed as this one appears to be from an adjective plus a noun, do appear, they are usually hyphenated: old-school tie. Besides, they normally carry the suffix morpheme ed: pink-eared mouse. In fact, Hopkins explains that he is using wanwood not as a premodifier at all, but as a noun, and leafmeal is to be taken as the adverb attached to lie. He is, he explains, fusing together
the obs. 'wan' (dark, gloomy), the obs. prefix 'wan-' (indicating deficiency as in 'wanworth'), and the arch. 'wan' meaning 'pale', 'bloodless', the last sense being caught up in the adverbial leafmeal (cf. 'piecemeal'). 25

But 'fusion' of meaning -- meaning 'caught up' -- is not for Barnes. Nor is unusual syntax: his constructions display no greater complexities than the use of subordinate clauses and the occasional apodictical or extrapositional phrase. Besides, if his dialect were to 'designate strongly the people who use it', 26 as he believed all dialect authentically used must by definition do, then he could not extend its performance beyond the bounds of its natural speaker's habits. Since wanwood leafmeal depends upon the understanding of 'obsolete' terms, then it cannot be part of normal performance. (There may also be a slight sense of the unusual in the adverbs preceding the verb: adverbs like now, soon, prepose quite naturally but others can sound marginally more formal, and, furthermore, single adverbs seem to prepose less naturally than adverbial phrases.)

Thus, because Barnes is limited through his concern for clarity and for Dorset authenticity of performance, he could not have chosen -- even assuming he had the necessary kind of flexibility and inventiveness in terms of imagination -- to write Hopkins's kind of poetry, despite the fact that he worked on a similar principle of creativity out of a pure language base. Gardner writes of Hopkins: 'He led poetry forward by taking it back - to its primal linguistic origins'. 27 Barnes could set out to take poetry to its origins: but he could not then lead it forward in Hopkins's direction.

The point is related to my discussion, in Chapter Two, of contrasts between the two artists as religious poets. Here I suggested that neither the pain nor the ecstasy of Hopkins's relationship with God may be sensed in Barnes's work. A strong emotional response would not be expected from Barnes: his family and friends all recalled an outwardly calm, normally cheerful and secure personality, and his religious beliefs seem to have been orthodox and quietly and firmly held. The language of his religious comment is similarly calm, clear, and firm.

On the other hand, the 'pangs' and 'cries' of Hopkins's sonnet, 'No worst, there is none', may be understood by the reader partly through the
The language closely patterns the emotion. A number of complex transformations, unusual in performance, lead to the particular arrangement of words and the elliptical construction of the utterance,

Pitched past pitch of grief,
More pangs, will, schooled at forepangs, wilder ring.

(The term transformation relates of course to the theory of Chomsky's transformational-generative model of language. It is linked to the concept of deep and surface structure, explained on p.189. Chomsky argues that two sentences appearing dissimilar on the surface -- at the point of actual utterance -- may, in their deep structures, have been identical. That is, John hit the ball, and the ball was hit by John, have the same deep structure, but, by a process of transformation, one appears on the surface as an active sentence, the other as a passive.)

The word order and omitted phrases of Hopkins's lines allow for stress and intonation patterns which may suggest successive attacks of emotional pain, as if they were physically endured. If Barnes, with his determination to maintain clear and conventional syntax, had been asked to gloss the utterance -- tacitly, that is, assuming the existence of a deep structure and developing his version from it -- he might have produced something like:

More pangs which have been schooled through the experience of earlier pangs, and which are pitched past pitch of grief, will wring the soul more wildly.

This is not to suggest, of course, that everyday lexicon and syntax cannot convey strong religious emotion. Just one example from another poet -- Emily Dickinson -- writing also of God and faith, but using plain language, makes the point. It is not always absolutely clear when she is writing of God, or alternatively, referring to another power, perhaps of love or of nature. But the sense of intense feeling, perhaps in response to God, is frequently conveyed with the help of an everyday register. Thus, an impression of immense suffering, and immense evasion, is reinforced in the following example by the everyday means of post-modifiers and adverbials whose meaning is stressed and amplified through
intonational and rhythmic patterns. (I have underlined relevant phrases.)

There is a pain - so utter -
It swallows substance up -
Then covers the Abyss with Trance -
So Memory can step
Around - across - upon it -
As one within a Swoon -
Goes safely - where an open eye -
Would drop Him - Bone by Bone. 29

The marked contrast between Hopkins and Barnes is not then simply one of a difference in religious feeling, nor one of linguistic competence differently used: it is a combination of the two factors. The limitations upon Barnes are not inevitable linguistic restrictions, but a matter of his personality and his consequent linguistic choices. Barnes would have been uncomfortable with both the language and the emotion of Hopkins's lines,

The heart rears wings bold and bolder
And hurls for him, O half curls earth for him off under his feet. 30

He would prefer the combined effect of the orthodox theology, calm acceptance, and linguistic performance of his own,

An' God do me'ike his win' to blow
An'.ra'm to vall vor high an' low,
An' bid his mornen zun to rise,
Vor all alike, an' gourm' an' skies
Ha' colors vor the poor man's eyes:
An' in our trials He is near,
To hear our mwoan an' zee our tear,
An' turn our clouds to zunsheen. 31

There seems to be a connection here with Charles Lock's discussion of Hopkins and Hillis Miller's belief that there is a difference in the way that language is used by Catholics and Protestants, so that Catholics use language sacramentally whilst Protestants use poetry as
'the manipulation of symbols which no longer participate in the reality they name'. Lock points out that 'sacramentalism' is the word made flesh, and writes:

If Christianity provides the potential for the world's redemption, for the undoing of the consequences of the Fall, then the Christian poet is specifically privileged with the task of redeeming language.

But he suggests that where one Christian may find God, the Puritan sees only 'the decadent and the perverse', so that, for Lock, Yvor Winter's well-known attack on Hopkins is explicitly motivated not by literary criticism but by religion and by his consequent puzzlement that Hopkins could have written an exciting description of landscape in the belief that he served God. 32 Both Lock and Miller appear to be making very major -- and sweeping -- statements which require considerable justification. Yet it is certainly true that the contrast between Barnes and Hopkins might contribute to that justification.

However, not only was Barnes personally a restrained man, with calm and orthodox Protestant faith, but the constructions of his grammar contribute to an implication that the Dorset labourer of his poems was similarly content. Whether or not Barnes correctly interpreted the local personality was an issue considered in Chapter Two: it may well be that his own conservatism wrongly attributed a similar restraint to his imaginary characters. But the fact that he seems to have believed he was recreating faithful portraits -- if, as I explained above, 'somewhat above the average' -- is relevant to a discussion of the semantics of his poems, to a discussion, that is, not only of the suggestivity of local syntax as he chose to use it, but also to a consideration of the signification of the Blackmore lexicon in performance. For Barnes seems to have chosen to limit its metaphorical potential. This restriction, like the syntactic restraint described above, may also have been one which Barnes found personally congenial: his prose writing does not suggest an intelligence prone to metaphysical speculation. But since the limitation is displayed in the persona of a local labourer, it also implies that figurative language was not specially prevalent in the Blackmore linguistic circle.
A contemporary Dorset County Chronicle observer appears to corroborate this impression. He remarked that local people were 'unaccustomed to analyse their impressions, or expand them in the expression: dealing little in metaphor, they have only the eloquence of simplicity and truth'. The implication seems opposed to that of Doyle who, it will be remembered, spoke, during Barnes's lifetime, of his admiration for the poet and of a need for a provincial poetry for a provincial community. Commenting upon a rural lack of slick city language, fortified by foreign elegances, he remarked that the countrywoman had to struggle up to eloquence by making all the language within reach bend under her until it cracks . . . [using] vivid metaphors . . . not to decorate . . . but . . . to quicken and fortify the sense.

On the other hand, Doyle also believed that the daily thoughts and words of provincial people were 'too remote from those of established poets to be in any degree impressed by them'. He appears to be distinguishing between the metaphor of literary convention on the one hand, and spontaneous inventive signification on the other. Barnes may have made a similar distinction. That is, he may not be implying, through his poetry, an agreement with the Dorset County Chronicle writer: he may not be suggesting a labourer's lack of analysis or contemplation, leading only to an awareness of simple, surface, truths. He may appropriately and effectively if Doyle's view is accepted -- merely be shunning specially literary signifiers.

For Barnes never slighted rural intelligence. He protested that he never intended 'to show up the simplicity of rural life as an object of sport'. But he did contrast -- and contrast favourably -- rural knowledge with that of the conventionally and formally educated. In his view, rural families possessed a great body of knowledge, Folk-lore . . . which in the rating of the people's knowledge is often slighted . . . With children we think world-knowledge should be gathered before book-learning.

Book-learning would no doubt include the reading of literary poetry (as against the hearing of folk song), and there may be indications in Barnes's dialect verse of a presupposition that a distinction existed.
between the literary-linguistic competence of the rural family and that of the more highly educated. The point can be made through a comparison of the ways in which Barnes, Hardy and Hopkins deal with similar themes. (I shall compare poems by all three which are 'about' Autumn.) Barnes's personae may 'struggle up to eloquence', but not via the imagery of literary convention.

Barnes's dialect poems on Autumn are about the season in a very straightforward sense: certain farming activities are assumed to take place during it, the landscape has a particular appearance at this time, and the home may have a particular routine in these months. Ideas associated with these facts may be considered in 'tandem', as it were. Because leaves fall and die in the autumn, it might seem appropriate to talk about death as well as the season in the same poem. But the features which define the autumn period -- like falling leaves -- do not themselves automatically stand in Barnes's poems for their related, abstract concepts. Barnes may go as far as a kind of simile, but rarely to metaphor.

For example, a section of his first edition of poems is entitled 'Fall'. A number of its poems deal precisely with the subject of their titles. 'Corn A-turned Yellow' (p.136) describes the appearance of the time of year and its pleasurable activities.

'Tis merry when the brawny men
Do come to reap it down, 0,
Where glossy red the poppy head
'S among the stalks so born, 0.

'A-haulen o' the Corn' (p.136) describes in simple, clear physical detail, the effect of the work on the men and their horses.

The hosses, wi' the het an' lwoad,
Did froth, an' zwang vrom side to side,
A-gwMin along the dousty road,
An' seem'd as if they would a-died ..
At uncle's orch'd, gwāin along,
    I begged some apples, vor to quench
My drith, o' Poll that wer among
    The trees: but she, a saucy wench,
Toss'd' over hedge some crabs vor fun.
I squarl'd her, though, an' made her run;
An' zoo she gi'ed me, vor a treat,
A lot o' stubberds vor to eat,
    A-haulen o' the corn.

There is nothing metaphysical about these commentaries. But nor is
there anything shallow. The language is made, as Doyle believed all
rural language tended to be made, 'to bend . . . to quicken and fortify
the sense'. Through its sharp focus on crucial details -- the sounds
and rhythms of the lines supporting the sense of their words -- the reader
cannot fail to have a clear impression of the sounds, sights, and rowdy
enjoyment of the workers at the feast in 'Harvest Hwome' (p.137).
(The careful selection and presentation of images in order to convey a
vivid scene has been discussed of course in Chapter Three. The following
Chapter considers the manner in which Barnes utilises the special
resources of the dialect in order to communicate his images.)

An' uncle, wi' his elbows out,
Did carve, an' made the gravy spout;
An' aunt did gi'e the mugs about
    A-frothen to the brim . . .
An' zoo they munch'd their hearty cheer,
An' dipp'd their beards in frothy-beer,
An' laughed, an' jok'd -- they coudden hear
    What woone another zaid.
An' all o' m drink'd, wi' wone accword,
The wold vo'k's health: an' bēat the bwoard,
An' swung their ē̆rms about, an' roar'd,
    Enough to crack woone's head.

Other poems, evidently included in this section since they describe
activities which traditionally take place in Autumn because of crop cycles,
are 'Out A-nutten' (p.148) and 'Tellken in Apples': these are based on the
sheer fun of the sociable activities which take place during the gathering in of autumn fare. 'Shrodon Fedir' (p.153) and 'Guy Faux's Night' (p.157) also describe, in clear physical detail, customary Fall events.

But 'The Veðry veet that I do meet' (p.146), also in this section of 'Fall' poems, does depart from the work and play activities of the season. It is linked to autumn only by the vision of the landscape that it contains, a beautiful, glowing, description of the kind discussed in Chapter Three. However, the images are important to the persona, not simply for their intrinsic beauty, but because he connects them with his beloved. Nevertheless, the autumn scene is just this, a related setting: it complements the beloved's beauty, no doubt, but its image makes no deeper comment than this upon her personality or upon the relationship.

When dewy fall's red leaves do vlee
Along the grass below the tree,
Or lie in yellow beds a-shook
Upon the shallow-water'd brook,
Or drove 'ithin a sheMdy nook;
Then softly, in the evenen, down
The knap do steal along the groun'
The veðry veet that I do meet
Below the row o' beech trees.

Probably the reader can sense the loved one's beauty and also understand the persona's appreciation of it -- although it is never described in itself, except through the small suggestion of delicacy in her 'veyry veet' -- via the speaker's awareness of the loveliness of the setting. But that setting is never presented as a simile, much less as a metaphor for beauty.

'MeMple Leaves be Yollow' (p.151) and 'Night A-zetten In' (p.151) are, it is true, rather more reflective in their response to Autumn. Each acknowledges that certain autumn signs -- yellowing leaves and the nights drawing in -- are also indications that winter is soon to come. Therefore the best of the Fall season must be enjoyed before it is gone for another year.
Zoo come along, an' let's injay
The last fine weather while do stay;
Whilst thou canst hang, wi' ribbons slack,
Thy bonnet down upon thy back,
Avore the winter, cwoold an' black,

Do kill thy flowers, an' avore
Thy bird-cage is a-took in door,
Though me~ple leaves be yollow.

But Barnes and his persona do not succumb to any temptation -- if indeed such a temptation was recognised by Barnes -- to extend these acknowledgements of mortality, or of restrictions of freedom, into a metaphysical speculation.

However, the two eclogues in the 'Fall' group of poems are somewhat different from these just discussed: instead of concentrating upon the benefits to be enjoyed in the autumn season, 'The Common A-took In' (p.158) and 'Two Farms in Woone' (p.160), extend dialogues upon autumn work to a sad recognition of the miseries that enclosure and engrossment have brought to land people. But it is merely this -- a sad recognition: the perception remains an observation of the situation and, though its details and the tone of the speakers express its pain -- Ah! Robert! times be badish vor the poor: / An' worse will come, I be afe~rd, if Moore / In theHuse year's almanick do tell us right ' -- that distress is not used as a spring-board for political theorising upon abstract ideologies. Neither these, nor any of the other 'Fall' poems considered so far, deal with autumn in any way symbolically.

Admittedly one or two of the poems in the section are rather less immediate. For example, 'A Zong ov Harvest Hvome' (p.140) uses language more ritualistically, as if it were a kind of secular prayer.

An' mid noo harm o' wire or storm
Beval the farmer or his corn; ... 

Mid nothen ill betide the mill,
As day by day the miller's wheel
Do dreve his clacks, an' heist his zacks, ...
Mid luck an' ja'y the beekker pay,
As he do hear his vier roar,
Or nimbly catch his hot white batch,
A-reeken vrom the oven door.

But still autumn is thought of as a physical fact. No metaphysical concepts are expressed via these facts as symbols: the reader simply watches the -- hopefully steady -- progress of the corn, from the farmer, via the miller, to the baker. 'Jenny out vrom Hwome' (p.145) also describes, without metaphorical reflection, the west winds (presumably of autumn). The wind is personified and is linked with the persona's distress: but it is merely linked -- it stands for nothing but itself.

O wild-reven winds! if you ever do roar
By the house an' the elem's vrom where I' a-come,
Breathe up at the window, or call at the door,
An' tell you've a-voun' me a-thinken o' hwome.

However, it is true that, although none of the poems so far discussed in this context appear to work significantly through symbolism, two others in the group -- 'The Ivy' (p.142) and 'The Weather-beaten Tree' (p.152) -- are treated rather differently. These poems involve philosophical reflection, and the two natural objects -- the ivy and the tree -- are used to explain the persona's thinking. That is, the ivy is free, and the persona would choose to be similarly 'unchained'.

Upon these knap I'd sooner be
The ivy that do climb the tree,
Than bloom the gayest rose a-tied
An' trimm'd upon the house's zide.

St.I
The rose mid be the maidens' pride,
But still the ivy's wild an' free;
An' what is all that life can gi'em
'Ithout a free light heart, John?

St.III
Oh! why do vo'k so often chain
Their pinen minds vor love o' gain,
An' gi'e their innocence to rise
A little in the worold's eyes?
The oak tree is used comparably: it has been beaten by storms and the poet observes the connection between its ordeal and a human being’s trials.

The woaken tree, a-beæt at night
By stormy winds wi' all their spite,
Mid toss his lim's, an' ply, an' mwoan,
Wi' unknown struggles all awone;
An' when the day do show his head,
A-stripp'd by winds at last a-laid,
How vew mid think that didden zee,
How night-time had a-tried thik tree.

An' happy vo'k do seldom know
How hard our unknown storms do blow,
The while our heads do slowly bend
Below the trials God do zend.

Natural phenomena are thus being used symbolically in these last two poems. But they are openly declared as symbols: they are similes, their relationship to human life, as comparisons, being clearly spelt out.

... our heads do slowly bend
Below the trials God do zend,
Like shiv'ren bennets, bëre to all
The dreven winds o' dark'nen fall.
An' zee in tryen hardships we
Be lik' the weather-beætten tree.

There is no assumption then, that the labourer-speaker and the reader share a similar complex, metaphorical, -- perhaps conventionally literary -- understanding of the sign 'ivy' or of the sign 'weather-beætten tree'.

This approach, used in a large number of Barnes's poems, is in direct contrast to Hardy's use of autumn as a sign in his poem, 'The Upper Birch Leaves'. Hardy assumes a shared understanding, between the poet and
the reader, of autumn as a dying time of year, preceding winter which may be acting as a signifier for death. But he makes no reference to the concept itself until the last two lines of the poem, and even here the implication is oblique. The impact of the poem depends, then, upon the reader's response to subtle variations in rhyme scheme and rhythm which signal a shift from security to insecurity, from life towards death. That is, a jigging rhythm and rhyming couplets begin the poem and 'match' its sense of leaves 'jigging in glee' on a beautiful autumn day.

Warm yellowy-green
In the blue serene,
How they skip and sway
On this autumn day!

But gradually the harmony of patterned sounds and the optimism of dancing rhythm are interrupted by irregularity and disjointed flow (through metre, caesura and intonation). They are themselves the ominous 'note' that is finally heard and its significance described in the second stanza.

But no; there lies        a
At times in their tune    b
A note that cries         a
What at first I fear      c
I did not hear:           c
'O we remember           d
At each wind's hollo -    e
Though life holds yet -   f
We go hence soon,         b
For 'tis November;        d
- But that you follow     e
You may forget!           f

Yet the reader's emotional response to the shifting tone can only be intellectually meaningful in the light of an assumed metaphorical comprehension of the sign, 'autumn'.

Hopkins's 'Spring and Fall' makes similar assumptions, of understanding shared between poet and reader, but they receive more direct.
reinforcement from the poem itself. Margaret may unconsciously understand the season of autumn as a metaphor for the inevitable waning of her own life. Hopkins uses his poem to explain her metaphorical understanding: he uses it to account for the way in which autumn/fall has grown linguistically (through the language features of displacement and association) from a simple label for a season, via a simile for the comparison between that time of year with a state of human life, into a metaphorical sign for that condition.

Margaret, are you grieving
Over Goldengrove unleaving? . . .
Now no matter, child, the name:
Sorrow's springs are the same.
Nor mouth had, nor nor mind, expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
It is the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for.

The poem relies, in its explanation of the sign's growth, on the reader being wholly aware of autumn's full metaphorical implications from the moment he starts to read.

Barnes's poem 'The Weather-beaten Tree' bears some comparison with 'Spring and Fall'. The ivy is almost to be taken as a metaphor for true love -- the symbol goes just beyond a simile. But it is a metaphorical implication which is spelt out quite clearly. Barnes declares 'True Love is the ivy': he, unlike Hopkins, does not depend upon some implicit and complex response to the sign, understood by his audience automatically.

True love's the ivy that do twine
Unwith'ren roun' his mossy rine,
When winter's zickly zun do sheen
Upon its leaves o' glossy green
So patiently a-holden vast
Till storms an' cwold be all a-past,
An' only liven vor to be
A-melted to the woaken tree.
Barnes's more direct observations of nature, and his more open connections between nature and human life, are nearer to the kind of use that contemporary nature poets like Clare, sometimes, and Bloomfield, usually, made of the linguistic sign.

A cluster of five poems in Tibble's edition of Clare's work is entitled 'The Fall of the Year', 'Autumn', 'Autumn', 'Autumn Change', and 'The Autumn's Wind'. All of them are predominantly a description of autumn, and of autumn as a pleasant season. None makes symbolic use of the time of year. Though two attach to their descriptions a more philosophical thought (after the pattern of Barnes's two or three stanzas of description, followed by a 'parsonical' reflection of the kind objected to by Hardy). One has as its last line, 'Whoever looks round sees Eternity there'. Another closes with the couplet, 'In solitude the musing mind/Must ever love the autumn wind'.

Bloomfield's 'The Farmer's Boy' is divided into four books: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Autumn does provide an opportunity for more than a description of the season's physical properties. One section deals with 'reflections', another with 'disappointments'. The season plays a part in these inner states, because of its appearance, and because of the kinds of activities it allows.

Bereft of song, and ever cheering green,
The soft endearments of the Summer scene,
New harmony pervades the solemn wood,
Dear to the soul, and healthful to the blood:
For bold exertion follows on the sound
Of distant sportsmen, and the chiding hound.

But still the season's link with human nature is actual rather than metaphorical.

I have been suggesting that the restrictions imposed upon Barnes, as a result of his decision to use Dorset competence and then to imaginatively recreate that competence in a locally appropriate performance, may well have been the kind of limitations, of syntax and lexical signification, which would have been a natural part of his own language. Dorset
performance happens to conveniently match Barnes's own. The labourer may not have chosen to speculate metaphysically: Barnes certainly did not. However, the question remains, did Barnes sometimes write dialect poems which, being, as Hardy believed, 'a pretext for the expression of his own mind', go 'wilfully outside the dramatization of peasant talk'?\(^\text{42}\)

I argued above that Hardy was mistaken in equating certain of the poems' syntactic structures with a 'straining' of the capacities of dialect, but it may be that certain poems do, through a configuration of certain features, convey a particularly marked sense of Barnes's presence behind their mask.

Take for instance stanza three of the poem 'Yields in the Light' (p.101).

\begin{quote}
An' when by moonlight darksome sheEdes
Do lie in grass wi' dewy bleEdes,
An' worold-hushen night do keep
The proud an' angry vast asleep,
When I can think, as I do rove,
Ov only souls that I do love;
Then who can dream a dream to show,
Or who can think o' moons to drow,
A sweeter light to rove below?
\end{quote}

This poem seems to have a greater abstraction of theme (about 'the proud an' angry vast') and of linguistic singification (as in 'worold-hushen night') than others. But I think that complexity and abstraction is only part of the hint that Barnes is personally 'visible' in the personae of such poems. After all, I have been arguing that the local syntax can -- and clearly does in this poem -- accommodate intricacies of thought, and Barnes himself firmly believed, as I explained in Chapter Four (p.156), that the Dorset labourer was capable of recognising and of expressing 'pithy truths'. There is no reason to assume, with Hardy, that a complexity or an abstraction automatically signals an expression of the personal life and thinking of Barnes, rather than his imaginary rural figures.

Nevertheless, there are poems in which these features are accompanied by other indications of Barnes's personal expression. For example, those
stanzas which declare faith in God, and which 'sum up' a whole poem so that it is almost like a religious tract, might be taken to come very directly from Barnes since he openly stated the same personal religious belief and a didactic motivation. There are signs of this in 'Yields in the Light', but take also the last stanza of 'Tweil' (p.422).

Where the voice o' winds is mildest,
  In the plain, their stroke is keen;
Where their dreading voice is wildest,
  In the grove, the grove's our screen.
An' where the world in their strife
  Do dreading most our tweilsome life,
Why there Almighty's care mid case
A better screen ageän the blast.
Zoo I woon't live in fear o' men,
  But, man-neglected, God-directed,
Still wull tweil an' tweil ageän.

It also seems reasonable to assume that poems like 'The Rose in the Dark' (p.395), dealing with a much loved woman, may be an utterance from Barnes's own heart, since he appears to have been devoted to Julia and to have felt her early death very deeply.

An' tho' the darkness then did hide
  The dewy rose's blushen bloom,
He still did cast sweet air inside
  To Jeäné, a-chatten in the room;
An' though the gloom did hide her face,
Her words did bind me to the please.

An' there, while she, wi' runnen tongue,
  Did talk unseen 'within the hall,
I thought her like the rose that flung
  His sweetness from his darken'd ball,
'Whiteout the wall, an' sweet's the sight
Ov her bright face by mornen light.
There is certainly something contrived in the neat equation of sweet rose in the dark balanced with sweet woman in the darkness: and yet, it is tempting to think that the image of a woman chattering away in the dark -- hardly, in its mild ordinariness, the conventional scenario of a love poem -- is part of Barnes's own genuinely remembered experience. I have also argued, in Chapter Three, that all those poems dealing with a woman named JeHne may be -- though not always directly linked to Julia Barnes -- an example of what Hardy called a 'pretext for the expression of [Barnes's] own mind and experience'.

But the final decision that in some poems the speaking voice is Barnes's, rather than the mask he assumes, may stem not from evidence in the poem that can be linked with biography, but perhaps from reader expectation. First, the literary reader may automatically assume -- with Hardy -- that any complexity or abstraction must be, to use Barnes's own ironic phrase, 'a thought above the ploughboy'. If so, that reader falls within the kind of audience which Barnes feared could not respond to his work whilst believing that a removal from the country to the city or the plough to the desk represented intellectual and cultural improvement. Second, I personally imagine Barnes to be closer to those poems which express profound feeling -- like 'A Wife A-prais'd' (p.332) and 'The Wife A-lost' (p.333) or 'The Rose in the Dark' (p.395) -- than poems of work, like 'Hay-carren' (p.115) or play, like 'Polly Be-en Upzides wi' Tom' (p.127). This is certainly not because I assume the labourer cannot feel deeply. But it may be because fieldwork, and its attendant festivities, are unfamiliar, and therefore seem to belong to characters remoter from many readers than the vicar, or teacher -- or poet: and besides, we assume Barnes's personal exclusion from involvement in the fields since he left these as a boy. The expression of emotions universally experienced may, however, seem to include Barnes inevitably within their circle. That is, Barnes and the reader can both be assumed to understand emotion and 'pithy truths' -- but not, perhaps, the business of mowing and ploughing and roof-thatching: therefore, the reader and the poet can seem drawn closer together in the more abstract poem than they do in the poem concentrating more directly upon physical fact.

The expression of 'pithy truths', of emotion, and of physical facts -- the potential, that is, of dialect verse to 'mean' -- is the subject...
of Chapter Six. However, before passing on to a more detailed appraisal of the potential which Barnes may acquire by working within the 'task' of the Blackmore linguistic circle, there is a final point to consider in relation to its limitations. If these restrictions do genuinely exist as a result of using Dorset competence in an appropriately local performance, then they should not be so much in evidence in Barnes's poetry written not in the dialect exclusively but in a more standard English. I am referring not to his first attempts -- his rather mannered and conventional attempts -- at poetry in national speech and poetic diction, but to his standard poems written after he began to experiment with Blackmore speech.

I have suggested that these poems might be seen as a utilisation of the facility possessed by rural people, as Hardy's Tess exemplifies, to use two competences, that of their locality and that of the standard speech taught to them in school. For the themes of these poems are still largely rural: there is 'The Old Farmhouse' (p.723), 'Melhill Feast' (p.738), 'Fair Weather' (p.870). But now Barnes sometimes offers the kind of linguistic fusion identifiable in Clare. It is a fusion which takes a dialect element largely from the lexicon. Phonetic idiosyncracies of Dorset (suggested orthographically, and confirmed in the metrical and intonational patterns of the lines, as I explained above) are gone: so are the special syntactic structures of the dialect. But the wind still huffles in the more standard poems. The 'flower-stalks of grass' are still bennets. The standard verb to glean is still to leaze in these verses, so that 'girls up the hill, by the trees, / Came on with their headloads of leazings'. There are also more poetic touches in the standard poems, and these include syntactic as well as lexical elements. Take, for example, the poem 'Rooks and Swallows' (p.744).

I sat me where an ash tree's head
From o'er a bankside reach'd around,
With outcast shade that overspread
Some grass, and eke some stubbled ground,
While hedges up the hillock's brows
Held out their now befruited boughs.

I have underlined befruited because it represents a transformation,
involving permutation and ellipsis, which seems to belong to a more
mannered diction: a deeper structure must have consisted of the two
sentences, (s1) held out . . . boughs, (s2) the boughs have fruit. I have
argued that Barnes preferred to create words out of existing 'pure'
elements in a language so long as the inventions were made on the lines
of an established morphemic pattern. Be + noun + ed is a fairly common
pattern (bemedalled soldiers, beribboned girls). But the particular
coinage befruited does not feel right for the performance of a Dorset
speaker, not because it is too complex in its derivation but because it
has a rather stiff and stylised air which I assume would have prevented
Barnes from allowing the vital labourer personae of the wholly dialect
poems to use it as a modifier. The reason for this sense of stiffness is
difficult to pin-point linguistically. However, beemedalled and beribboned
come from verbs of ornamentation or adornment: the medal or ribbon is put
on to the person. But befruited comes from the verb to fruit, to bear
fruit: it refers to a process, in which the bough has participated
organically, and therefore, if the term implies a mere adorning of the
hedge with berries (as if by the hand of some outside agent), it is both
inaccurate and reductive. And a man who works with and understands the
land would not be likely, in his everyday conversation, to make the kind
of mistaken implication that a town dweller could unthinkingly suggest:
nor would he, in his folk-song, be likely to use a word which might, in
this way, have become part of the sometimes inaccurate poetic diction
of a more remote city artist.

However, not only does this poem carry lexical and syntactic features
which are not obvious in the dialect work, it is also an example of
Barnes's use in these later standard poems of registers which he avoids
in the dialect poetry. Its last stanza refers to 'wings of gold' and to
the 'dove', and therefore seems to be using a mode of language habitual
in the Christian church. Now, since the Dorset labourer is very
definitely, as he appears in Barnes's poems, a member of that church, he
would surely be familiar with its related register. Yet it is not a
register drawn upon significantly in the dialect collections (though
Barnes translated the 'Song of Solomon' into Dorset and published
this separately). Is this because, though familiar with the religious
mode, the labourer would not carry it with him out of the church and into
the fields which are the context of the majority of the dialect poems?
A number of standard poems not only use the appropriate church register, they also take the specific form, and the rhythm, of the hymn tune. For example,

The earth, O Jehovah, is Thine,
And its fulness is all of Thy giving,
It teems with all fruits for our health,
And its grain becomes life for our living. 46

Rachel Trickett writes:

The diction of hymns was always directed to the congregation, to the company of ordinary faithful believers . . . For this is a popular poetry . . . its purpose was to command the widest audience. 47

If this is so it is not surprising to find that Barnes, whose paramount desire was to communicate the good and the loveworthy as widely as possible, should have wished to include the familiar structure of the hymn in his repertoire of poetic forms. So why are they not represented in the dialect poems, as well as in the standard ones? The implication cannot be, since he did translate the 'Song of Solomon' into local speech, that Barnes did not believe dialect to be a fitting language for use in a religious form. Such a belief would in any case be in direct contradiction to his theories about the dignity of all 'pure' languages. The explanation may be linked to a possible reason for the omission of the sonnet from the dialect poems and for its inclusion amongst the standard works. 48 That is, the sonnet is a highly wrought 'literary' form: there is no way that its structure could fit into the patterns of everyday speech. It is true that Barnes does use other extremely intricate verse patterns in his dialect poems, but these are largely sound and rhythm echoes of the kind that might have helped speakers and hearers of ancient oral poetry to follow and remember what was being said, that is, these are devices. (mentioned in Chapter Four and to be discussed again in Chapter Six) which belong to relatively unsophisticated and highly functional poetry. The hymn is not part of everyday performance -- whereas the poems in dialect are apparently contextualised within the weekday, work-a-day existence of the labourer. The hymn, and the sonnet, are therefore appropriate in the canon of standard poems, since its speaking voice, using a more standard English, is no longer specifically
attributable to a rural worker, and so can range more freely amongst registers, both everyday and artistic: they are not, however, appropriate to the range of everyday performance.

It is partly then because Barnes apparently chose, in consequence of adopting the 'task' of local speech, to limit his range in this kind of way and in others which have been the subject of this Chapter, that his dialect work could be described as a 'small thing'. I have been indicating some of the dialect poetry's limitations and arguing that these are not necessarily weaknesses, or artistic flaws, but that in the main they fit Barnes's overall purpose of providing the local people with a poetry of 'their own'. Some of these limits would not be called for in the register of his standard English poems which, though they still maintain an air of the labouring life do, in some of the poems particularly, admit some of the language and tones of a person closer to Barnes himself. In fact, Mary Keane's work on the standard poems leads her to believe that they 'show that Barnes's personal struggle with doubt and fear contributed greatly to his spiritual growth'.49 I do not myself find any very conclusive evidence of spiritual development, either in the dialect poems or in the standard work. And the fear of loss was always present, though firmly controlled, throughout the dialect work as I have explained and will continue to suggest. Yet it is true that the later standard poems do carry a more overwhelming sense of fear, and a clearer admission of the doubt that is virtually non-existent in the dialect poems with their stress upon utter faith in God and tradition (though there is an exception to which I refer in my conclusion). Thus, the theme of continuity, so prevalent in the dialect work, is dealt with far less confidently and optimistically in the standard 'How Great Become' (p.856). The persona is counting his blessings -- his family -- so that he can declare 'With all the soul that I may claim / How great I am! How great my name!'. Thus far the poem is precisely in keeping with the light and loveworthy emphasis of the dialect work. But in the final stanza the tone alters and the speaker admits that his blessings are a matter of the present moment: the preservation of the past which he has maintained in the dialect canon, and the security of the future, are less certain.

But oh! how little can I track
The longsome team of father men,
That runs, from me to elders, back
  A chain of links beyond my ken.
O'er what dear heads, by one and one,
  My name at length came down on me
I know not now, nor may I see
Below me one child's child's sweet son.
No. I am only one of all
Those links of life. But one. How small!

There is certainly therefore a sense of struggle, perhaps of personal struggle, in this poem, and it is a sense that is not so marked in the dialect work. The limitation is hardly surprising in the specifically local poems which Barnes, in his adopted role of affirmative Bard, intended should lighten and uplift. It remains to be considered then whether or not the use of dialect, conveying its narrow impression of a local circle, produces merely, as Bridges believed, 'a peculiar but shortlived charm'. Hopkins disagreed with Bridges. He accepted that Barnes's chosen limit 'narrows his field' -- but, in consequence, 'heightens his effects'. Chapter Six looks at the evidence which supports Hopkins's view:

He is a perfect artist and of a most spontaneous inspiration; it is as if Dorset life and Dorset landscape had taken flesh and tongue in the man. 50
CHAPTER SIX

THE SKILL THAT CONCEALS SKILL

Andrew Lang believed that Barnes was merely 'a weariful writer of misspelled English' and Geoffrey Grigson, though he evidently admired Barnes's work, has remarked that since 'content and subtleties of thought' do not distinguish him, the reader needs 'to be peculiarly equipped, in a way not very common at present, in verse physiology, speech of "breath-sounded words", and in the felicities of rhythm'. But Quiller-Couch found that Lang 'lowered his point', revising his derogatory opinion when he read 'The Wife A-lost' (p.333) and I would argue that Grigson's remark should not distract the reader from recognising in Barnes -- if not subtle thought -- a profoundly subtle relationship between his language, his verse 'physiology', and the ideas of his writing. For it seems to me that Grigson expresses his view of Barnes better, in another description of his poetry, as an 'art of wholes', a phrase which appears to relate to Hardy's discovery in Barnes of 'a closeness of phrase to his vision'.

That closeness seems to have been achieved by the exercising of what Barnes called 'the skill that conceals skill', the subtly effective use of language and poetic form. I have explained, in Chapter Four, that his model of the Dorset dialect reveals his sensitivity to the semantic resources of Blackmore speech: although any language can apparently extend to the expression of any concept, each individual dialect has its own 'purity', its own idiosyncracies which appear to signify, in Barnes's view, the local personality. I shall be looking in this Chapter at Barnes's skilful and creative use of these Dorset resources of phonetics, lexicon, and syntax to, as Hopkins put it, 'heighten his effects'. These effects include that image, discussed in Chapters Two and Three, of a 'good and loveworthy' community, bathed in a rich, warm light. And Blackmore competence is shaped into an impression of peculiarly local performance, through the formal combinations of words, syntax, rhythm and sound, in the 'activities' of conversational monologues, local anecdotes, ballads, and the small dramas of eclogues. It was only by using the vital language of the community in this appropriate way, believed Barnes, that poetry could 'reach the English mind or heart'. But it must be stressed of course that although he used Blackmore linguistic competence, and
though this speech in the performance of the poems may seem appropriate to the normal register of the Dorset labourer (in so far as poetry can ever assume an everyday tone), that performance is ultimately stage-managed by Barnes through his perspective of rural life seen from his somewhat detached vantage point.

Further, in his 'Rariora of Old Poetry', Barnes described the tribal 'song-dances' that he admired: he appreciated their combination of 'the dance, as the poetry of motion; tune, as the sweet measure of time; and song, as the tale of the piece', and thought that the modern opera was equally admirable in its similar composite form. Therefore, I shall be looking, in this final Chapter, not only at Barnes's skilful suggestion of his view of Dorset communicative competence, but also at his ability to achieve an 'art of wholes' through a subtle blending of rhythm, sound and form, all of which would be available to him in any language and are not of course dependent upon peculiarly Dorset resources. I have suggested earlier that Barnes's 'skill that conceals skill' developed dramatically when he left behind the rather mannered diction and self-conscious versification of his earlier standard work, and began to write in a more immediately vital Dorset speech. But the transition was basically a stimulus and an opportunity to experiment with the conversational diction and social situations which freed him from conventionality and encouraged him to focus on fresh material outside himself. His ability to create poetry from the Blackmore language is not entirely dependent upon the dialect's particular potential: it is a personal art which he extended to some of his later work in standard English, though I shall continue to concentrate in this study upon the special nature of his achievement in Dorset speech.

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I begin by looking, individually, at Barnes's use in his poems of a) the Blackmore community's phonemes, b) its lexicon, and c) its syntactic patterns, in order to consider the ways in which these do appear to signal, intrinsically, a local instress, together with the ways in which Barnes's choice and arrangement of these linguistic features further imply a particular persona and register. (I shall subsequently be looking at these features in combination.)
a) Phonemes

I have established in Chapter Four that Barnes's orthography indicates a consistent phonology in the dialect poems. His substitutions of z for s, and d for th give the impression that local consonants, which they purport to be, (as I have explained, Barnes implied that he was using Blackmore speech), tended to vibrate more -- are, that is, more 'voiced' -- than standard English equivalents, and a number of diphthongs are indicated (for example, shake is given as sheYke). Clusters of consonants may be separated by a vowel (elem) and the verb ending ing is replaced by en. Barnes argued that these and similar phonological features gave the dialect a special 'mellowness', apparently meaning a rich, languorous tone conveyed through the rounded and elongated vowel sounds and 'burry' consonants. And he went so far as to connect this mellow tone with the local personality: its sleepy warmth seemed to him 'a good vehicle for the softer feelings, as well as for the broader humour' which he personally identified in local life. (Given Barnes's refusal to condone anything which he believed to be crude, he must by 'broad' have meant something like 'less complex' or 'less sarcastic'.) It is true that gentleness and a simple humour are prevalent in the dialect poems, but whether such characteristics were genuinely paramount in the locality is of course a separate issue.

Certainly Bernard Jones suggests that the dialect of Barnes's chosen region did sound more melodious than the relatively staccato tones of nearby Dorchester. But, if Barnes's own argument is carried to its logical limits, this comparison should imply the startling, if true, sociological conclusion that Dorchester folk -- living only just down the road from the people of the poems -- are generally and significantly different in character, perhaps even rather sharper in personality. And Barnes seems to be overlooking the fact that, whilst local idiosyncracies of speech may give a general impression of local character, that local personality may well appear with modifications: presumably Hardy's Arabella, had she been born amongst the community of Barnes's poems, would have been blessed with tones whose mellowness would hardly match her aggressive nature.

But, a mellow tone is not the impression given by every poem in the canon. Take, for example, the eclogue 'Rusticus Emigrans' (p.482).
There is nothing mellifluous in the juxtaposed t and d and n and m and c and g sounds which pervade the following extract: they result in a rather disjointed and hard-sounding utterance.

ROBERT Well Richat, zoo 'tis true what I do hear
That you be guoing to Dieman's Land to-year.

RICHARD Ees, I shall never eat another pound
0' zalt in England here, where I wer barn;
Nor dig another spit o' English ground;
Nor cut a bit muore English grass or carn.
Ees, we must get to Lon' on now next Zunday
Abuoard the Ship that is to car us.
Vor if the weather should be rightish var us
We shall put out to Sea o' Monday,
Zoo our vew tools and clothes (for we must car all
That we can get by buyen, or by baggen),
Here t'other day I packed up in a barrel
And zent 'em on to Lon'on by the waggon.

Yet there is nothing hard, and certainly nothing aggressive, about these rather pathetic characters. But nor, at the moment, is there any­thing lyrical in their lives. Yet the majority of Barnes's poems concentrate upon a lighter side of their landscape, upon what Robert refers to elsewhere in this same poem as its abundance of 'carn and cattle' and its flow of 'milk and honey'. In describing these images the lines do take on a luxuriant richness of sound. There is even a hint of a mellow remembrance in 'Rusticus Emigrans' itself, when Richard lists, in round and elongated vowels, all that has been precious in his environment.

Here be the trees that I did use to clim in,
Here is the brook that I did use to zwim in,
Here be the ground where I've a worked and played;
Here is the hut that I wer barn and bred in;
Here is the little church where we've a prayed,
And churchyard that my kinsvolk's buones be laid in.
The repeated deixical **here** draws attention to the gentler phonemes because its own softness introduces the lines and sets the pace of a sonorous rhythm and intonational flow which helps in the separation of the harsher sounds (for example, **b**, **t**, **d**, **k**) one from the other. That separation is assisted in some places by the structure of the Dorset past tense: instead of **I used to clim**, involving a cluster of consonants which are unavoidable in standard English, **used** loses its final **d**, and also separates **did** from **clim** (**I did use to clim**) and therefore **d** from **k**. Smoothness replaces the potentially clumsy.

In fact, in his description of the milk and honey land of 'My Orcha'd in Linden Lea' (p.233), Alan Hertz actually speaks of the 'honeyed' quality of the language.

'Ithin the woodlands, flow'ry gleåded,
   By the woak tree's mossy moot,
The sheenen grass-bleådes, timber-sheåded,
   Now do quiver under voot;
An' birds do whistle over head,
An' water's bubblen in its bed,
An' there vor me the apple tree
   Do leåm down low in Linden Lea.

This opening is a masterpiece of orchestration. The honeyed slowness of the first three lines, with their lingering diphthongs and double consonants, and the patterned alliteration of **w** and **b** in lines 5 and 7 evoke a sweetly harmonious world. The internal rhyme of lines 7 neatly integrates 'me', the speaker, into this all-encompassing euphony. 10

I would also draw attention to a stanza from 'The Meåd in June' (p.350). There is orchestration and euphony of the dialect's own sounds; but, whereas Hertz's example is itself referring to sounds in the country, to whistling birds and bubbling brooks, the following stanza seems to evoke an equally sweet and harmonious silence.

An' there the brook do softly flow
Along, a-benden in a bow,
An' vish, wi' zides o' zilver-white,
Do flash vrom shoals a-dazzlen light;
An' alders by the water's edge,
Do she'de the ribbon-bleded zedge,
An' where, below the withy's head,
The zwimmen clote-leaves be a-spread,
The angler is a-zot at noon
Upon the flow'ry bank in June.

There is a feeling of a drowsy stillness in the human world, as it
passively and comfortably watches the natural world go quietly by (so
much so that the angler's disruptive purpose is virtually obliterated).
The repeated, gently stressed and breathy w sounds of the last four lines,
in company with the lazily elongated vowels of noon and June, their value
heightened by the rhyme scheme, help to reinforce the notions of midday
summer-time heat and the angler's patient waiting. We are told that the
brook moves quietly, and s, z, and sh sounds imply in their sibillance
the absence of intrusive noise, so that the reader hears nothing, but
watches with the silent angler, undistracted, the flashing form and
flashing light of silver fish, the shady alders, and the drifting clote-
leaves.

It is only to be expected that Barnes should allow the 'honeyed'
sound to predominate in his verse. He feared that city readers would
automatically equate a rough-sounding dialect with the 'boorish' person-
alities they expected to find in the countryside: they might forget that
standard English can sound mellow or harsh, depending upon its present-
ation. He could not afford to risk such a reaction: he wanted to
offer only the 'light' side of the country and, at all costs, was
determined to avoid rural labourers appearing to be 'objects of sport'. Besides, he did not see his community as comic: personally he delighted
in a peace and beauty which, despite the occasional and inevitable shadow,
his loving perception recognised all around him. It is no doubt for this
reason, rather than any inherent property in the dialect, that Barnes
chose to hear and recreate its mellow aspects, in contrast to the generally
harsher tone stressed in the following extract from a dialect eclogue by
Robert Young, a harshness which may stem from Young's abhorrence of Dorset
drinking habits rather than from his delight in language, poetry and
people. There may be an explanation here of the difference, discussed in
Chapter Four, between the dialect phonology of Young and Barnes, despite
the fact that the two men lived and wrote in virtually the same time and place. In fact, Barnes originally experimented with a similar phonology to that used by Young, writing rather narrower, more closed vowel sounds at the start of his career but then opting for the more open phoneme, so that *make* in the following Young example would eventually have become *meike* for Barnes. (Jones suggests that Barnes's experimentation went on until about 1856.) But Young also chose in these stanzas, unlike Barnes as I have indicated, to cluster together hard and awkward-sounding consonants and there are virtually no sibilants or fricatives in these lines.

**JOHN**

I dunno hardli how I be,
But _zic_ and _zorrie_, you _mid_ _zee_.

**THOMAS**

Well, John, you do look rather _shakey_,
Why, what on e''th_lik_that_da maike ye?

**JOHN**

An, Thomas, you _mid_gie a guess,
How, 'tis I be in such a mess,
But if I oonce _git_well agi'n,
I'll _warn'd_ I'll _strik_to beer and gin:
An'_twerden much I _seemed_to drink,
Eet I _wur_done up in a twink.

Nor are Tennyson's Lincolnshire dialect poems mellow in their sounds. It may be that Lincolnshire is a marginally less 'warm' and 'round' sounding speech, in some hearers' subjective judgement, than Dorset dialect. But Tennyson's Lincolnshire orthography seems to include a suggestion of these same diphthongs which appear to contribute to a sense of richness and languour in Barnes's use of Blackmore speech.

*Wheer 'asta _bëhn_ saw long and meëd _liggin'_ 'ere aloëh?
Noorse? thourt nowt o' a noorse: thourt nowt o' a noorse; whoy, Doctor's _abeëh_ an' _agoëh_,
Says that I moënt'a _naw moor_ aëhle: but I _beënt_ a fool:
Git my my aëhle, fur I _beant_ a-gawin' to breèk my rule._* 14

Yet attendant rhythms and intonation patterns draw more attention to
disharmony than to euphony, stressing m, n, and b sounds which are already, in their frequent close juxtaposition, difficult to say.

(I shall be returning to the comparison between Tennyson and Barnes in my discussion, below, of their conversational rhythms.)

But then, Barnes was firmly convinced that in the two Tennyson dialect poems he knew ('Northern Farmer, Old Style' and 'Northern Farmer, New Style') there was no hint that Tennyson loved the people he described. It is perhaps not so much a matter of love, but of a difference in perception between Barnes and Tennyson. Barnes heard the lyric in country life: Tennyson heard a harsher and sadder comedy. Even though his dialect poem written some years later than these, 'The Spinster's Sweet-Arts', deals directly with love, it has no lyric sweetness since it sets out to give the lie to the contentment and mutual benefit Barnes always represented in his poems of marriage and family life. The spinster persona has, in fact, chosen to turn her back on all the men that courted her, Tommy, Steevie, and Rob: she has given their names to her cats, for these she can control whilst her solo existence remains, in her view, unsullied by the strains of a shared life. (Note particularly the distaste sounded in the stressed consonants of lines 5 and 6.)

An' thou was es fond o' thy bairns es I be mysen o' my cats,
But I niver not wished fur childer, I hevn't na likin fur brats;
Pretty anew when ya dresses 'em opp, an' they goðs fur a walk,
Or sits wi' their 'ands afoor 'em, an' doesn't not 'inder the talk!
5 But their bottles o' pap, an' their mucky bibs, an' the clats an' the clouts,
6 An' their mashin' their toys to pieces an' maakin ma deff wi'
their shouts,
An' hallus a-joompin' about ma as if they was set upo' springs,
An' a haxin' ma hawkard questions, an' sañyin' ondecent things,
An' a-callin' ma 'hugly' mayhap to my face, or a teñrin' my gown -
Dear! dear! dear! I mun part them Tommies - Steevie git down.

Barnes's personal use of local phonemes contributes, then, to his own particular perspective on local performance. The potential for 'mellowness' exists in the dialect: mellow sounds seem to emphasise a contented personality and rich world: therefore, in his emphasis upon the idyllic
Barnes would inevitably choose to stress this quality of sound. Local performance is shaped partly by Barnes himself, and the consciousness of his choice of the 'mellowest' possible phonology seems emphasised by the deliberate sound changes he made as his career progressed.16

A similar point may be made about his artistic use of the Blackmore lexicon.

b) Lexicon

(A number of points in the following paragraphs relate to, and expand, suggestions made earlier in this study.)

The lexicon may automatically indicate, through its peculiarly local words, a local personality. But, as with phonetics, Barnes of course controls the use of the lexicon: the local performance it suggests is that performance seen through Barnes's eyes.

David Wright drew attention to the objects in Barnes's poetry. His landscape is clearly realised for the reader through its physical details, of buildings, plants, and animals. We discover a good bit about how people look, their faces, shapes and clothes, and know something of the tools they work with. The poetry is highly visual and sensual.

This effect is achieved through precise labelling. The ability to vividly realise an image is suggested in some of Barnes's early standard poems. The following poem, 'The Aquatic Excursion' (p.53), achieves clarity through its concentration upon noun phrases, each with a single head word, normally having single modifiers: otherwise there is little syntactic complexity to obscure the vision.

And Julia, by the river side,
To me holds out her lily hand,
And quits, with trembling foot, the land,
Upon the waves to ride.
Now put I out the bending oar,
The curling steam dividing, . . .
The stream is flowing wide and deep,
  We pause, and look around
Where rocks are rising high and steep,
  Or hills with Greenwood crowned;
Or where upon the verdant ground
  The wand'ring cattle feed,
Whose lowing is the only sound
That passes o'er the silent mead.

But the technique of precise observation comes to the fore when Barnes chooses to direct the main thrust of his poetry away from the inner thoughts which are the topic of many other of his earlier works, and toward the people and objects of his surroundings. It is at this point, in my view, that his work becomes more 'substantial', not only in content, but also in impact: that is, it would appear that the focusing of his talent upon physical objects (although naturally these themselves invite some reflection) minimises the kinds of self-consciousness, sentimentality, and conventionality that weaken his early standard work.

The people in Barnes's poems are named; Poll, Mary, JeHne, Sam, John, Tom, and so forth. The surname 'Hine' occurs frequently. Barnes claimed that the incidents recounted in his poems actually happened to local people, but said he changed their real names. (My correspondence with the Barnes Society in Dorchester has not uncovered anything significant about a local family actually called 'Hine' or connected it with Barnes.) Place names of actual Dorset locations occur from time to time. And the topography of, say, 'Lydlinch Bells' (p.302), taking the reader through the Bagber lanes towards 'woody Stock' or 'the walls o' Thornhill', seems to have been fairly authentic. The vocabulary describing the homes and doings of people in this area is, of course, drawn from the local lexicon: there is bibber for shiver, caddIe for a mix-up, Robin Hood for red campion, stannens for market stalls, veag for a fit of anger. All in all then, there is a west country flavour -- or, as Hopkins called it in his remarks to Bridges about Barnes, 'instress' -- in all of Barnes's dialect poems. (It is a flavour extended to some extent to his standard English pastoral poems since these, although they do not use local phonology or syntax, do use to a considerable degree both local terms and the image of the local landscape.) However, the details attached to the
people and places of the poems are not so consistent that it might be possible to reconstruct from the whole canon an entire village with distinct family trees and inter-relationships. I explained in Chapter Three that the name 'Jeane' is given to a character who seems to be, variously, old, young, married, single, a relative, a friend, a wife, a milkmaid or a housewife. Perhaps she is one personality, seen from different perspectives, by different personae, at different times. Nevertheless, the result is still a degree of vagueness about Jeane. We have a West Country flavour then -- but, despite the use of a certain local speech circle, it is only a flavour: we do not have the impression of a very specific community in all its special and minute detail.

I have already referred to the reasons why objects were important to the personae of the poems and, it seems, to Barnes himself. The poem 'Our Fathers' Works' (p.270) explains a conviction that each man contributes something to village life through his work: his legacy -- perhaps in the form of a building, a road he worked on, or a hedge he planted -- will remain to enrich the lives of future generations and also to remind them of their ancestry. 'The Wife A-lost' (p.333) evokes the profound sense of human vitality that can cling to objects, giving people who live amongst them a sense of place and security -- a sense which can be tragically reversed when those who used them are gone, until the pain of loss has eased and these objects may become the 'tokens' discussed in 'Our Father's Works', and in the poem itself called 'Tokens' (p.421).

Each mark ov things a-gone vrom view -
To eyezight's woone, to soulzight two.

So it is that each object and location can become the subject 'a teäele's a twold o' -- and thus many may become the starting point for reflection and narrative in Barnes's own poems, his own 'teäles'.

I shall look now, then, at the language of Barnes's local 'labelling', and make initial reference to the manner in which he develops a poem -- tells tales -- out of an object, a creature, or place (in the way that I explained, earlier in my thesis, he built lessons in his classroom out
of contemplation upon a work of art, a scientific experiment, or a quotation, which triggered discussion).

Using local words naturally lends a local air to a poem immediately. But to appreciate the full sense of local terms the reader will need to step within the 'magic circle' of the dialect. The Dorset term drong is a particularly good example of the point. To be fully understood it is necessary to know that in Barnes's area the word could refer to two ideas. On the one hand it could refer to a 'throng'. On the other, it could mean 'a narrow way'. Its selection is therefore particularly appropriate in the poem 'Sound o' Water' (p.311) where it helps to convey the feeling of imprisoned claustrophobia that people who are accustomed to field work, out in the open, might experience if trapped in close, crowded, city lanes.

I born in town! oh no, my dawn
0' life broke here bezide theâse lawn;
Not where pent air do roll along,
In darkness drough the wall-bound drong,
An' never bring the goo-coo's zong.

Furthermore, this stanza is completely misunderstood, and trivialised, if it is automatically assumed by a standard English reader that lawn means a smooth, well-cared for sweep of garden grass. In fact for Barnes's personas lawn meant 'unploughed land in a field'. Therefore the poem is not contrasting a dainty cottage life with grim industrial streets, but compares the freedom of a rural but vital working life with the restrictions of a city working existence.

And when a poem refers to 'happering' it is not sufficient to guess from the surrounding context that it is describing fruit, apples perhaps, falling on the ground: the image can only be fully recognised if the reader knows that the verb does not simply mean something like 'falling', with the attendant sense of 'hitting the ground', but actually implies 'bouncing up from a fall, like hail stones'.

Nor does hodmadod, in 'John Bloom in Lon'on' (p.473) mean 'new-fangled thing', as I originally guessed, making the assumption on the basis that it refers to a 'tidy little' London cab and the poem has been
about new transport, in the form of a train, taking John to see new inventions at Crystal Palace, and thus moving him from rural tradition to city innovation. In fact it simply means 'a dump or an untidy mess', and this is eventually confirmed when John, furious that his great bulk has been unable to fit into the tiny carriage, declares he will kick the 'vooky' thing -- the unhandy thing -- off the road. If hodmadod were assumed to mean something derogatory about all newness the point of the poem would be missed: for the lines do not make a simple opposition between a marvellous rural existence, in which John lived well and contentedly, and an inferior city living. In fact, John goes eagerly to see what Crystal Palace can offer, and thoroughly enjoys the ride en route in the train: his shrewd businessman's eye for the economical seems to see the invention as potentially useful to trade. It is rather that he makes more pragmatic judgements, distinguishing the convenient from the inconvenient, and the poem closes by implying the related point that city observers should learn to distinguish between sweeping and theoretical assumptions that rural labourers are necessarily poverty-stricken and the fact, which Barnes makes Bloom himself signify, that some countrymen are well-fed and contented.

But Barnes admits elsewhere to a bleaker vision, (even if it never becomes in the dialect work quite as strained as I have suggested it may do in the more personal standard poems). And as a final example of the need to be familiar with the full weight of the local lexicon, the use of the words holly and holm in the poem 'Hallowed Places' (p.284) is interesting. Blackmore speech used both terms, but holm meant particularly prickly holly. 'Hallowed Places' has an incremental refrain. The first three stanzas are concluded with precisely the same two lines.

The hall, a-hung wi' holly, rung
Wi' many a tongue o' wold an' young.

Yet the last three stanzas are all fractionally different -- and perhaps most significantly each of the last three substitutes holm for holly. Places are, as I have explained, always hallowed in Barnes's work because they carry memories of past happiness and past loved ones. But the point of this and so many other poems is that these happinesses are in the past: happy memories, as I have emphasised throughout this study,
are tinged with the pain of loss. The first three stanzas of this poem are most preoccupied with the happiness of memory -- and they conclude with reference to the holly. But the last three, which also terminate with a refrain that chooses the word describing a painfully prickly variety, are particularly conscious of the sadness that accompanies recollection. The paving stones outside, once hot beneath the summer sun, now strike cold beneath the maidens' thin-shod feet: the pear-tree has a 'leafless shroud': there is something sinister in the ivy-stems which 'crawl' on the windblown wall: and the girls' voices have 'fled' as the cold sends them shivering inside to say good-night. It is perhaps as well that the persona's small child's eyes are closed, 'seal'd' not only from 'sheen'en skies' but, for the moment, from 'darksome trees' and the halls hung with 'holm': for she will create her own memories soon enough, with their attendant sorrows as well as pleasures. It is not that recognition of memory's mixed blessing is entirely missing from the first three stanzas: there are hints within these of the 'vorseaken', of chilly winds, and of 'darksome sh'ouds'. But the shift from holly to holm may help to signal an increasing consciousness of such sorrows. It is interesting too that Hardy's edition deliberately leaves out two of the 'holm' stanzas. Only one remains: and stanzas three, four and six, are gone altogether. The result is a poem which loses the significant image of the sleeping, innocent child, and the full weight of the potential signal of the incremental refrain. The way in which Hardy frequently weakened Barnes's poems, stripping from them some of their complexities, and thus contributing through his edition to a misleading impression of Barnes's work as an everlasting idyll, will be considered again below.

I want now to turn to the manner in which Barnes modified his labels of objects, people and places, in the landscape of his poems. He used the local lexicon, and the creative potential he found in it, to precisely delimit his images. His sharp eye and his ability to select a telling word produced phrases which describe the witch as having 'wold hard wither'd skin', the daisy beds 'so white's a sheet', the stream as 'curlen', the children with nowhere outdoors to play as having 'a thin mushroom fænce, 'Wi' their bodies so sumple as dough'. But I want to focus particularly upon Barnes's use of clear, bright colour, onomatopoeia and his use of compounds. (Chapter Three has already given close attention
to the 'light' which suffuses the majority of Barnes's images, and to his use of a personality, named JeMne, to 'carry' -- in a sense to 'label' that is -- some of the more disturbing emotions of the poems.)

Barnes tended to select primary colours to describe his nominals, and few of these are modified further. He concentrated upon clear red, green, blue, yellow, brown, black and white, with little reference to their various shades. Grigson pays particularly attention to this phenomenon in Barnes. He notes that Barnes (as I explained in Chapter One) recognised harmony in nature's arrangement of colours. Barnes wished, as I suggested in that Chapter, to preserve harmony above all. Therefore the colours of his poems never jar one against the other, but suggest a marvellously rich tapestry of almost medieval quality in the usually bright clarity of its image.

Now the yellow zun, a-runned
   Daily round a smaller bow,
Still wi' cloudless sky's a-zunnen
   All the sheenen land below,
   Vewer blossoms now do blow,
But the fruit's a-showen
   Reds an' blues, an' purple hues,
   By the leaves a-glowen.

Still, Barnes believed that 'black and blue are found in lepidoptera more often than white and blue are seen in our Flora and Fauna'. Yet, as Grigson observed, blue and white is a coupling frequently repeated in the poems. If the combination did not reflect a connection in the natural world, Grigson suggests that it has a significance in relation to Barnes's own personal nature.

Blue and white well express the mathematics, the clear, the serene, and the harmonious in Barnes's make. Blue and white are the serenity of nature - the nature, said Barnes, which is 'the best school of art', adding, 'and of schools of art among men those are best that are nature's best interpreters'. 19

And, I would add, Barnes interpreted and enjoyed colour, as he interpreted all things, through reference to its human contact. It is
for this reason that his persona loves blue best of all in the following extract. It is for this reason, apart from aesthetics, that colour features so distinctly in Barnes's poems which are 'less about objects and more about related human nature' as he perceived it.

The brown, I zaid, would do to deck
Thy heðir; the white would match thy neck;
The red would meðke thy red cheðk wan
A-thinken o' the gi'er gone;
The green would show thee to be true;
But still I'd sooner zee the blue,
Because 'twer he that deck'd thy heðir
When vu'st I walked wi' thee to feðir. 20

However, there is another sense in which the use of clear, bright colour helps to delimit Barnes's labelling of local phenomena in a way which adds to the local 'instress' of his dialect work. That is, the practice is suggestive of the folk tradition, and that tradition would, by definition, be part and parcel of his imagined personae's rural way of living: the personae would tell, and listen to, the folk tale, perhaps at the end of the hard-working day. The use of primary colour is particularly noticeable in traditional folk ballads: 'She dressed herself in a scarlet robe, / Her waiting maid dressed in green'. But whereas the ballad being, as E.K. Wells explains, primarily 'concerned with the story cannot cumber itself with individualizing each object, and resorts to a stock vocabulary which soon becomes familiar', Barnes, having broader motivations, aimed at a more exact individuation in which primary colour plays only one of many other defining parts.

For example, onomatopoeia, suggestive alliteration, and compound modifiers also add to the instress of the lexicon. Barnes made no direct claim that Dorset had, overall, more phonological suggestiveness in performance than standard English. But it may be that onomatopoeia, in the special closeness of this linguistic feature to the real world that it tries to represent, can seem specially appropriate in poetry which purports to be the utterances of men and women who lived closest to the sounds and textures of actuality and furthest from the abstractions of their own minds. E.L. Epstein however believes:
Objective mimesis always has a tendency to seem trivial . . . there is always a suggestion of a trick about it, an act of conscious craftsmanship. I would suggest that this impression is the result of the basically unnecessary nature of the art itself . . . the reader knows what slowly flowing tears, echoes, waves, and similar phenomena, look, feel, or sound like without the assistance of sub-lexical mimetic techniques. 22

But surely there is nothing inherently trivial in conscious craftsmanship? Barnes, delighting in 'the skill that conceals skill', appreciated conscious craftsmanship above all. The crux of acceptability lies in the degree of concealment of the craft. Onomatopoeia must, by definition, advertise itself to a degree. But sometimes it and alliteration can do so with pleasure, for the speaker and the hearer, when they closely and subtly match their object, without the sounds themselves, and their patterns, assuming ascendancy over the propositions they express. Hopkins (whose own use of suggestive sound can be more or less effective -- effective in stressing mundane effort in 'The Windhover' where 'sheer plod makes plough down sillion /Shine', cumbersome in the 'nor yet plod safe shod sound' of 'Tom's Garland') found Barnes's handling of sound and sense, particularly in the context of Welsh cynghanedd, which I shall be discussing again below, sometimes 'more of a miss than a hit'. 23 And I agree that his use of a kind of onomatoepaeia, in the 'The Wold Wall' (p.286), to suggest the keening sounds of grief, is quite dreadful when it is forced to fit the added craft of Persian ornamental punning.

Ah! well-a-day! 0 wall adieu!
The wall is wold, my grief is new.

But for the most part, I think there is an enjoyable and helpfully suggestive closeness between sound and meaning in poems like 'The Stage Coach' (p.303). Here the sound of the whiplash, and the speedy rotation of the wheel, are reinforced by the repeated w and k sounds, and by the closely linked wh...s and swi sounds. Further, the combination of phonemic stress, with intonation contour and rhythm, forms an organic whole.

While the whip did smack
On the ho'ses' back,
An' the wheels went swiftly rou', good so's;
The wheels went swiftly roun'.
Besides, some of the Dorset dialect words seem intrinsically to be specially phonetically appropriate to their sense. For example, the wind *whivers* in Barnes's poems when it is particularly weak, and the word seems apt because its narrow vowel can hint at smallness, and the *w/v* connection can suggest the intermittent vibration of a breeze. So the dialect lines 'An' roun' the woak, the wind a-blowen weak, / Softly whiver'd by' seems more suggestive than Barnes's standard -- and also onomatopoeic -- 'weakly-wailing breezes play'd / Within the ivied elm-trees' shade'.

Hufflen sounds another specially appropriate modifier for wind. It is most frequently used like *rustling* in contexts where both sound and movement are suggested -- 'hufflen winds did she~ke the zedge':

A considerable number of Barnes's modifiers, however, are compounds rather than single words. Usually these compounds are pre-modifying adjectivals, or gerundives, formed from reducing relative clauses. Occasionally they are verbs. I explained in Chapter Four Barnes's preference for the creation of words, and compound words, from within the existing language rather than the borrowing of items from other languages when no term in current local performance seemed particularly apt. The effectiveness of his own use of the practice appears to support his theory. That effectiveness has to do with the bringing of the landscape and its people closer to the reader, through the striking nature of the compounds: they are striking either because they are particularly beautiful in their stress upon some specially lovely aspect of the object or action they describe, or because there is some surprise value in their focus, or because they mark a close connection between humanity and the world of nature.

Thus, modifiers like *deHisy-dappled*, *blue-feHced* or *clear-fellced pool* seem specially attractive as they draw attention to the lovely random scattering of tiny flowers across the field, to the sheer blueness or the translucence of water. Compounds like *long-tongued*, *springy-voooted*, *yellow-banded*, and *high-ear'd* are effective in their focus upon a particular identifying feature of a dog, a bee, and a horse. *Thin-edg'd* (of clouds) and *errand-loaded* (of Jenny) are similarly pointed, but perhaps more noteworthy in that the edges of clouds are not usually focused upon in this way, and errand refers more usually to the process rather than to the object of the task (so that in this example we have
the dual implication of not only packages, but also the effort of fetching them, weighting Jenny down).25 A specially attractive compound that works by surprise value, in its amusing aptness, is the verb compound which helps to form the delightfully immediate picture of children greeting and caring for their father when he returns, in 'Fatherhood' (p.256), miserably cold from his day's work.

Vor the vu'st that I happen'd to meet
Come to pull my gritcwoat vrom my elrm,
An' another did rub my feMce warm,
An' another hot-slipper'd my veet.

But some of the loveliest compounds have a particularly profound meaningfulness in that they describe a natural object by drawing attention to its vitality -- and some go even further, emphasising the effect of that vitality upon humanity. 'The moon-clim'd height o' the sky' fixes in the mind not a frightening sense of vast distance but offers a sense of measurable proportion, given to the land observer as he watches the moon apparently progressing across the sky. However, the natural world's energy is seen to touch humanity more powerfully in images like 'the cheMk-burnen seasons o' mowen', 'worold-hushen night', and 'storm-be-smother'd bell'. All three compounds emphasise the effect of nature, suggesting in it a power greater than man. This final kind of compound is limited, no doubt because, as I argued in Chapter Two, Barnes is presenting an image of a cultivated land, where man appreciates, but tends to be in control of, nature.26 He may admit challenge from the land and from change outside Dorset -- but Barnes is not willing to allow it to overtake his poems, certainly not those in dialect.

Finally, in this consideration of the lexicon in the dialect poems, and particularly of the manner in which it conveys a local instress, I shall look at Barnes's artistic use of the local habit of connecting memories, ideas and stories, to the valued objects of the landscape. The way in which he may build the form of a complete poem around such an object will be looked at again below, but here I would simply draw attention to poems like 'The Blackbird' (p.78) and 'Dock-leaves' (p.77) where the bird and the plant, focused upon in the title, are triggers for the recall of associated memories.
An' zoo they docks, a-spread so wide
Up yonder zunny bank's green side,
Do bring to mind what we did do
Among the dock-leaves years agoo.

But occasionally a poem like 'The Girt Woak Tree that's in the Dell'
(p.81) allows not only past memories to be linked to the object which
figures in its title, but makes room for imagined future dreams to come
in to play. (A curtailment of future prediction is discussed below.)

But oh! if men should come an' vell
The girt woak tree that's in the dell,
An' build his planks 'ithin the zide
O' zome girt ship to plough the tide,
Then, life or death! I'd goo to sea,
A-saflen wi' the girt woak tree:
An' I upon his planks would stand,
An' die a-fighten vor the land.

Objects are used, that is, as symbols of continuity: they recall the
past and sometimes permit a sense of future, bridging the gap between now
and the years to come. 'The Bells of Alderburnham' (p.220) works in a
similar way: the bells ring out still, as they always did, but they remind
the persona that they will continue on into a future, which is bound to
contain both the weddings and the funerals they have always signified.

Other poems, containing a place or object in their title, offer a
narrative -- a complete tale, rather than an isolated image or idea --
relating to that title. Thus 'The Beam in Grenley Church' (p.263) tells
the local story about a beam, cut too short to fit in place, which --
overnight -- is miraculously lengthened and placed securely in the roof.
'Minden House' (p.267) tells how a young man called when Fanny's parents
were out at work: he had come to see her father but, meeting Fanny Deûne
instead, fell in love with her.

An' when he went thik road ageûn
His errand then wer Fanny Deûne.
So, the objects of the poems, carefully labelled and modified, contribute to the 'instress' of the dialect work, giving it a strong sense of place and immediacy. Further, the manner in which Barnes chooses to refer to these objects, through his dialect speaking personae, adds to the impression that they were valued, in the Blackmore community, as markers of past, present and future life. He emphasises harmony in these objects and their contexts, but hints too, if mildly, at fears for the security of their traditional balance, as he does in 'Hallowed Places' and as the restrictions of future images may imply. 'The Girt Woak Tree' may look forward -- but it does so with a fantastic and perhaps therefore pathetic bravado.

Also, Barnes arranges the syntax of the poems in a way that emphasises an impression of localness: Dorset syntax has idiosyncracies of local performance but, again, Barnes — through his art of wholes -- stresses a particular focus upon that performance.

c Syntax

The meaning potential of an aspect of language -- its phonology, its lexicon, its syntax for example -- naturally depends in part upon its relationship with other features of the grammar. For example, many of the differences between Dorset syntax and standard English syntax lead to an expansion of the standard English expression, through the addition of prefixes and extra participles of the verb. So the Dorset speaker does not say the air I breathed shook, but rather the air that I've a-breath'd did shek. This syntactic lengthening may contribute to the slowing of rhythm in Dorset speech and also to the amount of stress which falls in certain parts of the utterance. As a result syntax can, for instance, be partly responsible for Barnes's implication that the dialect can sound more 'mellow' than standard English since in this example, as in many others, slow rhythm draws attention to the long and rounded vowel sounds of breath'd and shek.

Nor am I at any time implying that Dorset is able to 'mean' in special ways closed to any other language: as Barnes himself remarked,
Dorset had certain idiosyncratic syntactic constructions and lexical items, but another form of speech could, if its users wished, express the idea in alternative ways, perhaps by periphrasis. The point of drawing attention to local constructions is rather to explain the part that syntax can play in giving the poems a particular local instress—and to emphasise that although dialect is no more meaningful than standard English, it is certainly, in its unfamiliar terms and constructions, no less rich in potential meaning.

But I would begin by pointing out one way in which the Blackmore dialect suggests a meaning which some other dialects, and certainly 'common' English (as Barnes called standard speech), do not choose to offer directly or indirectly, except in certain peculiarly literary senses. According to Barnes it was a Dorset syntactic convention, as I explained in Chapter Four, to refer to many nouns by the pronoun he. There is no self-conscious literary personification therefore in 'Wellen O' the Tree' (p.83).

An' we cut, near the ground, his girt stem a'most drough,
An' he sway'd all his limbs, an' he nodded his head,
Till he vell away down like a pillar o' lead.

Nor is the personification of objects piled on the moving cart, in 'Leady-Day, an' Ridden House' (p.73), a careful literary device. Kettles and crocks, and saucepans and coffers, were stacked high,

An' fryen-pan, vor aggs to slide
In butter round his hissen zide,
An' gridire's even bars, to bear
The drippen stelhke above the glehre
O' brightly-glowen coals. An' then
All up o' top o' them agehm
The woaken bwoard, where we did eat
Our croust o' bread or bit o' meat,
An' when the bwoard wer up, we tied
Upon the rehves, along the zide,
The woaken stools, his glossy mehtes.
Ernst Cassirer suggests that this kind of syntactic personalisation need not have arisen from a community's belief in animism: the syntactic construction can itself encourage the perception. But whatever its origin, pronominalisation in these respects appears to add a resonance of vitality which would otherwise have been difficult to convey: that is, it makes clear, in an almost 'totemic' way, the importance of certain objects, plants and creatures, to the rural labouring family. And, since it is emphatically not a literary device, a device belonging to a more artificial arrangement of speech, nothing of that importance is transferred from actuality to the art form. There is no possibility of underestimating the importance of the elm tree to the mowers who had welcomed its cool shade, or to the hay-makers who had rested, eaten lunch, and told their jokes and stories beneath its branches. There is no ignoring the domestic necessity of the household equipment carefully carried from one house to another -- and carefully listed, one after the other, in the poem. Mark Hertz makes a related observation about this listing.

One by one, objects are piled on a cart, losing their value as they are wrenched from their accustomed place. Normal domestic relationships are ironically inverted. The 'woaken bwoard' rests upside down on the 'cwoffer' of crockery, with the salt-box wedged between its legs. The clock-case is emptied of its works and laid face down; even the children's stools 'lie, / Wi' lags a-turn'd toward the sky'.

There are resonances of the displaced furniture in Hardy's 'During Wind and Rain'.

They change to a high new house,
He, she, all of them - aye,
Clocks and carpets and chairs
On the lawn all day,
And brightest things that are theirs ...  
Ah, no; the years, the years;
Down their carved names the rain-drop ploughs.  29

Barnes's displacement is, of course, conveyed by syntax, by the locatives which emphasise that the table legs are 'turn'd up'ard', and the clock-case is 'at'hirt upon his fe'ce', the settle 'flat upon his back'. As Hertz remarks, this is a 'mock-epic catalogue'. But if there
is a joke in these near-living objects lying in unnatural and undignified attitudes it is not, I suggest, so bathetic -- however unlike the complex mood of 'During Wind and Rain' -- that the reader is unable to respond with sympathy to the persona's final observation that (looking round the empty house and listening to creaking, unlatched doors after the cart has removed its last contents) he is beset by memories of past times there, and he acknowledges

... when a man do leave the he' th
An' ruf where vust he drew his breath,
Or where he had his bwoyhood's fun,
An' things wer woonce a-zaid an' done
That took his mind, do touch his heart
A little bit, I'll answer vor't.
Zoo ridden house is such a caddle,
That I would rather keep my staddle.

In fact, the cheerful, vital, listing draws attention to the goods and to the courage of their owner, so that the reader's sympathetic understanding is likely to be secured. Hardy's family do not actually express disquiet at change in 'During Wind and Rain'. Perhaps they feel it, but they appear to continue 'blithely' and optimistically on, and unease is expressed instead by a distanced, authorial voice. Barnes's labourer, however, articulates (and then controls) his distress himself. It is true that this control is signalled by a slight distancing of voice: the persona talks of distress almost as if it were happening to another husband and father by using the third person, speaking of 'a man' leaving 'his' home. But the much greater distancing of disquiet into authorial commentary helps to make Hardy's poem the more impressively disturbing: but Barnes's poem is no less moving or perceptive for being more simply and immediately touching.

I referred in Chapter Four to another aspect of local syntax which Barnes, in his model of Dorset speech, argued was particularly apt in its expressiveness. He believed that some, by reference to the German, means strictly apt to do or promote the thing denoted by the word to which it is attached, whereas ful means full of, or having much of a thing. By
this argument the following lines have highly appropriate -- meaningful -- syntax.

An' air o' zummer nights do blow
Athirt the yields in play'some flight,
'tis then delightsome under all
The sheādes o' boughs by path or wall. 30

The choice of delightsome, to describe the atmosphere of the evening -- an atmosphere apt to delight -- expresses, if his analysis of the morphemes is correct, Barnes's meaning more exactly than the standard alternative delightful. The case of play'some as the most meaningful choice can also be argued. Whilst the abstract flight can obviously not be full of anything, the breeze in its flight may be apt to play with leaves, trees, people, in its path.

Another aspect of Dorset speech to which Barnes draws attention in the 'Dissertation' is its apparently meaningful use of the nominative instead of the accusative pronoun in order to mark emphasis. 'The Best Man In the Yield' (p.117) uses it to stress anger.

An' if dost think that thou canst challenge I
At any thing, - then, Bob we'll teāke a pick a-piece . . .

Then, as I explained in Chapter Four, 'A Wife A-prais'd' (p.332) demonstrates a Dorset use of the auxiliary did, which Barnes describes in his model of the dialect: evidently it was used in Blackmore only to indicate the continuous past tense. It also seems to be chosen correctly in the following extract, since Barnes is describing here not a single occurrence but the atmosphere of the whole month of May.

The zun did glow wi' yellow gleāre,
An' cowslips blow wi' yollow gleāre,
Wi' graegles' bells a-droopen low,
An' bremble boughs a-stoopen low. 31

It is, then, a construction which helps the poems to convey their sense that those idyllic aspects of the past, which they continually recall, were
a constant, never-ending delight, whatever attendant strains and challenges may be acknowledged.

An example of the same construction's particularly poignant use comes in a poem which might be seen as a companion piece to 'A Wife A-prais'd'. Barnes set beside this poem 'A Wife A-lost' (p.333), which describes place after place which the persona and his beloved once shared and which are now too painfully full of memories for him to revisit alone. Instead he goes to places where she 'did never come'.

Since I no longer do see your face,  
Up stairs or down below,  
I'll sit me in the lone some place,  
Where flat-bough'd beech do grow;  
Below the beeches' bough, my love,  
Where you did never come,  
An' I don't look to meet ye now,  
As I do look at h'ome.

The auxiliary implies, of course, a continuing state of affairs. That continuity -- that empty continuity, in this case -- is emphasised by never, and never is itself stressed because the presence of did lengthens the line in such a way that increased weight, and probably a rise-fall intonational nucleus, falls upon the negation. There is then anguish in the utterance which would not have been implied so strongly in the rhythm and syntax of the alternative and standard where you never came. I think, too, the alliterated d draws added attention to the stress upon the three words containing it in the last three lines; it emphasises, that is, words which are resonant with the situation's bleakness and with the persona's courageous determination to combat it. And the three alveolars of did never, d-d-n, may have a strong effect of something binding and final.

I have been looking so far at examples of syntax drawn straight from Dorset competence. What follows are a number of points to do with Barnes's arrangement of syntax -- an arrangement which he could equally well have effected with the syntax of standard English -- in a manner which may suggest his conception of a specifically local, rural, performance. Hardy was well aware of Barnes's careful, meaningful structuring: he remarked
that Barnes's 'apparently simple unfoldings are as studied as the simple Bible-narratives are studied' and elsewhere had said of Biblical texts that 'their so-called simplicity is, in fact, the simplicity of the highest cunning'.

The most obvious syntactic signal of Dorset performance is of course the use of the pronoun I, implying that the speaker is a member of the labouring family living in the context of the poems. However, Epstein makes the following observation.

A persona is not an object with an existence independent of the writer; its existence is entirely contingent upon his.

Its use is therefore, in his opinion, an example of subjective, rather than objective, mimesis.

I accept of course that the persona owes his existence to the creative imagination of the poet, and to that extent is contingent upon the writer. However, 'I' need not stand for the poet's own self, and much of the discussion of Chapter Two, and again of Chapter Five, considered the complexities of the relationship between Barnes himself, the professional figure, the poet, and the labouring families of his poems.

A second equally obvious but equally significant syntactic figure is the poems' frequent markedly deixical use of the past tense and the adverb when. Chapter Two discussed the open placing of many of the poems' images in the past tense, either because they referred to childhood or to Barnes's admission that times were changing. A random search through the collected works finds poems based on this construction, like 'Where we did keep our Flagon' (p.119), 'The Happy Days when I wer Young' (p.171), 'Poll' (p.205), 'False Friends-like' (p.329), 'Shaftesbury Feair' (p.450), and 'Knapton Tower' (p.493). Other deictic adverbs, like there and then, are also very frequent, since the poems are pointing to places and times and groups of people which were once very special but which exist now only in memory. Take, for example, 'What John were a-tellen his mis'ess out in the Corn Ground' (p.413), or 'Zummer Stream' (p.402), from which I now quote.
Ah! then the grassy-meaded May
Did warm the passen year, an’ gleam...
There by the path, in grass knee-high,
Wer buttevlees in giddy flight, ...
Vrom yonder window, in the thatch,
Did sound the maidens’ merry words.

The poem is very precisely spatio-temporally located. (I have marked
indications of spatial deixis (1), temporal deixis (2).) Indeed, this is
its main purpose and charm. There is both a strong sense of the past and
of the ever present. So that the poem can end:

'Tis good to come back to the place
   Back to the time, to goo noo mware;
'Tis good to meet the younger face
   A-menten others here avore.
As streams do glide by green mead-grass,
My summer-bright’ Pend years do pass.

ment = to be like

But although this, and other poems, acknowledge and welcome the presence
of these younger faces -- now living in the old place so that past and
present unite -- there is, as I mentioned earlier, little forward looking
to the future of this new generation. The anxiety which prevents all but
the most tentative look to their future is bred of a recognition that the
present is a period of transition, a recognition that is clear in the
images and in the deictic syntax of 'Times o' Year' (p.415).

Here did sway the eltrot flow’rs,
When the hours o' night wer vew, ...

There the milkmaid hung her brow
By the cow, a-sheenen red; ...

Now the cwolder-blowen blast,
Here do cast vrom elems’ heads ...

Soon shall grass, a-vrost ed bright,
Glisten white instead o’ green,
An' the wind shall smite the cows,
Where the boughs be now their screen.
Things do change as years do vlee;
What ha' years in store vor me?

All points of deictic reference firmly relate to a currently visible part of the landscape: it was here, in this place that . . . This particular poem acknowledges a colder blast challenging the present, but of course the majority of the poems surround — and thus control — these hints of chilling darkness with light and warmth, much of it derived from the past.

I have explained in this and in previous Chapters how much store Barnes set by the traces of past experience, which remain in the landscape. The description of these still-existent traces, and of those emotions and happenings which seem to him to be traditionally good and loveworthy, appear of course in those poems written in the present tense and which firmly state a value in the rural community and in the individual strengths within that community. Thus there is 'Praise o' Do'set' (p.369).

We Do'set, though we mid be hwomely,
Ben't ashamed to own our pleace.

And there is 'Vull a Man' (p.373)

No, I'm a man, I'm vull a man,
You bæt my manhood, if you can.

Within that present, the syntax suggests, there is order and there is habit. For instance, when does not always appear, with then, in a past tense construction. It is also very prevalent in poems which stress the connections, of custom or of inevitable cause and effect, which abound in Barnes's harmonious vision of the labouring life. (If/then constructions are contrastingly rare.) Thus there is 'The Shep'erd Bwoy' (p.200). The shepherd has certain patterns of behaviour when it is warm, when it is cold, when it is stormy, and when it is shearing time. Or, 'when in the evenen the zun's a-zinen', certain rituals come into play (p.143):'The Welshnut Tree' describes how, at leisure time, mother sits with folded
arms by the fire, father relaxes in his 'girt' chair, and the young ones, until their mother calls them home, play 'thread the woman's needle', or hide and seek, or chatter and ask riddles. This comforting sense of regularity is the theme of 'Evenen, an Maïdens out at Door' (p.98). It begins almost aggressively in the present, stressing the first word of the first line: 'Now the sheādes o' the elems do stratch mwore an' mwore'. In this present the maidens are lovely and lissome. But once their group included Fanny, the persona's beloved Fanny, standing by her door 'vor to chatty an' zee vo'k goo by'. 'The times have a-been - but they can't be noo mwore -.' And yet, says the poem, in a sense they can. Fanny herself has gone, but there is comfort to be derived from a belief in cyclical time.

But when you be a-lost from the parish, zome mwore
Will come on in your pleazen to bloom an' to die; . . .
Vor daughters ha' mornen when mothers ha' night,
An' there's beauty alive when the feairest is dead:
As when woone sparklen weāve do zink down vrom the light,
Another do come up an' catch it instead.

As I have said, these syntactic construction are, though telling, simple and straightforward. Given his model of Dorset speech, complex constructions would not be expected from Barnes -- complex, that is, in the sense of difficult to comprehend at a first reading -- since he made it clear that directness of expression and unambiguity of meaning were of particular importance to him.

Thus, descriptions of events and appearances of objects are presented through declaratives with only the simplest nesting of subordinate and relative clauses. Accounts are given, therefore, in 'straight lines', either temporal, or spatial. Stories unfold clearly, across time and space, taking the eye across a setting, adding detail to detail until a whole picture is produced. So the events of Leādy-day, in the poem mentioned above, are explained in a believable temporal order. The reader watches the whole operation from the arrival of the removal horse and cart, via the loading up, until the house is empty.

Barnes takes him then into the same position at the end of the poem as the persona who is moving. Thus it may be possible to feel with the
labourer just why 'ridden house is such a caddle'. Or the reader can imagine himself transported to one Easter Zunday and into Jim's company, watching him choosing his finery, item by item, blue frock-coat, yellow waistcoat, button-hole, breeches, tied below the knee with a ribbon, and leggins put on instead of kitty-boots -- and then see him strolling out of church, 'Wi' sister Kit an' cousin Jeane, / A-turnen proudly to their view / His yellow breast an' back o' blue'. It is a measure of Barnes's narrative skill that the reader can feel himself a comprehending witness to these scenes: a careful selection of detail, arranged in probable and telling order, blurs the boundary between the imaginary and the actual so that we may forget the poet's manipulation of his images.

In a similar way Barnes sketches in the details of a landscape. The reader might well go along for the ride, with the persona. There is a similarity here with the practice of 'matching' syntax to vision which John Barrell identifies in Thomson's work and also, possibly, in John Clare's. Barrell suggests that Thomson's arrangement of syntax follows the perspective of many eighteenth century landscape paintings; the eye is first drawn to an object in the foreground and then is led away and up to rest on a high point in the distance. Barrell also suggests that Clare's rather dense and in certain ways haphazard syntax can mimic the unruly density and unordered profusion of nature in his pre-enclosure surroundings. Barnes's syntax may well match, in a rather different, not necessarily conventionally pictorial way, the ordered, steady and regular activities and images he describes, in that he takes them point by point as their details apparently come before his imagination's eye. Sometimes there is a sense of temporal as well as spatial movement in the description of these images, as there is in 'The Mornen Moon' (p.512) where the reader can go with the persona, up the hill, via Maycreech knap, down Burncleeve rock, to the mother's hillside house, in the quiet dawn 'A-vore the zun had now begun / To dazzle down the mornen moon'. I would point out, however, although the syntax is simple, the images placed thereby in an unfolding narrative, that the sense of changing time conveyed by the two together is crucial to the point of the poem; a wife may seem like the sun, making the day to shine; but the poem insists that a man's mother, like 'the midnight's weaker light', must not be forgotten -- outshone -- as time goes on and he takes a wife. (I referred, in Chapter Three, to a possible tension between Barnes's feeling for his wife, and for his own mother.)
The similarly straightforward unfolding of images, in 'I Got Two Yields' (p.126), is also more telling than might at first appear. The poem takes the eye to a field with crops, to a meadow between a hedge and elms, near the river bank with its flowers and trees. Then the blackbird, the cuckoo, and the mowers at work, are heard. Then the poem turns to look at the path from the house, and a bridge across a trickling gully-bed. Frame upon frame (each full of activity, of action that seems stressed by the Dorset auxiliary do — the leaze do stretch, the clotes do lift their heads, the withy do spread his leaves) Barnes's technique seems to anticipate the film, rather than to derive from eighteenth century landscape composition. It is not so much that one image follows successively upon the other, but that each is listed, and 'chained' to the next, rather as in a montage: the effect seems to be a stressing of the interlinked relationships of each aspect of the small-holding, and emphasis upon its integrity and self-containment, as well as delight in the owner's possession of this object, that object, and the other.

I got two yields, an' I don't cäre
What squire mid have a bigger sheäre.

I have been arguing, then, that Barnes's use of specifically Dorset linguistic competence — together with his chosen employment of syntactic features, and in a way phonetic ones, which might be discovered in other varieties of English — all contribute to a sense of local performance (seen and heard via Barnes's rather detached perspective). This sense is still present, to some extent, in his later standard English work, for these poems, although they lose an impression of local accent, and do not use idiosyncratic local syntax, still retain some of the Blackmore lexicon, and Barnes continues to arrange his syntax, and to select phonetic tones, in ways which imply a Dorset family behind many of the personae of the poems. For instance, 'The Surprise' (p.727), 'Shellbrook' (p.729), 'Beechley' (p.746) and 'The News of the Day' (p.818) contain several of the features of 'mellow' phonetics, suggestive phonetics, local lexicon, and apparently meaningful syntax, to which I have just referred. Though a number of the standard poems, in their theme, form and choice of a more poetic diction, do suggest a persona who does not belong to the local labouring community, and one who, as I have suggested in Chapter Five, expresses fear and doubt rather more
openly than Barnes's dialect speaker, the remainder seem to utilise, as
I have mentioned above, the ability of many rural people to switch
dialects, from local to standard, according to context.

I began, in considering syntax, to look at Barnes's organisation of
language into units larger than the sentence, for I was looking partly at
the influence of syntax in the shaping of the whole poem. I want now to
look at other forms, beyond or over and above the sentence, in Barnes's
poetry. These include his suggestion of natural conversation, his use of
the anecdote form, and those of the ballad, the song, the sonnet and the
eclogue.

The suggestion of natural conversation

Sissons remarks: 'Such is Barnes's skill that the reality of the
voice is enhanced, not lost, amidst intricacies of rhyme and metre'.36
Here, it would seem, is another example of skill concealed by skill. No
doubt Barnes, who, as I have explained, was organised and balanced by
nature, and who found beauty in harmony, would have particularly enjoyed
the flowing results of his conscious or unconscious blending of natural
speech with versification. Besides, the couching of everyday dialect in
the form of highly-wrought poetry, was part of his project to give to
members of the rural community a 'sound high-toned poetry of their own'.
Furthermore, even when the 'I' of the poems' monologues is not clearly a
local labouring figure, it may suggest, given the motivations I attributed
to Barnes in Chapter One, a local rhymer, or ancient bard, addressing a
community audience, and this speaking voice would be fully realised when
Barnes read aloud to local gatherings.

Much of Barnes's poetry seems addressed to another member of the
rural community. The speaker refers rapidly to himself and, although that
other member may say nothing in response, he is often directly addressed,
as in 'Harvest Hwome' (p.137).

Since we were striplens naɪighbour John,
The good wold merry times be gone:
or less specifically in the 'you' of 'Polly be-en Upzides wi' Tom' (p.127).

Ah! yesterday, d'ye know, I voun'
Ton Dumpy's cwoat an' smock-frock, down
Below the pollard out in groun'.

And, even if he is not so directly addressed, the feeling that a local persona belongs to a group and is chatting to another member of that group is signaled simply by a reference to 'we', or 'my' or 'our' -- virtually no poem is without such a sign -- together with the common sense realisation that the kinds of observations being made are rarely too private to be shared. Furthermore, a good number of the poems begin with 'and so', or 'ees' (yes), as if the speaker were simply carrying on an exchange that had begun some moments previously. A rare exception to this sense of friendly exchange is 'Jenny out vrom Hwome' (p.145). Even here there is a sense of communication, attributable to Barnes's habitual stress upon deictical role, yet, since the extended Dorset use of gender allows a greater complexity of deictical role than does standard English, the addressed 'you' is not a human being but the wind. Most of the poems are, of course, monologues, despite their sense of an attendant hearer who happens to remain silent. But some, notably the eclogues of course, are dialogues.

However, neither the monologues nor the dialogues bear all the hallmarks of natural conversation. The encouraging fillers, stabilisers, empty phrases, and question/answer nesting of a more casual level of communication are likely to be missing in the balance and economy of most poetry. And, although some kinds of writing might work with less harmony than others; Barnes, delighting in tasks and all that he considered to be 'fitting', would naturally opt for a tighter form.

And yet the sense of natural utterance, and even of conversation, is present in Barnes's work. it seems to rest largely in rhythm and in intonation, which he handles with consummate skill. 'It is the very inflection of ordinary speech,' writes C.J. Sisson, 'and where else would you look for that in the verse written in England in 1844?' Sisson goes on to suggest that this inflection 'combined with an utter sureness in
the handling of metre need not come automatically with the decision to write in the everyday medium of dialect: he implies that Tennyson's Lincolnshire verse is not so competently managed, and this is a point to which I will return. It is perhaps the subtle use of natural inflection which is behind Hardy's feeling that Barnes neither became 'a slave to the passion of form' nor wasted 'all his substance whittling at its shape' so that 'by a felicitous instinct he does at times break into sudden irregularities in the midst of his subtle rhythms and measures, as if feeling rebelled against further drill. Then his self-consciousness ends, and his naturalness is saved'.

Conversational rhythms are particularly obvious in the eclogues. Take 'The Common A-took In' (p.158).

THOMAS  Good morn t'ye, John. How b'ye? how b'ye?
Zoo you be gwâin to market, I do zee.
Why, you be quite a-lwooad wi' your geese.

JOHN  Ees, Thomas, ees.
Why, I'm a-getten rid ov ev'ry goose
An' goslen I've a-got: an' what is woos, I fear that I must zell my little cow.

THOMAS  How zoo, then, John? Why, what's the matter now?
What, can't ye get along? B'ye run a-ground?
An' can't pay twenty shillens vor a poind?
What, can't ye put a lwoaf on shelf?

JOHN  Ees, now;
But I do'fear I shan't 'ithout my cow.
No; they do meän to teäke the moor in, I do hear,
An' 'twill be soon begun upon;
Zoo I must zell my bit o' stock to-year,
Because they woon't have any groun' to run upon.

There is considerable natural variation in the rhythm of Thomas's first remarks. There are two caesuras in line 1, and the single breaks in the two subsequent lines come in varying positions. The normal falling
intonation of statements is of course interrupted by the rising tones of two questions, and by the surprised 'why'. And yet these, and the following similarly varied lines, are all largely -- if unobtrusively -- based upon the imabic pentameter. The rhyme scheme is also regular -- and also unobtrusive. It is either rhyming couplets or abab, or, towards the end of the poem, abba. It is not intrusive because run-on lines and the varied positioning of major stresses distracts from the echoed sounds (for example, in John's second line, 'why', being a tone unit by itself, is firmly stressed, but 'goose' is smoothed over in the enjambment which sweeps on to the next mid-line major stress, which falls on 'a-got', and then on 'woose'). Furthermore, line 11 is shared by the two speakers, so that in completing it John also completes the rhyme which Thomas had begun in line 8. Nor are the lengths of individual speeches dictated by versification: they are varied throughout the eclogue, according to the needs of the speaker, from three lines to twenty.

Natural features of speech are also recognisable in the monologues, like 'Sweet Music in the Wind' (p.107). Because a name is specified the reader is in the position of an evesdropper, listening to the persona addressing 'dear Jenny'. The rhyme scheme is one of Barnes's favourites: aabbcccd. It is strictly adhered to. So is the metrical arrangement of four iambic feet per line, except for the refrain which has three iambic feet. But neither the metrical nor the rhyme scheme becomes intrusive because the poem's intonational patterns are in counterpoint to both. There appears to be a natural rhythm, that is to say, which, unrestrained by poetic convention, suggests natural feeling. For instance, the first two lines of each stanza rhyme: they are all couplets, but each has a different flow, encouraged by variations in end-stopped and run-on lines and by the placing of caesuras which come at different points -- or are omitted altogether -- in the line.

When evenen is a-drawen in,
I'll steal vrom others' naïsy din;

I'll think how in the rushy leâze
0' zunny evenens jis' like' theâse

An' when wi' me you' walked about
0' Zundays, after church wer out
An' when the playvul a'ir do vlee,
0' moonlight nights, vrom tree to tree.

It is not merely that irregularity suggests spontaneous naturalness. Flexibility also allows Barnes to use rhythm and intonation to reinforce emotion. Take for example the third stanza of 'Polly be-en Upzideswi' Tom' (p.127).

```
Then in a veag away he flung
His frock, an' after me he sprung,
An' mutter'd out sich dreats an' wrung
His vis't a' size!

But I, a-runnen, turn's an' drow'd
Some doust, a-pick'd up vrom the road,
Back at en' the wind, that blow'd
It right into his eyes.
```

I suggest there is fury implied in the first four lines, but then a touch of delighted and stealthy cunning creeps into the second four. The fury is implied by the five major stresses which coincide with tone nuclei -- veag, flock, sprung, dreats, and size -- which are reinforced by the hard consonants, -- g, k, d, t, -- and the alliterated f/v. A sense of tension -- and mounting tension -- is partly conveyed because 'an' after me he sprung' has much the same intonation pattern and appears the same length of utterance as the following phrase 'an' mutter'd out such dreats'. The next two tone groups, separated with a boundary after 'up', also appear to be of similar length, but have a shorter, and perhaps therefore more agitated-sounding, pattern than the previous one.

I feel that stealth interrupts remembered anger, however, because line 5 slows the fury down, by the introduction of two early caesuras, each preceded by a slight stress and probably a rise-fall intonation, followed by the even measure of a delicate stealth that is helped by the alliterated d/t sounds of the clause, 'turn'd an' drow'd some doust'.

Even when no obvious hearer is addressed by a monologue, and the 'I' of its speaker is buried deep in the poem, as in 'Grenley Water' (p.145) for instance, Barnes still uses a flexible rhythm and intonation which continues to suggest a natural speaking voice.
I discussed in Chapter Five the limits placed upon Barnes by his use of the local speaking voice, and qualified the view that it automatically prevented him from implying more than one perspective. In this connection I would mention Parisi's suggestion that Barnes was perfectly capable of implying 'all the subtle irony that the dramatic monologue is famed for'. He offers 'A Witch' (p.224) as an example, arguing that 'cruelty to the old woman is not lost to the reader even if it is to the narrator' in the following lines.

There's thik wold hag, Moll Brown, look zee, jus' past!
I wish the ugly sly wold witch
Would tumble over into ditch;
I woulden pull her out not very vast.
No, no. I don't think she's a bit belied,
No, she's a witch; aye, Molly's evil-eyed.
Vor I do know o' many a withren blight
A-cast on vo'k by Molly's mutter'd spite.

It is hardly likely that the reader will not spot the cruelty in a speaker who goes on to describe, with relish, how someone tried to stick a needle into the 'witch's' skin to prove that no blood would be drawn and she was therefore evil. But that discernment surely depends more upon the reader's sensitivity than upon signals of an irony in the text.

Parins may feel that we are pointed to disparagement of the speaker via his obvious naivety which allows him to assume that Molly's visit is the certain cause of the disasters that follow it -- the sour milk, the sick pigs and dead chickens. But this is hardly the kind of subtle indicator which ensures that we know the poet holds a different perspective and is therefore implying irony. Hardy may well have drawn this same conclusion, for his edition leaves out the lines I have quoted so that the cruelties of the poem are attributed largely to the farmer's wife who wields her needle and the speaker -- the closest persona to Barnes behind the poem -- remains merely descriptive, without the active spite of the performative verbs in his introductory lines. Hardy's omission is another example of his cuts which tend to present a blander poetry (in this case one which permits no suggestion of cruelty in Barnes's himself) than was originally the case. (I shall be drawing together my observations about these cuts below.)
A further example also throws doubt on Parins's belief that Barnes did convey a number of perspectives, in very subtle fashion, through his monologues. 'John Bloom in' Lon'on' (p.473) is a monologue but it reports the utterances of a number of other speakers: that is, an apparently local Dorset man tells the tale, but it includes the voices of a number of others, including the Dorset miller Bloom, and the London cab driver. But all three speak in precisely the same dialect — including the London 'drever' who more than likely should have had a Cockney accent. Barnes misses, then, an opportunity to stress his contrast between the city and the rural personae of his poems.

I am not certain therefore that Parins is right to conclude that Barnes's skill in 'exposing small-minded rural hypocrisy through the use of dramatic forms and dialect speech was admired by his countryman Thomas Hardy' and was therefore emulated in poems like 'The Ruined Maid'. The exposition may be there — but it does not depend much upon linguistic irony. Whereas 'The Ruined Maid', using speech contrasts with much greater subtlety than Barnes, undoubtedly does. Hardy's technique is beautifully encapsulated in the poem's final line. Its first four words suddenly slow the poem's flow, particularly because the introductory iambic foot of every other line is abandoned here and the first syllable is stressed, a stress which immediately implies a highly superior -- city -- tone followed by a city drawl. Then hoity-toity languor is delightfully counterpointed by the final utterance of the country-girl-made-good as she falls back into the dialect counteraction of negative verb inside a brisk punch line.

-'I wish I had feathers, a fine sweeping gown,
And a delicate face, and could strut about Town!'-
'My dear - a raw country girl, such as you be,
Cannot quite expect that. You ain't ruined,' said she.

Whether Barnes was capable or incapable of such skilful manipulation of language is not quite the point. Probably he was, given the delicacy with which he could manage rhythm and intonation. But irony would not have been a mode he specially enjoyed. He insisted upon absolute clarity of expression: irony might blur distinctness. Besides, his own gentleness, and simplicity of manner, would be unlikely to use irony and
sarcasm easily. He wished to force nothing upon the reader: he preferred to offer images which the reader could interpret with freedom.

But I am not suggesting that he could not recognise irony, duplicity and sarcasm in others. The poem 'False Friends-like' (p.329) is based on the observation that experience brings with it the disturbing acknowledgement of deception. The speaker remembers being tricked when he was a child by a bigger boy.

Zoo when a man do come to me so thick-like,
An' shellkes my hand, where wononce he pass'd me by,
An' tell me he would do me this or that,
I can't help thinken o' the big bwoy's trick-like.
An' then, vor all I can but wag my hat
An' thank en, I do veel a little shy.

Besides, there are also, kept in the DCM, the following sharp comments in Barnes's own hand: 'a nice man' means, he suggests, 'one who has pleased the speaker . . . it does not refer to character', and 'an architect' refers to 'a carpenter who has built a farm house, and three or four cottages'.

I would make two final points in connection with Barnes's impression of natural conversation. First its features of irregular rhythm and varied intonation, the sense of a speaker and of a hearer, are occasionally reinforced by the use of a specially colloquial phrase. And these appear in the later standard work as well as in the dialect. For example, 'The Hines of Burnley' (p.697) begins with a remark that is hardly the stuff of conventional or distanced poetry.

Well. Pleas'd or not it's all the same.

'Goody Tired' (p.873) has an equally colloquial beginning.

Home, thank God, but like to fall
O'er the threshold of the door.

Finally, Sisson compared Tennyson's use of dialect conversation
unfavourably with Barnes's. He appears to think its conversational rhythms are not well blended with its metrics. The point cannot, I think, be substantiated. Tennyson works in his dialect poems with lines of six iambic feet and, for the most part, does not deviate from the pattern. Within this pattern he includes all the conversational features that I have attributed to Barnes's work. The difference is, however, the one I alluded to in my discussion, above, on the contrast between the tones of the two poets. That is, although both dialects may possess similar phonemes -- in particular similar rounded phonemes -- Tennyson does not attempt to stress a honeyed flow in his conversation whereas Barnes veers in this direction more often than not. The reasons, as I explained above, have to do with the two poets' very different intentions: the one produces the idyll, the other a coarser reality. It is not that Tennyson cannot -- or even does not -- blend metrics with conversational rhythm: his blend is there and well managed -- but it is the sort of blend found in the following lines which cannot be called beautiful or harmonious.

An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn ridin-erse to 'ersen,
An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms, an' was 'untin' arter the men,
An' hallus a-dallackt an' dizenent out, an' a-buyin' new clothes,
While 'e sit like a gra'tt glimmer-gowk wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is nose,
An' is nose sa grufted wi' snuff es it couldn't be scroobed away.

Therefore, once again, Barnes's use of language can be shown, not only in its choice of phonemes, lexicon or syntax, but also in the prosodic features of rhythm and intonation, to offer a marked sense of local performance, particularly as Barnes interpreted that local register. I want now to turn to a larger aspect of the poem which draws on all these features, that is, the anecdote.

**Anecdote**

I have touched earlier in this Chapter upon story-telling in Barnes's poetry, particularly in connection with the 'trigger' factor of objects in the landscape. And the use of conversational features of course allows him to increase the impression that the story is being
told by a Dorset man or woman to the local community. The first lines of many poems establish the suggestion of this local raconteur, with a kind of confidential drawing in of the hearer, achieved by a reference to a recent point in time when the incident to be recounted took place, and by the impression of a leisurely pleasurable atmosphere: it is almost an 'are you sitting comfortably, then I'll begin' that is phatically signalled by the introduction to 'Out A-nutt'en' (p.148),

Last week, when we'd a-haul'd the crops,

and by the start of 'What Dick an' I Did' (p.166),

Last week the Browns ax'd nearly all
The naighbours to a randy.

The story-teller, and the custom of listening to 'teyles a twold', were of course integral features of the local community as Barnes represented it in the extract from Hone's Year Book, quoted in Chapter One; and the skill of tale-telling is one of the attributes the persona prizes most in a grandmother he remembers in 'Mother o' Mothers' (p.510).

Anecdotes also figure in the later standard English works. There is 'Erwin and Linda, A Tale of Tales' (p.623). But this poem does not have a consistently subtle blending of conversational features with those of versification, and its seven narrators are virtually indistinguishable one from the other. The rhyme scheme is intrusive, and its end-stopped lines force the rhythm. All in all it is a much more mannered piece than the dialect stories.

What lightly comes, they say, will lightly go,
For ill-earn'd wealth will waste as melting snow,
And faithful labor's hard-earn'd mite will win
More happiness than all the hoards of sin.

(From 'Mr John's Tale' p.625).

There are also a number of standard English fables. The 'Spider, Fly, and Creeper' (p.909) and also 'The Dog and Cat' (p.910) take fanciful material for their themes and therefore, although they are
stories -- 'fabulous' stories -- they do not have quite the local colour of the dialect anecdotes which makes the hearer imagine the personality and local context of the speaker and consequently feel drawn in to his circle of language.

That kind of local colour is particularly strong in a number of the dialect poems which recount not individual incidents but generally known traditional tales. Charlotte Lindgren, in a recent article, explains that Barnes had collected local sayings, superstitions, and tales of the miraculous and ghostly all his life, so that he was able to contribute not only to Hone's Year Book of popular customs and traditions but also to Udal's Dorsetshire Folk-lore and to local lectures on the subject. Parins suggests that 'The Beam in Grenley Church' (p.203) tells a well-known local story about a beam miraculously erected in the church roof. 'The Veairies' (p.133) and 'A Ghost' (p.184) also seem to work with traditional rural superstitions; and 'The Weepen LeWdy' (p.171) is, Parins believes, Barnes's version of a world-wide story of a woman 'whose restless spirit is doomed to return to familiar early scenes until whatever is bothering it is removed' (he mentions a Wisconsin version entitled 'The Lady in Red').

But whether the tale is a well-known traditional one, or stems from a recent local event, behind some of these stories is a more 'shaping' teller than can be sensed recounting other tales. For instance, 'Polly be-en Upzides wi' Tom' (p.120) sounds as if it were the triumphant recollection of a relished moment: the story is told simply to allow Polly to relive her triumphant success in a quarrel, and to encourage the hearer to applaud her. If Polly means to influence her audience, it is just to the extent of persuading them to her views of Tom as a defeated victim and herself as heroine. The tale of 'John Bloom in Lon'on' (p.473) is rather different. The teller of this story does not identify himself. Nor does he directly address a particular audience: a set of hearers is not specified in some such deixical remark as 'd'ye know'. And it rapidly becomes apparent that this story need not be limited in its application to a particular community (even though it was, according to its heading, 'all true' to the adventure of a local man), for the raconteur seems to be deliberately shaping its events to emphasise a point about rural living which may be of interest to Dorset
and London folk alike. John Bloom's substantial personality — his worthiness as a good business and family man — is reflected in his large frame which, it is suggested, is the result of the good eating and digestion which comes from having a clear conscience and a pleasant place in which to live. So, though London has interesting inventions to tempt Bloom up to the city to see the Crystal Palace — progress and change evidently have some aspects to recommend them — the capital is somehow too 'small' to accommodate this 'jolly' and 'worthy' miller who has lived by the land. Certain aspects of the form of the poem contribute to the sense that its story is recounted by a consciously manipulative speaker who is more distanced from the emotion of his subject than Poll was from hers. For the repeated pattern of the last four lines of each stanza, and the refrain 'Cried worthy Bloom the miller', emphasise the fact that, despite its conversational rhythms, we are listening not to a casually told story but to a carefully constructed poem. The poem leans then as much towards the narrative ballad, (another aspect of folk literature and therefore appropriate to Barnes's poetry of the community), as to the apparently spontaneous telling of a tale.

Ballad

A few of Barnes's poems have been set to music and a number of them have the form and rhythm of songs: I shall be referring to these below. However, his work frequently suggests the ballad form and content, even though there is no indicated musical accompaniment. The two most significant comparisons relate to Barnes's use of the refrain, and to the concrete detail of his images (both of which are also discussed in different contexts in this study).

Repetition of a line or a phrase is a distinctive feature of the ballad. Frequently the line alters slightly as the stanzas progress, marking a link between the subjects of each verse and at the same time signalling an important development in the narrative. E.K. Wells suggests that incremental repetition is neither cumbersome nor a naïve patterning. Its simplicity, she suggests, is 'a means of freeing our imaginations ... simple interest turns into absorption, taking the place of our nervous
demand for variety of expression'. 47

The incremental refrain of 'Ellen Brine of Allenburn' (p.250) seems to work in this kind of way. It is, variously:

Vor Ellen Brine ov Allenburn,
Oh! there be souls to murn.

Oh! Ellen Brine ov Allenburn,
They childern now mus' murn.

Vor Ellen Brine ov Allenburn
Did veel that they mus' murn.

Vor Ellen Brine ov Allenburn
Would never mware return.

So the final couplet of each stanza always repeats the title, but its slight variation draws attention to a step in the narrative. Three of the four couplets rhyme 'murn' with 'Allenburn', but each varies its subject, from 'souls', to 'childern' to Ellen Brine herself. The last couplet, however, rhymes 'return' with Allenburn, and instead of the m sound of the previous stanzas being contained in 'murn', it now rests in the word 'mware'. In this way the reader's attention has been turned from its original focus upon the process of mourning for Ellen to fully facing the fact, and the consequences, of her death itself. The shift in perception is emphasised by the word 'vor', repeated in stanzas one and three and syntactically suggested in stanza two, since it changes its function from acting as a preposition to meaning 'because'. The fact has to be faced: mourning is inevitable just because 'Ellen Brine of Allenburn / Would never mware return'.

A considerable number of Barnes's poems which are not essentially narratives also use the refrain, and I shall therefore return to their use again in subsequent paragraphs.

I have also mentioned above that Barnes's use of concrete detail is suggestive of the ballad. And I have noted that a contemporary journalist
assumed that rural people did not 'analyse their impressions'. This assumption is shared by Wells who argues that 'concrete objects . . . stand for ideas in the folk idiom'. So the ballad singer 'phrases an idea in terms of things, unconsciously metaphorical . . . one finds degrees of allusiveness, some more subtle than others'. 48 But I would suggest that Barnes tends to extend his allusiveness as far as possible, and perhaps further than a genuine countryman might wish (though I have qualified this assumption in my discussion, in Chapter Five, of poems whose performance might seem more attributable to Barnes than to his rural personae). For Barnes was hardly in the position of the authentic ballad maker who sang:

I kan namoore expounde of this mateer;
I lerne song, I kan but smal grameere. 49

So it is that poems like 'The Lark' (p.376) focus initially upon 'objects', in this case the lark on the one hand and its eggs on the other, but, as I mentioned above, objects are frequently triggers of memory, of stories, and of related ideas for Barnes and apparently for his countrymen. The objects of this example allow for a moral observation: they have a metaphorical implication (although my contention, explained in Chapter Five, that Barnes's use of symbols is not complex, still holds good; for the reader is not left to assume or guess at metaphorical suggestivity, but has a moral relatively clearly spelt out for him in the last stanza). That is, the first three stanzas describe objects and activities generated by them: one son watches the lark in the sky, the other 'look'd below / Vor what the groun' mid have to show'. The point of showing the reader these images is summed up in the final stanza's closing couplet:

But, aggs be only woonce a-vound,
An' uncaught larks ageðn mid sound.

Thus Barnes can extend his poems, though some may in other respects resemble the ballad, to observations of Christian morality which were not, in Well's view, traditionally present in the folk ballad: 'there is a wealth of paganism . . . a corresponding poverty of Christian elements'. 50
Paganism would naturally be missing from Barnes's carefully selected good and loveworthy themes. But he did claim in later life that, as a boy, he had been fascinated by a local 'witch', Jemmy Jenkins, and that Jemmy's library of magic and astrology had stimulated his love of books. And there are amongst the poems those hints of fairies, ghosts, and witches that I have described above. Yet some of these poems tend to control the power of the supernatural. 'Haven Woone's Fortune A-twold' (p.109) pokes gentle fun at gullible belief in clairvoyance. But others appear to accept superstition, for it is described (as in 'The Witch' (p.224) discussed above) in an apparently purely Dorset countryman's voice, without Barnes's controlling commentary.

A number of other features in Barnes's work may be derived, as I have mentioned above, at least in part from a likely familiarity with the ballad tradition and from his knowledge that it was an aspect of the life of the community on which his poems concentrate, and therefore an appropriate form for that poetry to take. I have referred to his ballad-like use of clear colour, though I added that Barnes aimed in general for a more exact individuation than the stock vocabulary of the folk narrative, which is largely preoccupied with the simple telling of a tale without Barnes's more complex intentions. I have mentioned too Barnes's use of the stock ballad character.

The comic ballad is at its best in satirizing human relationships. Stock characters, like the vain woman, the gullible husband, the shrewish wife, and the tongue-tied lover are sources of comedy for the ballads, as they were for the early plays, tales, and fabliaux. 51

Barnes's 'A bit o' sly coorten' (p.95) includes suggestions of all these characters rolled into the two speakers of the eclogue, John and Fanny. But Barnes, with a feeling for the psychology of human relationships, which he demonstrates with a light touch in other poems such as 'False Friends-like' (p.329) and 'Sam'el down vrom Lon'on' (p.481), develops these two into something much more than ciphers. The comedy lies not in the simple triggering of a stock joke, but in Fanny's steady progression from erring girlfriend to a position of self-righteous command, little by little wrong-footing John as she -- and Barnes -- skilfully manipulate a conversation.
Now, Fanny, 'tis too bad, you teazen maid!
How leate you be a-come! Where have ye stay'd? ...

Now tidden any good to meake a row,
Upon my word, I cooden come till now.
Vor I've a-been kept in all day be mother, ...

I thought you mid be out wi' Jemmy Bleake ...
You walk'd o' Zunday evenen wi'n, d'ye know,
You went vrom church a-hitch'd up in his eārm ...
He took ye roun' the middle at the stile,
An' kiss'd ye twice 'ithin the ha'f a mile.

Ees, at the stile, because I shoulden vall, ...
What harm wer it? Why idden he my cousin?
An' I can't zee, then, what there is amiss
In cousin Jem's jist gi'en me a kiss ...

Well, if girt Jemmy have a-won your heart,
We'd better break the coortship off, an' peart.

He won my heart! There, John, don't talk sich stuff;
Don't talk noo mwear, vor you've a-zaid enough.
If I'd a-lik'd another mwear than you,
I'm sure I shoulden come to meet ye zoo;
Vor I've a-twold to father many a story,
An' took o' mother many a scwolden vor ye.

(weeping)
But 'twull be over now, vor you shan't zee me
Out wi' ye noo mwear, to pick a quarrel wi' me.

Well, Fanny, I woon't zay noo mwear, my dear.
Let's meake it up. Come, wipe off thik there tear.
Let's goo an' zit o' top o' theāse here stile,
An' rest, an' look about a little while.

Now goo away, you crabbed jealous chap!
You shan't kiss me, - you shan't! I'll gi' ye a slap ...

There is of course no resemblance between this eclogue form and the ballad stanza, with the latter's more regular pattern and probable incremental refrain: the comparison between the eclogue and the ballad stops with the links between their characters and their narrative line.
Nor is there any indication that the poems I have discussed in the immediately preceding paragraphs were set, like ballads, to music. Nevertheless, as I shall explain below, a number of Barnes's poems do resemble songs, though they do not carry the narrative content and shape of the ballads.

**Songs**

Whilst it may be theoretically possible to set any poem to music, a number of Barnes's works seem specially designed as songs, even though they were not necessarily accompanied by music at the time of writing. (Barnes was personally an accomplished musician. If he did set any of his work to music that music does not appear to have been found.) To include songs in his repertoire is, like including the ballads, appropriate to the community which provides the themes and dialect for his poetry. It will be remembered from Chapter One that Barnes himself described, in a contribution to Hone's *Year Book*, the pleasure the local family discovered in song.

Some of his poems proclaim themselves as songs with the word 'zung' in their title. 'A Zong ov Harvest Hwome' (p.140) has, in its exhortations and in its very simple refrain, a feeling of the ritualistic. It sounds appropriate to local customs attached to celebrations of the harvest gathered in.

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Ah! mid noo harm o' vire or storm
    Beval the farmer or his corn; . . .

The happy zight, - the merry night,
The men's delight, - the Harvest Hwome.
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Others have a sort of chorus line, short and ending in 'O', for example 'The Clote' (p.125) and 'The Mead A-mow'd' (p.122). There is also a lullaby -- simply entitled 'Lullaby' (p.180) -- which moulds a soothing chorus sound an alliterated and liquid l, the 'continuant' r and sibilants.

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Lullaby, Lilybrow. Lie asleep:
    Blest be thy rest.
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But some of Barnes's poems suggest songs without advertising themselves so clearly as the examples just given. Perhaps the reason is linked to Barnes's admiration for ancient poetry which allowed for the tribal synchronisation of words, music, and dance rhythms. He thought that in modern times, as I mentioned above, the opera came closest to achieving this composite art form which he seems to have felt answered a basic human need to combine movement, melody, and language. (His pupils also recalled that Barnes taught them to memorise facts by singing them to a simple melody.) And certainly some of his poems do seem to rely particularly heavily for their effect upon a sense of rhythm and melodic sound which is attendant to their words. Take for example 'The Shepherd o' the Farm' (p.99), 'The Milk-maid o' the Farm' (p.80), 'The Carter' (p.175), 'Farmer's Sons' (p.212) and also 'Vull a Man' (p.373). The first four of these poems all have four-line stanzas, rhyme scheme abab, and usually four iambic feet per line. The last two are slightly more complex, but they begin at least with the very regular and rather jaunty rhythm of the other examples. All the poems become subtler in their versification as they progress, but nevertheless they still carry with them a feel of a simple jig or nursery rhyme.

Oh! I be shepherd o' the farm,
Wi' tinklen bells an' sheep-dog's bark,
An' wi' my crook athirt my eārm,
Here I do rove below the lark.

They may then be reminiscient of the sounds and rhythms of the village-rhymer (to whom I referred in Chapter One). Perhaps there is evidence of his kind of sound and rhythm in another of Barnes's poems, 'Bob the Fiddler' (p.88) whose dancing, singing, air is matched by all the other poems I have just mentioned.

Oh! Bob the fiddler is the pride
O' chaps an' maídens vur an' wide;
They can't keep up a merry tide,
But Bob is in the middle.
If merry Bob do come avore ye,
He'll zing a zong, or tell a story;
But if you'd zee en in his glory,
Jist let en have a fiddle.
It is interesting that these poems take as their central theme the image of a particular kind of workman or woman, and although 'Vull a Man' does not describe an individual job it identifies a man -- in Barnes's view a 'vull' man -- in terms of his ability to work, for his own and his family's welfare. Perhaps Barnes has taken for these work themes a traditional form and rhythm of songs heard at the feasts and fairs which customarily followed the working days and seasons. Work and relaxation were, as I argued in Chapter Two, so closely linked for the rural labourer that it would be entirely appropriate to have work as a theme in an entertaining song. (unlike the material of so many of to-day's popular songs enjoyed by people whose working life is generally entirely separate from their social life).

Although Barnes does not appear to have written music for his poems, some were given musical accompaniments by others in the nineteenth century. 'Praise o' Do'set' (p.369) is known by some Dorset people as their 'county song' and was set to music by one of Barnes's ex-pupils, Boyton Smith. Bernard Jones suggests that the poem may echo an old west country rhyme. Boyton's father, F.W. Smith, had earlier set Barnes's standard 'Sabbath Lays' to music.52 Gerard Manley Hopkins also wrote music for some of the poems, and I found a letter in the DCM collection, from a Mr Thorne, referring to a setting of a sonnet.53

However, it is Vaughan Williams who has given Barnes's poems their most famous musical settings. He wrote music for works which include 'My Orcha'd in Linden Lea' (p.233), 'Blackmore Maidens' (p.232), 'The Winter's Willow' (p.319), and 'In the Spring' (p.380).54 All the melodies have light, cheerful rhythms befitting the words. It is hardly surprising that Vaughan Williams, attracted to the nostalgic flavour of the folk song, should have selected these particular poems, avoiding those with a less idyllic atmosphere. (Though it is interesting in this respect that Hertz finds the clouds, which I agree undoubtedly gather over some of Barnes's poems, lingering even in 'Linden Lea'. Hertz believes 'the offer of apples ominous' and the solitude, even in this 'sweetly harmonious world', seems to him 'oppressive'. But I think the 'ambiguity' Hertz finds in the poem is tenuous, and the result of modern critical attitudes rather than Barnes's own feeling about the themes. Hertz seems to be arguing that the comfort of the orchard invites a psychological dependence which is in itself a curtailment of freedom, but
that dependence is surely, in the mind of the poem's persona, the
security which Barnes appears to prize everywhere in his poems. And
there is nothing to suggest in Barnes's prose that he, personally, found
dependence upon the land, the community, or a loved one, a restriction.
Hertz, and many other modern readers, may find the orchard's riches
cloying: but it is inaccurate, I feel, to imply that Barnes's poem
deliberately points to the shadow of an ambiguous and parasitic
dependence.)

More recently a number of other songs, including 'White an' Blue' (p.574) and 'Praise o' Do' set'. (p.369), have been recorded, accompanied
by traditional instruments and sung in the dialect. 56

One kind of song which is not suggested in the dialect poems at all,
however, is the hymn. Yet it does appear in Barnes's standard English
works (pp.589-603). I have considered above some possible reasons for
this discrepancy, arguing that Barnes might have been avoiding, in his
dialect work, any structure which could be seen as particularly and
inappropriately -- given the everyday register of his work -- 'formal'
or literary: this explanation would also account for the omission of
the sonnet from the dialect poems whilst it is still used in the 'common'
English work.

It might be felt, on these grounds, that the eclogue would be
inappropriate for inclusion amongst the dialect canon: after all, it
derives from classical literature. However, its conversational form
does make it especially suitable for Barnes's poems of performance.
And I have argued above that the dialogue allows Barnes, if he so chooses,
to present a balanced view of a situation: he need not place one speaker
or the other in a particularly aggressive position, so that the endings
of his eclogues can fade away, without dramatic political emphasis on
one side or the other.

Nevertheless, though Barnes might not choose to emphasise a political
'drift' in these particular poems, he does make a point of view clear in
others. Hardy believed that Barnes's work does not 'tell': instead, it 'shows'. I would agree that on the whole, Barnes did not aggress­
ively offer 'evaluation' through his poems, but had other quieter, yet
no less effective, methods of persuading the reader to assume a particular point of view in his personae, methods which frequently stemmed from his skilful use of language, (in addition to his suggestion of particularly vital and glowing images, as I explained in Chapter Three).

**Evaluation**

I begin, however, with one kind of evaluation which does 'tell' and which Hardy at least considered particularly unskilful, that is, the 'parsonical' stanza which concludes a large number of Barnes's poems. 57

A large number of Barnes's poems take the form of a parable, clinching the 'point' of the story in a last stanza which links the narrative with a confirmation of faith in God. But Hardy -- probably not surprisingly, given his personal religious perspective which differed so much from his friend's -- omits these stanzas in a number of the poems in his edition. 58

As I explained above, he objected to a 'parsonical' streak in Barnes, and evidently thought it was exemplified in these closing lines. As a result, a poem like 'The Spring' (p. 71), which is the first poem in Hardy's edition, becomes a straightforward, descriptive, nature poem, without pertinent application. W.J. Keith argues that for Hardy 'to omit the applicatory stanzas too often leaves us with the kind of trivial descriptive poem that has brought the term "nature poetry" into disrepute'. 59 I would add that, by introducing his own selection in this manner, Hardy encourages a narrow definition of Barnes's motivations and talent. And his other omissions -- of different kinds -- from the original text, may also contribute to a false image of Barnes and his work since they frequently dilute Barnes's own suggested 'evaluation' -- whether shown or told -- of his theme.

For example, Hardy leaves out of 'Hay-carren' (p. 115) the whole stanza which refers to the persona's relationship with Jenny Hine, and also, as I explained above, those lines which talk of energy for work being stimulated by drink (11.10-15). Furthermore, by placing it in his section entitled 'Descriptive and Meditative', Hardy increases the impression of a poem of observation and contemplation, rather than one
of activity and of human involvement with work and nature. Other poems also limit the vigour of Barnes's work. Hardy leaves out the last stanza of 'The Settle an' the Girt Wood Vire'. The first stanza is a flash-back to memories of youth, to visions of the kitchen that could be seen from the settle. The second describes the fate of the fire-place, now partially walled up, and extends the discussion of change into a comment on modern carpets and furniture which, the persona believes, are now less functional and more ornamental than once they were. But it is the last stanza which states this opinion with most vehemence. It begins with an exclamation in colloquial form.

Carpets indeed! You couldn't hurt
A stwonen-vloor wi' a little dirt.

And the remainder of the stanza gets to grips with the 'muck an' mire' that could easily be washed from stone floors but must not be trodden into elegant homes, and the impossibility of enjoying a pipe because 'smoke won't goo / 'Ithin the vooty little flue' of the new and tiny fireplace. Perhaps Hardy believed the subject matter, and its treatment, had gone too far in their casualness from the poetic image he felt his friend should have. 'Christmas Invitation' (p.176) also omits stanza two which emphasises a small rough edge, about the difficulty of keeping a frock clean on muddy roads, in an otherwise fairly conventionally neat and pretty poem. 'The Linden on the Lawn' (p.279) also leaves out tiny domestic details: stanza five is lost with its details about pipe-smoking and little John shouting good-night from a window, details which interrupt with plain -- and touching -- fact a poem of otherwise lyrical beauty. A similar thing happens with the omission of stanza three from 'Woone Smile Mwore' (p.371), and I have referred above to Hardy's omissions from 'A Witch' (p.224) which minimise a tone of spite.

Hardy also leaves out stanzas from a number of poems, including 'Spring' (p.295 stanza two), which refer to the figure of Jenny. In this particular example there seems no reason of structural or thematic harmony to account for Hardy's decision: perhaps he simply objected to another kind of personal, realistic touch which tends to tie the vision of the work to a specific context rather than encouraging a wider application. A similar reason may account for Hardy's omission of stanzas five, six and seven from 'Gammony Gay' (p.361), for these are the lines which
illustrate the behaviour of Gammonny with a particular anecdote. Without them the poem is simply a description of the appearance and character of a village buffoon: the reader might well infer that he belongs to a broad class of village idiots, fitting a preconceived image and encouraging the maintenance of a belief that most rural figures are rough and simple, since the poem no longer ties its image to one specific personality -- probably atypical -- in the village group.

Some of these omissions just mentioned limit, therefore, not simply a suggestion of vigour in the poems but they may also, particularly in the last example, alter the social comment Barnes was, consciously or unconsciously, 'showing'. For example, 'The Girt Wold House o' Mossy Stwone' (p.222) loses, in Hardy's version, 11. 5-14 and 11. 19-26, lines which turn a merely descriptive poem into a descriptive poem with point: for Barnes was not simply eulogising the old house, but eulogising it in order to justify, by comparison, the sadness his persona feels at the gradual passing of the old order.

The very last ov all the revel
That liv'd the squier o' the pleaze,
Died off when father wer a-born,
An' now his kin be all vorlorn
Vor ever, - vor he left noo son
To tellke the house o' mossy stwone.
An' zoo he vell to other hands,
An' gramfer took en wi' the lands:
An' there when he, poor man, wer dead,
My father shelter'd my young head .

Don't talk ov housen all o' brick,
Wi' rocken walls nine inches thick,
A-trigg'd together zide by zide
In streets, wi' fronts a straddle wide,
Wi' yards a-sprinkled wi' a mop,
Too little vor a vrog to hop;
But let me live an' die where I
Can zee the ground, an' trees, an' sky.
Hardy's omission of the similar social commentary of stanzas three and four from 'The Water-Spring in the Leane' (p.277) and 'The Hwomestead a-vell into Hand' (p.215) has much the same effect. 'WayfeYren' (p.305) loses, through Hardy's cuts, its sixth stanza, and thereby the lines which object to the road-widening that benefits the carriage traveller but takes an easy-walking grass verge away from 'weary-vooted souls'. And, out of 'The Winter's Willow' (p.319), has gone a stanza which is critical of the city which may make its inhabitants 'peYle wi' smoke an' gas'.

In a sense these cuts clearly reveal more about Hardy's cavalier attitude to editing and about his feeling for Barnes, or else about his estimation of potential audience response to the work, than they do about Barnes himself. (And one or two of the alterations are linked to publication and copyright problems which are documented in Keith's article on the subject.) They appear to indicate that Hardy felt the poetry was reduced by its parsonical stanzas, by its inclusion of certain images which he judged as unattractive, and by its hints of social criticism. But consideration of these omissions is helpful in this study in that it may correct a misreading of Barnes that has been based upon only Hardy's versions, and particularly in that it helps to draw attention, via what is sacrificed in the omissions, to depths in Barnes which can be missed on a cursory reading, depths which have to do with a transformation of his poetry from a simple description of surface details seen in the landscape to a demonstration of a deeper response to, and evaluation of, those details. Some of those 'evaluations', however, rest not only in individual words and lines of the poems, but are also implied in the overall structures of a number of them: I have discussed above the semantic implications of the structure of 'Hallowed PleYces' (p.234), noting that Hardy's edition tampers with it and therefore, I think, destroys the evaluative significance of the form of the poem and its pattern of refrain. I shall be suggesting in the following paragraphs that structure is meaningful in other ways in Barnes's work: that is, its rhyme schemes and other formal patterns help to stress certain responses to the landscape and to emphasise an underlying sense of harmony in the poetry (a sense of harmony which is appropriate given Barnes's desire to create as far as possible that feeling of balance which he took to be aesthetically pleasing, 'fitting', and comfortingly secure). In one respect an editorial cut benefits Barnes in my view:
Hardy happens to leave out of 'Shaftesbury FeMir' (p.450) a particularly contrived version of cynghanedd, which chimes Paladore with Polly dear. In Hopkins's opinion this particular attempt was 'more of a miss than a hit'. It would be difficult to disagree. But in another poem, 'When Birds be Still' (p.291), Hardy spoils its entire symmetry by dropping the last of its four stanzas, for its balanced structure depends not only on a matching of the last lines of each verse but also on the beginning of stanzas one and three with the word vor and stanzas two and four with the word zoo. (It may be that Hardy left out the last verse because it was another example of a critical social reference, in this case to 'the town a-drown'd / 'Ithin a storm o' rumblen sound'.)

I turn now to a further consideration of significance in the structure of Barnes's work, a consideration which does not relate to Hardy's editorial cuts.

Structures (evaluative and harmonious)

I have explained that Barnes appreciated a poetic skill which produces lines which, 'while they keep all the strait rules of verse, yet flow as freely as if they were wholly untied'. It seems appropriate to Barnes personally that he should choose to place his images of local life in tight -- if unobtrusive -- patterns of co-operation and of traditions and places of work that linked a community together and connected it from generation to generation. And he appreciated the linking power of rhyme -- in the kind of complex patterns he adopts in the following example -- 'for the sake of oneness of time, or subject, or thought'.

Zoo now mid nwone ov us vorget
The pattern our vorefathers zet;
But each be fain to undertellke
Zome work to meûke vor others' gaûn,
That we mid leûve mûore good to sheûre,
Less ills to bear, less souls to grieve,
An' when our hands do vall to rest,
It mid be vrom a work a-blest.
Sometimes these patterns act, as Barnes believed they had acted in bardic poetry, as 'word-locks', helping the speaker and hearer to notice and memorise the content of a poem. Furthermore, Barnes's personal satisfaction and recognition of beauty in all harmonious form probably encouraged his experiments with precise patterns.

Hardy also used intricate rhyme schemes. He includes an internal rhyme in 'Last Signal', the poem he wrote as a tribute to Barnes when he died, and perhaps his own practice might have been encouraged by his knowledge of the older man's work. But, whilst Barnes adhered rigidly to a pattern once he had chosen it, Hardy advocated being 'a little careless, or rather seeming to be, here and there . . . Inexact rhymes and rhythms now and then are far more pleasing than correct ones'. Yet both he and Barnes looked to architecture to support their slightly different views about form. Barnes appreciated the regular harmony he found in perfect architectural proportion: Hardy preferred 'the Gothic art-principle . . . of spontaneity, resulting in . . . poetic texture rather than poetic veneer'. But I will argue below that Barnes's regularity produces more than a mere 'veneer', and as I have said, Hardy himself acknowledged some 'felicitous' irregularities in Barnes 'as if feeling rebelled against further drill'. I would suggest that such drill may have actually permitted the articulation of spontaneous feeling: Barnes was a very controlled man and it may be that the secure frames of his poems allowed a -- safely controlled -- consideration of personal feelings which might have been more troublesome had they openly left the confines of his poetry. (This suggestion is complementary to my feeling, described in Chapter Three, about the poems linked to a figure named Jeâme.) All in all, then, Barnes's formal patterns can contribute more to his art than a trivial framework within which to base other considerations.

For example, the poem 'Went Hwome' (p.392) contains examples of both internal rhyme and cymmeriad (concentration upon a key-word), and the two devices may help to emphasise Barnes's meaning. For each stanza ends upon the word Meldonley, the name of the place which is, happily, at the traveller's actual journey's end. And the final couplet of every stanza each contains a triple rhyme: Hertz calls this a 'staircase' of internal rhymes down which the persona can travel to his destination.
As noon did smite, wi' burnen light,  
The road so white, to Meldonley.

As I do goo, while skies wer blue,  
Vrom view to view, to Meldonley.

Till I come down, vrom Meldon's crown  
To rufs o' brown, at Meldonley.

I have mentioned above Barnes's regular use of the refrain. It is rather like an extension of *cymeriad*, the key-word pattern. And I would suggest that the refrain can also act as a kind of 'home base', as it happens to do in 'Went Hwome'. Thus the security represented by the sound of church bells is emphasised as Barnes returns again and again, in his poem 'Lydlinch Bells' (p.302), from his consideration of community scenes and activities to the couplet.

Vor Lydlinch bells be good vor sound,  
An' liked by all the naighbours round.

The refrain couplet of 'The Girt Woak Tree that's in the Dell' (p.81) is as follows:

Zoo I do like noo tree so well (or, Vor I do like . . .)  
'S the girt woak tree that's in the dell.

But the tree is really only a peg on which to hang a number of loosely related ideas. It provides an opportunity for the persona to remember marvellous moments of childhood that happened to take place near the tree, and through a sensuous recall to delight again in a very private meeting 'below the wide-bough'd tree' with a much-loved woman, and finally to fantasise about deeds of glory and patriotism that might take place in a ship made of oak: fantasy and sensual imagination, neither of these playing a prominent part in Barnes's public personality, are allowed some free play within the secure frame of the carefully structured poem. Similarly, reference to the 'zong' of the bird in 'The Blackbird' (p.78) closes each stanza, but it and the subject of the title are largely 'excuses' to allow consideration of not only their surrounding landscape
but also treasured memories of a walk with Je Déne (when the zong was heard) and a boyhood search, climbing trees to find a nest.

Two other, related, sound patterns are used by Barnes in a way which emphasises the security which is a theme of 'Woak Hill' (p.378) and of "Green" (p.563). 'Woak Hill' uses Persian pearl rhyme which links phonemes, like a string of pearls, right through the whole chain of verses. So each stanza ends with emphasis on the place which has been so important to the widower, and upon the activities there which made it so crucial in his life. For example,

My bride at Woak Hill . . .
She died at Woak Hill . . .
Her pride at Woak Hill . . .
Miles wide vrom Woak Hill . . .
My guide vrom Woak Hill . . .

'Green' works with Persian ghazal, which links not four-line stanzas together, but couplets. It does so again by a chain-rhyme running throughout the poem, together with assonance. These features draw attention to the rich vitality of the summer season, and in particular to the all-pervading nature of that luxury which touches every facet of rural life, from church, to town, to work, to home.

Our zummer way to church did wind about
The cliff, where ivy on the ledge wer green.

Our zummer way to town did skirt the wood,
Where sheenen leaves in tree an' hedge wer green.

Our zummer way to milken in the meledd,
Wer on by brook, where fluttren zedge wer green.

Our hwomeward ways did all run into one,
Where moss upon the roofstwones' edge wer green.

Hertz makes an interesting and related point about the use of cynghaneddd in the poems (that is the chiming of consonants in a kind of echo within a line). He finds the device emphasises this kind of rural luxury in
'My Orcha'd in Linden Lea' (p.233), with its euphony which describes the bountiful apple tree that 'Do lehn down low in Linden Lea'. But Hertz also suggests that cynghaned allows Barnes to merge place names with people. It would seem a semiotically significant merging since Barnes believed that places gained their importance from the people who lived within them, and communities gained security from continuity of place and landmarks. This kind of blending occurs in 'Lindenore' (p.405) where the refrain refers to 'Ellen Dare o' Lindenore', and in 'Fair Emily ov Yarrow Mill' (p.265) as well as 'Linda DeHne' (p.403). However, Hertz argues, particularly in 'Lindenore', for an intentional degree of obliteration of the personal name, as if the place was almost more important than the human being. I think the suggestion over-extends Barnes's motivation. Virtually every poem contains reference to people, and though Barnes stresses a faith in group co-operation and in the identity of the community, his poems show love and concern for the individual, for the beloved wife, the adored mother, the respected 'vull' man, the old and valued friend, the vital child, the sleeping baby. Therefore it seems to me that although the similarity of sound in these phrases may well confirm a closeness that Barnes appreciated between people and their homes, it does not indicate a greater love of place than of people. Probably Barnes was simply encouraged to use the patterning in this case because of his pleasure in the repetition of sounds.

In fact, it seems to me that Barnes frequently used rhyme and assonance only for a beauty he heard in their patterns. Thus he often worked with awdlau, or the single rhyme of poems like 'Winter A-comen' (p.573).

I'm glad we have wood in store awhile,
Avore all the ground's avrore awhile;
Vor soon we must shut the door awhile
Vrom wind that's a-whir1en snow.

And the parallelism of 'The Fall' (p.570) seems to have only a very low-level semanticity of form, but a rhythm that is simply pretty and satisfying.
Noo starlens do rise in vlock on wing -  
Noo goocoo in nesh-green leaves do sound -  
Noo swallows be now a-wheelen round -  
Dip after dip, an' swing by swing.

Since many of Barnes's sound schemes are based on ancient forms it is relevant to look at Epstein's comment on the degree of significance intended in these old patterns.

Classical Welsh and Irish poetry, skaldic verse and similar medieval forms seem to derive their value from their approximation to abstract phonological schemata, not from their degrees of mimetic approximation to their content. It is an open question whether the need for mimesis of an increasingly heterogenous lexical situation from medieval periods to our own caused the abandonment of the medieval scale of valued schemata in favour of our own more loose schemes of metrical and rhyming alliterative patterns, or whether the most highly valued forms of poetry were always those that demonstrated mimesis beneath the lexical level and [that] it was the gradual realisation of this that caused the general abstract paradigm of verse-making to crumble. 70

Nevertheless, although Barnes may often use similar sounds for the sheer pleasure of their echo, it seems to me that there is frequently a semiotic significance in this similarity which goes beyond the accidental. Though the parallelism mentioned above appears fairly bland, the more complex parallel drawn in the incremental refrain which closes each stanza of 'Wife A-lost' seems designed to heighten the poignancy of the utterance.

An' I don't look to meet ye now,  
As I do look at hwome.

The semiotic significance of these sound patterns is thus not always linked to security (as it has been in many of the examples discussed immediately above). I have referred elsewhere in this study to the suggestiveness of onomatopoeia and I would extend these comments here.

For example, the internal rhymes of 'The Voice of Hwome' (p.529) not only stress gloom (black, back, dark bark) but emphasis on these words may suggest a tension which could intensify the rather sinister vision which Barnes is creating (before proceeding to contrast it 'Wi' health an' work an' livelihood'). On the other hand, the judicious
use of the simple rhyming couplet can add an appropriate air of lightness to poems of beauty and happiness. 'Milken time' (p.290) is an idyllic glance at the milkmaid Jenny, 'A-talken on wi' smilen feæce, / An' zetten things in sich a light, / I'd fain ha' heard her talk all night'. 'The Water Crowvoot' (p.297) also uses the rhyming couplet throughout, and, until its last four lines, the poem is concerned with the loveliness of the 'small-feæced flow'r'. However, the last two couplets turn to the kind of black and painful vision which, though it is not generally acknowledged in Barnes's dialect work, does shadow the lightness of his landscape from time to time. But the switch in tone is heralded, despite the continuing neat couplet, by a definite caesura early in the four, darker, lines.

But no, the waterman 'ull weæde
Thy water wi' his deadly bleæde,
To slay thee even in thy bloom,
Fair small-feæc'd flow'r o' the Frome.

The break in the rhythm, in the form of such a definite caesura, is perhaps one of those 'felicitous irregularities' of which Hardy spoke. But the continued use of the couplet, even to this disturbing end, has potentially meaningful implications: for the waterman's destruction is as inevitable as the headlong flow of the rhyming couplet. (There are then marked similarities between these lines and the second stanza, also beginning 'But no', of Hardy's own 'Upper Birch Leaves' which was discussed in Chapter Five, pp.200-201).

Generally speaking, then, I would argue that Barnes's sound patterns, and other shapes in his poetic forms, do have a degree of semiotic significance. They are, that is, part of that 'art of wholes' to which Grigson referred. And, given Grigson's appreciation of Barnes's work as such an integrated art, it is puzzling that he should seem to believe that translated versions of Barnes's poems have precisely the same semantic significance as their originals. The issue of translation is discussed in the immediately following paragraphs.
Translation

My remarks in the following paragraphs should not be taken to imply that Barnes could not write so effectively in standard English as he did in the Dorset dialect. I maintained at the beginning of this Chapter that his talent appears to increase dramatically when he began to write in the dialect, and his skill came to encompass some of the later standard English work as well. However, this study concentrates upon the dialect poetry and reference is made to the 'common' English work largely to emphasise arguments made about the former. Here I want to look at a number of standard 'translations' of the Dorset work mainly to exemplify the basic contention of this final Chapter, that not only does Barnes handle language with skill and subtlety, but that he does so, in the Blackmore poems, in ways which enrich their local 'instress', and particularly his personal conception of that instress.

My own feeling about the possibility of translation closely follows that of Anne Cluysenaar, described in her book Introduction to Literary Stylistics. She is referring -- though in different terms -- to the extreme difficulty of maintaining 'instress' through the process of translation. Word-by-word translation may sometimes achieve the reproduction of logic from one language to another, but, in altering, through inevitable differences of structure and sound, the effects of rhythm, rhyme and tone, much of the original intention may be destroyed. On the other hand, if these latter poetic features are approximated instead in the alternative language, the original logical content may be altered. Cluysenaar remarks, 'Anyone who doubts the inseparability of form and meaning cannot do better than attempt the translation even of quite ordinary utterances'.

Given Barnes's own sensitivity to the fine nuances of meaning -- clearly stated in his prose work on education, and apparent in his poetry -- it is not surprising that he recognised the problems of translation. He believed that Hebrew poetry -- because it depended for the effect of its parallel structure (as I explained above) largely upon the balanced patterning of the logical elements of an utterance -- might be translated, so long as that pattern were preserved between versions. But otherwise he thought that 'the spirit of an author always evaporates in the process of translation'. It is something of a paradox then, which I cannot
satisfactorily explain, that he does offer two versions of a number of his own poems, one given in dialect, the other in standard English. (Some began as Blackmore poems, some as standard English ones.) Probably he was referring to the difficulty of translation from one distinct language into another, ignoring the fact that turning utterances from one dialect to another is still translation of a kind. However, this handful of poems provides excellent material to look further at the 'instress' of Barnes's work.

Equally puzzling are remarks by Hopkins and by Grigson on the issues of translating Barnes. Hopkins wrote to Bridges:

I was almost a great admirer of Barnes's Dorset ... poems ... A proof of their excellence is that you may translate them and they are nearly as good - I say nearly, because if the dialect plays any lawful part in the effect they ought to lose something in losing that.

And later in the same letter he said:

The use of dialect to a man like Barnes is to tie him down to the things that he or another Dorset man has said or might say, which though it narrows his field, heightens his effects. 74

There seem to be contradictions here: Hopkins does appear to think Barnes losses -- if only a little -- by translation, yet on the one hand that 'little' seems vital to his local effects, whilst on the other Hopkins appears to be saying that not much is lost by its removal. Perhaps the anomalies of Hopkins's remarks are the result of a misleading casualness in his informal letter to Bridges. But Grigson, who much admired Barnes's linguistic skill, made a judgement whose explicitness cannot be misunderstood.

Barnes does translate, and without a great loss ... Indeed, a lack of knowledge of the euphony of Dorset dialect does not, to my ear, make it impossible to enjoy Barnes's poems clearly and intensely. These are two lines I keep among the furniture of memory, and keep in this form:

The cuckoo over white-waved seas
Do come to sing in thy green trees.

Barnes wrote:

The gookoo over white-weav'd seas
Do come to zing in thy green trees.
The translation I make, more or less without meaning to, is much nearer Barnes's writing than, shall I say, Barnes's, or anyone else's reading of the Idyls of Theocritus was ever near to the original sound of Theocritus. 75

Assuming that Grigson is referring only to differences of sound and does not mean a complete translation of Theocritus from one language into another, this may well be so. But Grigson's translation is not, in my view, near enough. The lost diphthong and helped to lengthen the lines very slightly and to encourage a flowing rise-fall intonation: they are tiny phonetic features, and they make only slight differences, yet they are important differences which may help to make a mere statement of two-dimensional fact (which is virtually all Grigson is left with) one of more vital imagery, with a hint of movement and sound.

But it is obviously not possible to build a convincing case, one way or the other, on a mere two lines, and I want to look now at a variety of extended examples which give me an opportunity to discuss the impact of translation not only upon sound and rhythm but also upon the lexicon and syntax of a poem. (Other pairs of poems, not discussed here, are listed in a footnote.) 76

I begin with two versions of 'Clouds' (p.537 and p.883). I have no evidence to confirm which was the earlier poem but will assume that, as in the majority of proven cases, the Blackmore version was the original. This is a poem which does, I think, reinforce my point about the instress of the Dorset dialect: Barnes could have used the different sounds and rhythms of standard English to suggest a similar effect -- but a simple word-for-word translation, whilst it may preserve the original logic and the original rhyme scheme, must lose the tone that the Dorset words had achieved in Barnes's arrangement. The ing morpheme is so much harsher than the Dorset en. The three syllables of a-riden flow more smoothly than the more separated ones of onriding, and much the same might be said of the contrast between a-reachen and upreaching. 77 The vowels of a-blown are much gentler than the more constricted i of the alternative in drift. The result is a loss of mimesis in the standard English version: the suggestion of soft, rounded, silently flowing clouds is reduced with the alteration of the Dorset sounds and attendant rhythms.
A-riden slow, at lofty height,
   Wer clouds, a-blown along the sky,
0' purple-blue, an' pink, an' white,
   In pack an' pile, a-reachen high.

Onriding slow, at lofty height,
Were clouds in drift along the sky,
Of purple-blue, and pink, and white,
In pack and pile, upreaching high.

A small but, in my view, important difference in the two 'Hwome's a Nest' poems (p.506 and p.885) is also the result of a syntactic alteration necessary in translation. It is not here simply a question of morphemic change, but of a difference in a whole word. The Dorset present tense requires the auxiliary do. In order to maintain two parts to the verb -- and thus preserve original rhythms -- Barnes has replaced the Dorset do grow with a wholly different and, I think, unsuitable standard English alternative.

Hwome's a nest,
Where our childern do grow to vulvill
Not our own, but our Father's good will

Hom'e's a nest,
Where our children are bred to fulfil
Not our own, but our Father's good will.

The sense of a gradual achievement is lost and replaced with the deterministic and reductively animal verb to breed. The latter could not have been Barnes's considered preference, given that the rest of his Blackmore canon emphasises a sense of personal growth through the experiences, light and dark, of life.

The difference between the Dorset 'My Love is Good' (p.455) and its standard English version (p.902) is not basically one of sound or rhythm. In this case the Dorset lexicon produces a much more immediate poem than
the rather mannered alternative. That is, a 'winsome' face replaces 'my love is feair', and graceful garments of bending fold take over from the simple 'new or wold', whilst 'stately' feet were originally just 'strågt' stepping. It is no wonder that the Dorset poem, offering an image of a country woman, can end each stanza with a refrain which places her firmly in a rural setting, whilst the standard version only prepares for a much more abstract and generalised conclusion.

My love is good, my love is feair,
   She's comely to behold, 0,
In ev'rything that she do wear,
   Altho' tis new or wold, 0.
My heart do leÿp to zee her walk,
   So strågt do step her veet, 0.
My tongue is dum to hear her talk,
   Her vaiće do sound so sweet, 0.
The flow'ry groun' wi' floor o' green
   Do bear but vew, so good an' true.

O she's a girl of winsome face,
   A maid of fairest mould, 0,
And all her garments fall with grace
   In ev'ry bending fold, 0.
My heart it leaps to see her walk,
   So stately step her feet, 0,
My tongue is dumb to hear her talk,
   Her voice it sounds so sweet, 0,
For oh', she seems to my poor mind
   The very pride of womenkind.

Similar comments might be made about the contrast between the Dorset 'The Wind at the Door' (p.565) and its standard version (p.844). The former names the beloved clearly -- she is Jeåne: the latter is not so specific. And the greater feeling of immediacy of the Blackmore version is further strengthened by its simple statement of physical fact: 'I zot me sad as eventide did pass', becomes the vaguer standard abstraction, 'I sitting let the voiceless evening pass', which allows concentration to pass from the persona to the activity of the evening, whilst the Blackmore line includes the eventide only as an adverbial.
The two final pairs of poems I want to look at evidently originated in standard English (according to information provided by Bernard Jones). Although I feel that Barnes's poetry written in standard English after he had begun to experiment in dialect is much more vital and less mannered than his earlier efforts, still these two standard originals are I think much less effective than their translations. It does seem then that Barnes's talent did not simply increase, with the stimulus of using a dialect and in particular of listening closely to its carefully produced sounds and forms, but that there is some evidence that he was much better served in his chosen bardic task of local affirmation (if not in his more personal and sometimes more pessimistic standard utterances) by the speech of Blackmore.

The Dorset poem 'Vorgetting and Minding' (p.531) is in rispetto form and its original English version is simply entitled 'A Rispetto' (p.900). The following is a note which Barnes attached to some translations of Tuscan Rispetti:

The Rispetto is a pretty poem mostly of four, six, or eight strains, or lines, each of ten syllables, and it has often one fond thought on which the speaker lingers, by inversions or variations or repetitions of the wording of it . . . Rispetti . . . are most likely so called as poems of Respect and Love, and are very pure-thoughted and often sung or quoted by the landfolk. 79

However, the Dorset version seems much more likely to have been sung by vigorous landfolk than its rather effete English original. The Dorset use of the pronoun he and the lack of mannered verbs — the standard glided and led seem to me particularly ornamental in their context — lend a genuineness to the poem. The substitution of call back for yield seems to me not only more spontaneous but also leads to a much more accessible image. The Dorset version is not, therefore, a very accurate translation of its original: it produces a rather different tone, image, and as a result I think a much better poem than the standard one, if the criteria of value include an assessment of appropriateness that matches linguistic performance to the persona.
A day that died, with slowly-quenched light,
Before the dusk that glided to the west,
Had led its hours along in quiet flight,
With one of joy, that sweeten's all the rest.
Our minds could never yield the room for all
Our days at once: . . .

A day oonce died wi' slowly-quenched light
Avore the dusk a-vallen in the west,
And in his hours, a-gone in quiet flight,
Wer oonce o' jaÿ that sweeten'd all the rest.
Our minds ha' never room enough to call
Back all sweet days at oonce, . . .

Finally, much the same comments might be made about the Dorset version of 'Ruth A-riden' (p.453) which is a translation of a standard English poem (p.900). The two Ruths are entirely different women. The English one is elegant and beautiful. The Dorset woman however is warm and beautiful. The former wears a feathered sable cap, she has a trim waist, slender limbs, and winsome grace: her skirt 'o'erspreadeth wide /
With flowing folds the horse's side'. Here is the Blackmore woman.

Her healthy feáce is rwosy feáir,
She's comely in her gait an' lim',
An' sweet's the smile her feáce do wear,
Below her cap's well-rounded brim:
An' while her skirt's a-spreaden wide,
In wvolds upon the ho'se's zide,
He'll toss his head, an' snort wi' pride,
To trot wi' Ruth a-riden. —

It is perhaps no wonder, given this much warmer woman, that Barnes is drawn to add several stanzas to the Dorset version, so that it is not just a translation but a new poem. The clearer, more vigorous image leads the persona to wish 'that Ruth could be my bride' and to moralise on the healthy blessings of fresh air; 'weak an' peále' maidens should stop moping in their shady houses and ride through the winter wind and summer sun.
It is surely these striking, vital images, which Barnes evidently found the living Dorset language in its everyday register particularly helped him to create, that inspired him to write some of his best -- in the sense of most vital, most spontaneous and immediate -- poetry. That is, the language, the imagery of people and landscape and objects, all combine -- with the skill that conceals skill -- into what Grigson rightly called an 'art of whole'. Barnes is undoubtedly limited to the Dorset competence and approximate performance of a labouring rural community -- but it is these very limitations which allowed his dialect poetry a warm and rich vitality. Further, that approximation is built upon to offer -- show, if not tell -- Barnes's personal image of the local community and to convey the response to it that he wished his readers, particularly his dialect-speaking readers, to share. Translation from dialect to standard English and vice versa is not really viable because it damages the subtle balance of an art of wholes that closely matches phrase to vision.

Having examined, one by one, those features of Barnes's art which led to this close matching, I want now to conclude this Chapter by directing attention to one particular poem (and two related ones), in order to demonstrate those qualities which make it an example of a satisfying 'whole'. In this way I can draw together the threads of the Chapter. But at the same time the example offers an opportunity to stress the connection between Barnes's skilful use of language and a 'wholeness' of a different though related kind. I have been referring, since Chapter One, to Barnes's recognition of shadows on his sunlit landscape -- the vanitas, as it were, in the Dutch vision -- and I have suggested that his particular religious faith led him to expect a mixture of light and dark and even to welcome their blending; the presence of both, in a painting, may contribute to its sense of harmonious balance, and the same seems to have been true in Barnes's concept of a whole, rounded life and of the art which images it. The language and the themes of his poetry, particularly in dialect, work together to communicate this concept of secure harmony. (although I have suggested that the standard poems are sometimes less assured).

It is virtually impossible to select just one poem which incorporates every feature I have discussed in this Chapter. Therefore, although I want to draw attention to 'Jeême' (p.213), I refer also to 'The Bwoat'
(p.343) and 'A Wife A-prais'd' (p.332), two poems which illustrate aspects of Barnes's art of wholes which happen not to be particularly noticeable in 'Jeânne'. However, the three poems have in common one further striking aspect of Barnes's art. He declared that he wrote nothing without love, and believed that it was love -- of man and of God -- which transformed the combination of light and dark into good and loveworthy life: these three poems are all about the love of a man for a woman and, whether or not they refer to Julia Barnes, they convey with such depth a feeling of warmth and tenderness that they seem to confirm in Barnes a profound understanding -- and experience -- of a gentle love, the kind of love which is imaginatively extended in his other poems to friends, to children, to the rural community in general.

'Jeânne' is not such an openly stage-managed, such an obviously and deliberately 'whole' poem, as either 'The Bwoat' or 'A Wife A-prais'd'. 'A Wife A-prais'd' has a more complex versification, including an incremental refrain and rhyming couplet which extend their sound similarity across several words in the majority of the lines. Its first stanza also displays a marked Dorset lexicon and contains the example of the continuous past tense to which I have referred above. Its vowels are particularly rounded and their 'mellowness' (in the linguistic sense I have demonstrated earlier) seems to help to slow the rhythm and to appropriately match the lazy persistence of endless sunshine (the extended rhyme across a number of words may also emphasise this continuity throughout the poem) and cooing pigeons. It is a perfect setting for the young lovers of the poem whose first affection has persisted and deepened whilst their partnership, described in the rest of the poem as particularly dependent upon the wife's vitality, learned to live with pain as well as with pleasure.

A WIFE A-PRAIS'D

'Twer May, but ev'ry leaf wer dry
All day below a sheenan sky;
The zun did glow wi' yollow gleHre,
An' cowslips blow wi' yollow glaHre,
Wi' graegles' bells a-droopen low,
An' bremble boughs a-stoopen low;
While culvers in the trees did coo
Above the vallen dew.
An' there, wi' heair o' glossy black,
Beside your neck an' down your back,
You rambled gay a-bloomen fellir,
By boughs o'-may a-bloomen fellir;
An' while the birds did twitter nigh,
An' water weaves did glitter nigh,
You gather'd cowslips in the lew,
Below the vallen dew.

An' now, while you've a-been my bride
As years o' flow'rs ha' bloom'd an' died,
Your smilen heair ha' been my jaye;
Your soul o' greheir ha' been my jaye;
An' wi' my evenen rest a-come,
An' zunsheen to the west a-come,
I'm glad to teHke my road to you
Vrom yields o' vallen dew.

An' when the raHn do wet the maH,
A-bloomen where we woonce did stray,
An' win' do blow along so vast,
An' streams do flow along so vast;
Agein the storms so rough abroad,
An' angry tongues so gruff abroad,
The love that I do meet vrom you
Is lik' the vallen dew.

An' you be sprack's a bee on wing,
In search ov honey in the Spring:
The dawn-red sky do meet ye up;
The birds vu'st cry do meet ye up;
An' wi' your heair a-smilen on,
An' busy hands a-tweilen on,
You'll vind some usevul work to do
Until the vallen dew.

It is not so much the versification which makes the forming of 'The Bwoat' into a fairly obviously rounded whole. Here individual images draw coloured threads through the tapestry of a whole scene. The clear, vivid
colours, in which Barnes revelled, begin with the snowy-white blossom of
the first stanza: and then comes Jeûne, rowing by in scarlet cloak,
through brown-bloomed bushes, ruffling the water until she has floated
on down stream and 'left the quiet weMves woonce mwore / To zink to rest,
a sky-blue'dvloor'. Barnes was not a man given to open demonstrations
of passion, but the rueful admission, in the poem's final line, that
Jeûne's brief and delightful appearance has left him with a 'ruffled
mind', is, in its self-teasing, not only a testament to the presence of
the warmth of humour in the man, but also, in its restrained under-
statement, perhaps as suggestive of love as the loudest declaration —
especially since it follows the knowledge that the vision, like so many
experiences of love treated more seriously in his poems, is passed and
sadly lost.

THE BWOAT

Where cows did slowly seek the brink
0' Stour, drough zunburnt grass, to drink;
Wi' vishen float, that there did zink
An' rise, I zot as in a dream.
The dazzlen zun did cast his light
On hedge-row blossom, snowy white,
Though nothen yet did come in zight,
A-stirren on the straYen stream;

Till, out by sheddie rocks there show'd,
A bwoat along his foamy road,
Wi' thik fea(r ma'id at mill, a-row'd
Wi' Jeûne behind her brother's oars.
An' steadily as a queen o' vo'k,
She zot wi' floaten scarlet cloak',
An' comen on, at ev'ry strokes,
Between my withy-shelled shores.

The broken stream did idly try
To show her sheదpe a-riden by,
The rushes brown-bloom'd stems did ply,
As if they bow'd to her by will.
The rings o' water, wi' a sock,
Did break upon the mossy rock,
An' gi'e my bellten heart a shock,
    Above my float's up-leopen quill.

Then, lik' a cloud below the skies,
A-drifted off, wi' less'nen size,
An' lost, she floated from my eyes,
    Where down below the stream did wind;
An' left the quiet weaves wonce mmore
To zink to rest, a sky-blue'd vloor,
Wi' all so still's the clote they bore,
    Aye, all but my own ruffled mind.

There is no sense of loss in 'Jeäne'. But this poem conveys, like the two just mentioned, a balance of light and dark, strain and happiness, and, above all, the optimistic love which makes everything bearable. Its artistry is not so openly deliberate as that of 'The Bwoat' and 'Wife A-prars'd', but the linguistic skill, concealed even more than usual, is nonetheless present and contributes to the effect of the whole.

The poem is markedly conversational, in its contextualisation and its rhythm. The reader has a sense of on-looking, witnessing a quiet moment of closeness, a man telling his wife that he loves her. Not that there is any sense of unpleasantly intrusive voyeurism: the last stanza acknowledges the husband's pride in having Jeane beside him: he would wish the onlooker to know of their mutual love, if not of the private worries alluded to in the third stanza.

JEÄNE

We now mid hope vor better cheer,
    My smilen wife o' twice vive year.
Let others frown, if thou bist near
    Wi' hope upon thy brow, Jeäne;
Vor I vu'st lov'd thee when they light
Young sheäpe vu'st grew to woman's height;
I loved thee near, an' out o' zight,
    An' I do love thee now, Jeäne.
An' we've a-trod the sheenen bleđde
Ov eegrass in the zummer sheđde,
An' when the leđves begun to feđde
Wi' zummer in the weđne, Jeđne;
An' we've a-wander'd drough the groun'
O' swayen wheat a-turnen brown,
An' we've a-stroll'd together roun'
The brook an' drough the leđne, Jeđne.

An' nwone but I can ever tell
Ov all thy tears that have a-veIl
When trials međde thy bosom zwell,
An' nwone but thou o' mine, Jeđne;
An' now my heart, that heav'd wi' pride
Back then to have thee at my zide,
Do love thee mwore as years do slide,
An' leđve them times behine, Jeđne.

The poem's first word indicates the scene, two people close
together, the one quietly speaking to the other and promising their
shared future happiness together. That such happiness depends upon
their palpably close partnership is unobtrusively emphasised by versif-
ication. The woman's name is echoed and stressed, repeated again and
again throughout the poem. The 'I' who loves her is proudly emphasised
in the first stanza, through metre and through intonation. Their
partnership -- we -- is similarly focused in the second stanza. And the
beautifully modulated cadence of the second half of each of these verses
seems to surround the pair like their love.

That the partnership has been persistently close throughout its ten
years is emphasised in the images and verbs, and repeated conjunction,
stressed, again by metre and intonation, in the second stanza: 'An' we've
a-trod', 'An' we've a-wander'd', 'An' we've a-stroll'd together', through
season after season.

But it has not -- any more than any other life in Barnes's poetry
-- been perfectly easy for either of them. Strain has been felt but --
as usual in the poems -- quietly borne, and met with love. And as usual
also, whole in its balanced image of light and dark and in its match of
phrase to vision, this poem ends on the note of optimism which catches all the images of Barnes's work and holds them in a still life of light and harmony.

The precariousness of that balance is sensed in some poems more than in others. But, in the main, as this study has explained, the canon of dialect poems offers Barnes's vision of a good, loveworthy, and contented rural world. Its dialect and its themes proclaim his faith in the caring, co-operative, and self-respecting circle of the local community.
CONCLUSION

I would accept Auden's judgement -- to which I have referred earlier in this thesis -- that Barnes is a minor poet. There is not, in his work, the significant maturing which Auden requires of the major artist: the qualities I have been describing in Barnes's poetry are fairly consistent throughout the canon. Nor do the dialect poems, in their concentration upon the good and the lovable in a generally optimistic light, or the slightly more doubtful standard works, display the wide range of theme and treatment which Auden feels should probably be represented in great art. Nor is Barnes's vision unmistakably original: on the contrary, I have demonstrated that he set out in his local poems to maintain, above all else, a traditional image of contented rural life. But these limitations should not be allowed to obscure Barnes's very real achievements.

In the first place, he did accomplish precisely what he set out to do: that is, by using local language to describe local life, in a generally dignified and comfortable light, he did offer the Dorset labouring community a poetry which he believed could be 'their own', a poetry which would endorse and encourage a particular way of life and a sense of secure place and Christian commitment. This vision of local peace is not entirely and naively idyllic. There are hints of strain and shadow which the dialect poems particularly -- appropriately, given Barnes's personal belief in restraint and endurance -- control within their forms. Moreover, there are suggestions within the canon of ways of dealing with a changing social and economic structure whose inevitably mounting pressures Barnes does not entirely ignore but which, given his staunch faith in traditional hierarchies and economics, he cannot completely comprehend. For this reason his 'localness' has an unserviceable narrowness, of the kind that Barrell and Bull identify. But the courage, optimism, and quietly persistent endorsement of light, of peace, of loving co-operation and warm vitality, which pervade the poems, need not in consequence be undervalued, for the reader may find in them a relevance unrestricted to nineteenth century time, place, and politics. Besides, all these thematic considerations are consistently expressed in a masterly verse technique which is, as Barnes wished it to be, appropriately and satisfyingly 'fitting' for its subject. If any
artist was particularly influenced by Barnes, it is likely that it was his technical skill which was emulated. Hopkins was well aware of his work with verse patterns -- although he thought he could do some of them, particularly cynghaned, rather better. Hardy also experimented with form, and in his verse tribute to Barnes ('Last Signal') he uses a pattern of internal rhyme which was prevalent in Barnes.

In the second place, although Barnes's vision is not itself profoundly original or unusually perceptive, there is independence and innovation in his method of communication. His use of language -- the product of deeply held sociolinguistic convictions -- is not only technically admirable but is above all, through its use of the vernacular, a resounding endorsement of the worth he found in the special nature of each community, represented in the individual strength of each language variation. 'Unserviceable' he may have been, if his rural community needed its defects and disadvantages emphasising, its energies rallying in order to challenge and alter its condition. But, if local families required confirmation, for themselves and others, of a value which Barnes saw in their traditional life -- its work, its attitudes, its customs, its language -- then he answered that need in every dialect poem he wrote. Again, Barnes accomplished what he set out to do, speaking out for a rural community, and also for the artistic potential of dialect per se.

To say that Barnes accomplished his intentions, especially given the particular social, didactic nature of these intentions, suggests a considerable degree of self-consciousness in his art: the remark might imply a coldness, or else a deliberately narrow propaganda. There is certainly, whether he would have acknowledged it or not, a marked 'drift' in his poetry. And his art is definitely in some sense a teaching 'aid'. It is also clearly an exemplification of his linguistic theories. But these observations should not obscure the genuine depth of feeling which apparently led to such careful art: Barnes claimed to write only with love -- and I think the claim is substantiated by his persistent choice of the 'loveworthy' image, described with a warm and gentle energy, and by his delicate handling of the language of his community. Though his local artistic role may have been clear and deliberate in his mind, it was surely carried out with imagination and spontaneous inspiration, and his
understanding and personal experience of love seems confirmed in poems like 'The Wife A-lost' (p.333) and 'The Rose in the Dark' (p.395).

I think Hardy was right, then, to recognise Barnes as an 'academic' poet -- but to acknowledge that, nevertheless, he was 'primarily spontaneous'. The combination of these two elements -- a subtle and effective combination -- allowed Barnes to communicate all that he wished to say. The combination is present, as it is throughout the canon, in the following two poems. My comments upon these are intended to draw together the main issues of this study and to conclude with an endorsement of that which in my view makes Barnes not a major artist but still an artist of stature.

After the edition of 1862 Barnes wrote very little in dialect. 'The Geäte A-Vallen To' (p.928), however, was written in the last months before his death. I discuss it here because it seems to me that its form and content perfectly unite -- with his skill-concealing skill -- to communicate Barnes's perennial themes of love, work, and continuity, and, particularly, the shadowing of these features of secure harmony with the anxiety and sadness of change: it is a distress which must have disturbed Barnes more and more as the nation neared the end of a revolutionary century and the poet drew to the close of his sheltered life. The reasons why he may have chosen to write rather less in the dialect whose use proclaimed sociolinguistic ideas, his faith in local communities, and in rural life, were not openly explained by Barnes: but reasons are implied in 'The Geäte A-vallen To' and in the standard poem, 'Dawn' (p.933), which I shall also be discussing. They are reasons which are logical, given what I take to be the general focus of the rest of Barnes's work, and therefore, they help to corroborate my understanding of the motivation behind his art.

THE GEÄTE A-VÄLLEN TO

In the zunsheen ov our zummers
   Wi' the ha' time now a-come,
How busy wer we out a-yield
   Wi' vew a-left at hwome,
When waggons rumbled out ov yard
   Red wheeled, wi' body blue,
As back behind 'em loudly slamm'd
    The geHte a-vallen to.

Drough daysheen ov how many years
    The geHte ha' now a-swung
Behind the veet o' vull-grown men
    An' footsteps ov the young.
Drough years o' days it swung to us
    Behind each little shoe,
As we tripped lightly on avore
    The geHte a-vallen to.

In evenen time o' starry night
    How mother zot at hwome,
An' kept her bleHzen vire bright
    Till father should ha' come,
An' how she quicken'd up an' smiled
    An' stirred her vire anew,
To hear the trampen ho'ses' steps
    An' geHte a-vallen to.

There's moon-sheen now in nights o' fall
    When leaves be brown vrom green,
When, to the slammen o' the geHte,
    Our Jenny's ears be keen,
When the wold dog do wag his tail,
    An' JeHn could tell to who,
As he do come in drough the geHte,
    The geHte a-vallen to.

An' oft do come a saddened hour
    When there must goo away
One well-beloved to our heart's core,
    Vor long, perhaps vor aye:
An' oh! it is a touchen thing
    The loven heart must rue,
To hear behind his last farewell
    The geHte a-vallen to.
The introductory phrases of the first four stanzas might easily refer not only to the individual images of this particular poem, but to the settings of most of Barnes's work: the poems are placed, for the most part, in the clear, vital light by which he wanted his local readers and, if possible, his city admirers, to see rural life. His acute sense of balanced form, of meaningful form, is visible in the link between the first lines of each of these first four verses: every one begins by focusing on light, but each picks upon a different 'sheen'. The zunsheen, the daysheen, the starry night, and the moon-sheen, each bathe a different aspect of country living which Barnes had stressed throughout his life as infinitely valuable. The sun allows the crops to flourish and the workers to harvest them -- they were, the metre stresses, so busy -- and primary colour, unambiguous verbs, and the judicious selection of simple detail, convey, as they have done again and again in the poems, a sense of rewarding effort, vital noise and vigour. The second stanza implies that light returns, day after day, year after year, to encourage the cycles of man and nature to continue, the tradition of industry to be passed on from full-grown men to the footsteps of the young. The stars signal the end of the day's work and the fire is made to blaze, with light, warmth and energy, by the mother who herself epitomises these qualities, to welcome home the workers from the fields. Mother and father will be together, with the children for the evening -- as the poems have always suggested they should be. Our Jenny welcomes a loved one home as he 'do come in through the gate'. These introductory phrases, in their general similarity then, stress the everlasting continuity of invaluable light: their slight differences allow Barnes to encompass every feature of life he valued. The form is, as usual, helping to clarify the content.

It is true, however, that one feature, typical of Barnes's form, is missing: there is no determinedly 'parsonical' stanza. Yet Barnes's Christianity was never abstract theology but a lived faith, demonstrated in the work, love, and family life which are at the heart of this poem and which therefore continue, in a way, to endorse his belief in God and his image of a Godly way of being.

However, the poem's speaking voice is as conversational as ever, its varied intonation counterpointed with a patterned but never monotonous metre. And, although Barnes was never himself a farm-labourer, that
speaking voice is, as usual, firmly placed within the community circle of the poem: 'How busy wer we out a-vield'. Yet the poem's last stanza -- to which I shall be returning -- appears at a slight distance from the rest of the work: the reflective tone and content, typical of so many of Barnes's evaluative last stanzas, seems to hint at that close connection (discussed in Chapter Five) between the reader and the poet's own personality, without the mediation of a labourer's mask. Besides, this reflective conclusion seems to link with other signals that the mask is thin throughout 'The geête A-vallen to'. The poem begins, like so many others, in a continuous past tense, the syntax emphasised by the imagery: 'In the zunsheen ov our zummers . . . How busy wer we', 'Drough daysheen ov how many years / The geête ha' now a-swung', 'In even time o' starry night / How mother zot at hwome'. And Barnes was, of course, years ago, brought up on a farm: he did have personal memories of childhood participation in working family days, even if he did not continue to live the life in adulthood. Besides, the fourth stanza changes its tense;

An' oft do come a saddened hour
    When there must goo away
One well-beloved to our heart's core,
    Vor long, perhaps vor aye:
An' oh! it is a touchen thing
    The loven heart must rue,
To hear behind his last farewell
    The geête a-vallen to.

The memory has come close now and seems almost a present vision -- now there is moon-sheen, and now there is autumn in the air, and now Jeäh and her loved one are reunited. It is tempting to decide that the shadowy, unnamed figure coming through the geête is Barnes himself, united again in his vivid imagination with his much loved Julia. And, for once, the vision seems to have a symbolism that is generally lacking from the earlier dialect work: for once, autumn does seem to invite a metaphorical understanding. Indeed, although I have argued that in a sense the underlying implication of all Barnes's dialect work is consciously mythical -- that so much of it is set in past tenses, so much of it pointedly selective in its detail -- this particular poem seems in its individual detail to be, if not especially complex in this respect, more specifically metaphysical
than the usual kind of work which I dealt with, in comparison with the
metaphorical suggestivity of Hardy and Hopkins, in Chapter Five. It has,
as so many of the poems, a refrain. But, whereas the earlier refrains
tend to point directly to the central physical fact or emotion which is
more or less openly declared in the poem (even the holly/holm refrain
which permeates 'Hallowed PleMces', discussed in Chapter Six, merely
emphasises an idea which is fairly overtly articulated in the stanzas),
in this case the closing gate seems not simply to be shut gladly behind
the labourer, satisfied at a day's work well done, not simply closed to
permit the family to draw securely together and recover from the
exhaustion of the day, but also to be closing upon Barnes's own life, a
symbol of his impending death. The last stanza seems to point not only
to the kinds of partings which are suffered and endured throughout the
dialect canon, as a result of broken relationships, or enforced removals,
but especially to be linked with those that deal with the finality of
death. Only now it is perhaps odd that there is no reference to God in
these last lines, that Barnes chooses not to pass from the sadness he has
never denied and on to the faith and optimism that he had normally set,
particularly in his dialect work, alongside distress. The deixis of the
last stanza is slightly ambiguous. The first four lines seem to point to
one of the persona's own loved ones leaving him, one of those loved 'to
our heart's core', and perhaps it is this loved one's own last farewell
that is heard and rued in the closing lines. And yet, the connection is
really not so certain, and I sense in the final pronoun a reference to
Barnes himself. For his had always been a 'loven heart', and at the time
of writing the poem he must have known he was dying -- and he must have
known, at the end of his life and at the end of the century, that the
vision of this and all his poems was ending. The gate had virtually
closed upon them, and would soon be 'vallen to' on his own creativity:
he would be able to write no more poems to preserve his treasured vision
and he must have felt it unlikely that the experience of other rural
writers -- so very different from his own at the start of his life --
could encourage the kind of poem and loveworthiness that he had trusted.
The sadness then of parting from his beloved family and community must
have been connected with a sadness for the loss to others of his kind of
life and his kind of art.

And of course Barnes had known for some time that change was inevit-
able. He had retired to the vicarage, maintaining his orthodox faith and
ERRATUM

No page is numbered 297.
continuing to write his rural vision, despite outside challenge. But although the content of his poems had remained much the same, he had apparently ceased to write so much in a consistent dialect. Perhaps he realised it was being spoken around him less and less, as populations moved, tones and syntax altered and became more standardised. Perhaps he felt that its use, as a symbol of localness and local value (though his sociolinguistic ideas do not seem to have altered), was becoming obviously anachronistic. He opted, then, for the kind of standard compromise, between local speech and national speech, which local children like Hardy's Tess were gradually acquiring, and he also allowed that compromise to express on occasion the personal anxieties which he had always permitted rather more prominence in his standard English writing than he could allow in his dialect poems, designed as they had been largely to encourage a local audience.

And therefore, although this study has been about the dialect work which represents most clearly Barnes's preferred Bardic role and achievement, together with his ideas of language, it does not seem inappropriate to draw it to a close with one late example from the standard English writing. In fact, it seems specially helpful, since 'Dawn' corroborates the kind of hopes and the kind of regrets and sadness I identify in 'The Geólte A-vallen to'. It too seems to signal Barnes's own life's end, but it focuses not merely upon the past that has gone and the present which for a brief moment replaces it, but looks towards a new beginning.

To look forward in his poetry is not commonplace for Barnes and this reluctance, together with the uncertainty which tinges his forward vision in this particular poem, is only to be expected given the encroaching shadows which the poems, as I have shown, always acknowledged, despite his refusal to allow them to put out the light which generally floods his images.

**DAWN**

How fast it dawmeth up the sky,
    Softly lighter, softly brighter
Tinging sides of clouds on high,
And the stream that rambles by.
What brings the day that I see break
To sleeping men or men that wake?
How fast it dawneth o'er the grass,
    Dimly shaded, dewy-bladed,
Where I see no lad or lass
O'er the dusky pathway pass.
But may ev'ry soul be gay
To sing and whistle through the day.

Show forth old home-ground with thy oak,
    Now so dim in stem and limb,
Come forth dear house with thy blue smoke,
And show thy doorway and thy folk;
Though the sun comes not to shine
On any early friends of mine.

Come orchard out from shade to light,
    Come apple trees, and hives of bees;
Rise Hambledon in thy blue height;
Come mead, and cows of red and white.
Though night dreams flee as here I roam,
Still let me dream myself at home.

The dawn spreads over the land almost palpably in this poem. The rising tones of the first lines, together with the fairly rapid rhythm (any sharpness in which is offset by the gentle sounds of a repeated s, f, and a th and soft g, and the accumulating images of changing, spreading light), offer a near-tangible vision of lightening clouds, and brightening stream; all is quiet, there is no indication of sound. All Barnes's images have been similarly clear and immediate.

But the first stanza ends unusually: questions do not figure prominently in the canon, certainly not questions about the origins of life. And the lack of a firm statement on God's creation, and its substitution with a query, perhaps invites the reader to a wider interpretation of the poem's images than is usually encouraged. The vision is certainly of physical fact, clear coloured, the landscape unfolding piece by piece before the eye. But is the dawn perhaps also symbolic of new beginnings, has Barnes again, as in 'The Geäte A-vallen to', chosen in his later life to speculate? Has he, in fact, been forced, by persistent
change around him, to question what had once seemed so certain?

The second stanza seems to add to a sense of sad uncertainty. There is in this poem, as in them all, light: but the dawn is a new, different light, and by it the speaker can see no lad or lass. The nouns are not only rural-sounding but they have, through conventional usage, a poetic overtone. Perhaps this suggestion of boys and girls belonging more to the imaginary fields of verse than to the actual landscape of the country is more obvious a century on from Barnes's death than it would have been to him. Maybe the phrase 'lads and lasses' came naturally to his lips: but even so it does not have the immediacy of the third stanza's phrase 'any early friends of mine'. At any rate, lads and lasses, who could stand for generations—past, present, and future—of rural people, are simply not visible in this poem. And therefore the final couplet of the second stanza is almost pathetic in its repetition of the philosophy which has always been underlying Barnes's work. Just who is it that will continue 'To sing and whistle through the day'?

Perhaps no one. For the only people remaining to be seen in the poem are new and faceless inhabitants of the old places. The dear old house has new folk within it: 'the sun comes not to shine / On any early friends of mine'.

So it is that the plea of the last two stanzas -- in effect meaning, 'come, all that I once loved and made me safe' -- is specially poignant. Barnes, calm and controlled in real life, his dialect personae similarly patient and enduring, rarely allowed a hint of urgency or palpable anxiety to touch his country images. But 'come', repeated again and again, is emotionally charged in its repetition, particularly since it is linked with a vision of such immediacy and clarity that our knowledge that it is merely an imaginary vision and no longer actual seems desperately sad. Our eye watches with Barnes, as his imagination calls up picture after picture, out of the shade and out of his past poems: first the orchard, then the apple trees, then the bees, then Hambledon, the mead, and the cows in vivid, unforgettable colour. So the reader is with him when the sadness is climaxed in his final plea: 'let me dream myself at home'.

Let me dream. There are no illusions left in this poem that the myth of the earlier work, especially in dialect, is now anything other than a myth -- an encouraging, comforting myth perhaps, but still, a myth.
So the question of the serviceability of that myth, at least for future generations of readers, remains open to some extent. It must depend upon how the reader chooses to respond to the light of the poems.

To the very last Hardy acknowledged his old friend's ability to cast some kind of light through his art. It is a perception confirmed in 'The Last Signal', Hardy's poetic tribute to Barnes. Watching Barnes's coffin leave the vicarage in the dip below Max Gate, Hardy saw a flash of light rebound from it.

Silently I footed by an uphill road
That led from my abode to a spot yew-boughed;
Yellowly the sun sloped low down to westward,
   And dark was the east with cloud.

Then, amid the shadow of that livid sad east,
Where the light was least, and a gate stood wide,
Something flashed the fire of the sun that was facing it,
   Like a brief blaze on that side.

Looking hard and harder I knew what it meant -
The sudden shine sent from the livid east scene;
It meant the west mirrored by the coffin of my friend there,
   Turning to the road from his green,

To take his last journey forth - he who in his prime
Trudged so many a time from that gate athwart the land!
Thus a farewell to me he signalled on his grave-way,
   As with a wave of his hand.

Where the light had been least, the final signal of a brief blaze picking up the sun from the west, had illuminated 'that livid sad east'.

Nevertheless, it is not completely clear that Hardy himself always interpreted Barnes's poetic signals of light as precisely and totally as they were intended. I have explained that Hardy's own edition reduces some of the shadows, some of the strains, even some of the vitality, of
Barnes's myth: it is a practice that was subsequently picked up by some of Barnes's other editors. (For example, the collection William Barnes, One Hundred Poems (Blandford Forum, 1971), preceded by Forster's essay which dubs him a 'yes-man', omits all the mildly political eclogues).

But it is not enough to see Barnes's lightening of the sad east as a simply idyllic fantasy, a kind of comfortable and temporary evasion of a more comprehensive truth. And it is not enough to merely compliment him -- as Hardy's poem compliments him through its emulation of one of the internal rhyme patterns that Barnes enjoyed, and through its use of the typical compound, grave-way -- for his marvellously skilful manipulation of language and his courageous regeneration of a dying speech.

It is true that, as Grigson observed, Barnes's poetry is a poetry of 'wholes': but, as I emphasised at the end of Chapter Six, acknowledgement of his unity of linguistic form and thematic content should not obscure recognition of another kind of completeness, working hand in hand with the completeness of his technique: it should not obscure the recognition that the complete picture of Barnes's landscape in dialect is of an idyll tinged with shadow.

Whether the reader finds the circle of Barnes's poetry, in its stoic and optimistic acceptance of shadow and change within the light, a courageous and illuminating formula for a way of life, a way of coping, or whether he finds it merely shallow in its refusal to challenge the strains which Barnes clearly knew existed, must be a matter for that individual reader.

**SUMMER STREAM**

Ah! then the grassy-meåded Maß
Did warm the passen year, an' gleam
Upon the yollow-grounded stream,
That still by beech-tree sheådes do straß.
The light o' weåives, a-runnen there,
    Did play få on leaves up over head,
An' vishes sceåly zïdes did gleåre,
    A-darten on the shallow bed,
An' like the stream a-sliden on,
My zun out-meåsur'd time's a-gone.
There by the path, in grass knee-high,
Wer buttervlees in giddy flight,
All white above the deMissies white,
Or blue below the deep blue sky.
Then glowen warm wer ev'ry brow,

O' maId, or man, in zummer het,
An' warm did glow the chHaks I met

That time, noo mwore to meet em now.
As brooks, a-slieden on their bed,
My season-measur'd time's a-vled.

Vrom yonder window, in the thatch,
Did sound the maFdens' merry words,
As I did stand, by zingen birds,
Beside the elem-sheHded hatch.
'Tis good to come back to the pleMce,

Back to the time, to goo noo mwore;
'Tis good to meet the younger feMce
A-menten others here avore.
As streams do glide by green meHd-grass,
My zummer-brighten'd years do pass.
APPENDIX

Biographical information

The following key dates outline the major developments of Barnes’s life. They are expanded in the text of the dissertation where necessary. Publications, apart from certain key dates, are not included below but are detailed in the Bibliography to this study.

(Most biographical details have been drawn from the account given by Barnes’s daughter, Lucy Baxter, or from his family and work papers collected in the Dorset County Museum, or from T.W. Hearl’s perspective of Barnes as a teacher: see Bibliography.)

1801 - 14 Barnes was born at Bagber, near Sturminster Newton, in February or March of 1801. (Various dates have been suggested and the year of birth has also been given -- though Hearl believes mistakenly -- as 1800 and 1802.) His mother died when Barnes was very young and thereafter he divided his time between his father’s smallholding and, in the care of his aunts, his uncle’s nearby Pentridge Farm. Both his father and his uncle encountered severe financial problems. Barnes attended first a Dame school, and then Sturminster Endowed School.

1814 - 15 Barnes began work at Mr Dashwood’s solicitor’s office in Sturminster. He started his programme of self-education.

1818 He went to work for Mr Coombs, a Dorchester solicitor. Barnes lived above a shop in Dorchester, and his self-education continued. In the same year he met Julia Miles.

1820 Barnes's first published poem; 'To Julia', appeared in the local Weekly Entertainer. From this point on Barnes was constantly writing and publishing, both poetry and prose.

1822 Barnes became engaged to Julia.

1823 Leaving Julia behind in Dorchester, Barnes went to take over a private school in Mere, Wiltshire.

1827 Barnes and Julia were married and started their life together at Mere. They would have five children.

1835 The couple moved back to Dorchester and began a school there. Barnes began adult lecturing.

1836 Barnes enrolled at St John's College, Cambridge, as a Ten Years Man.

1844 The first volume of dialect poems, Poems of Rural Life, in the Dorset Dialect, was published. See Bibliography for details of this and subsequent collections.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Barnes was involved in the founding of the Dorset County Museum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>The first volume of poems in standard English, <em>Poems, Partly of Rural Life</em>, was published. See Bibliography for details of this and a subsequent collection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Barnes was ordained and took on the duties of pastor of Whitcombe, three miles from Dorchester. He resigned early in 1852.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Julia died on June 21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td><em>Philological Grammar</em> was published. See Bibliography for details of this and other linguistic publications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>Thomas Hardy began his apprenticeship as an architect with Barnes's neighbour, John Hicks. Hardy and Barnes apparently first met during this year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Closure of the school. Barnes became Vicar of Came, near Dorchester, and continued to write, though now he would produce more poetry in standard English than in dialect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>Barnes died on October 11.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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NOTES AND REFERENCES

The texts used are first editions unless otherwise indicated.

PREFACE

1. This, and all other terms mentioned in a special sense in this Preface, are fully explained and documented when they first occur in the body of the thesis.

CHAPTER ONE

1. A brief outline of Barnes's life is included in an Appendix. Some details of his biography can be found in a collection of material catalogued at the Dorset County Museum: the collection is referred to in these notes as DCM. An account by Barnes's daughter, Lucy Baxter, is helpful. It is published under the pseudonym, Leader Scott: The Life of William Barnes, Poet and Philologist (London, 1887). I refer to its author, throughout the study, as Lucy Baxter, and will do so (Baxter) in further notes on her book. Barnes's career as a teacher is detailed by Trevor W. Hearl, William Barnes, the Schoolmaster (Dorchester, 1966).

2. Full references to Barnes's publications are given in the Bibliography to this study. In addition to those mentioned here in the text, Smith published second and third dialect collections in 1859 and 1862. MacMillan published in 'common' English in 1868, Kegan Paul in dialect (collecting together the previous three dialect volumes). American editions came out in 1864, published by Crosby and Nichols, and in 1869 published by Roberts Brothers.


5. Lucy Baxter, quoted in W.J. Keith, The Poetry of Nature: Rural Perspectives in Poetry from Wordsworth to the Present (Toronto, 1980), p.70. But, whether he sought it or not, material catalogued at the DCM -- apart from the fact of American publication -- testifies to interest in the USA. An American writer named Conway visited Barnes 6 October 1870 (DCM Vol.4, p.55). There is also a note (DCM Vol.8, p.15) recording a visit from a Mr Henry Johnson, from Brunswick, Maine, who was about to lecture and write on Barnes in America. Correspondence between Barnes and the American poet Daniel Ricketson is filed alphabetically with all other letters in the DCM collection. Ricketson (28 June 1870) believed he could see in Barnes's 'poems and letters, the result of sound English training and culture which is much more thorough than anything we get here'. There was also French interest (see DCM Vol.3). Le Chevalier de Chatelaine translated some of the poems into French and, according to Hearl, p.293, visited Barnes in 1860. Prince Lucien Bonaparte collaborated with Barnes over dialect translations of the 'Song of Solomon' and went to Dorchester twice in 1859. DCM Vol.3, p.32, shows that Prince Frederick William of Prussia accepted a volume of poetry in 1860.


13. William Barnes, Poems of Rural Life in Common English (London, 1868), Preface. I shall not be discussing the standard work in detail except for points of comparison with the dialect. Its vision is very similar though it does admit a little more shadow into the idyll than does the dialect work. It may also be rather more personal than the dialect poems. I shall explain both these qualifications in the text.


15. Doyle, p.54.


19. William Barnes's, 'The Old Bardic Poetry', MacMillan's Magazine, (August 1867), 306-317 (p.306). Although this particular paper was not written until relatively late in Barnes's life, it was in June 1831, according to Baxter p.35, that during a visit to Abergavenny he was first 'quickened with a yearning to know more of the Welsh people and their speech', and papers on his Welsh studies began appearing in the Gentleman's Magazine from 1832 onwards, beginning in February with 'On the Identity of National Character and Manners' (p.119).


27. Hearl, p.280. Barnes spoke of the 'arrogantly boastful Englishman' and of 'missionary work with the sword', in a sermon preached at Winterborne in 1866 and quoted in Dugdale, p.179.

28. See Bibliography.

29. Information in this and the following paragraphs (pp.7-9) on Barnes's connection with adult teaching is drawn unless otherwise stated from Patrick Keane, 'Prophet in the Wilderness: Rev. William Barnes As An Adult Educator', Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Proceedings, 100 (1978), 8-21.


32. 'Dissertation', p.49.


34. Keane, p.8.

35. From a letter written to Barnes in 1863 by George E. Eliot, president of the Weymouth Working Men's Club, quoted by Keane, p.12.


37. Langport Herald, 22 February 1868, quoted by Keane, p.20. I noted that a letter (DCM Vol.4, p.53) from the Hon. Sec. of Bridport Library and Scientific Institute suggests that the subject Barnes had proposed to speak about at a forthcoming meeting would be of little interest and that a reading of the poems would be preferred (6 April 1870). The DCM collection contains (for example in Vol.2) posters and cuttings of reports on talks and readings of poems given to Mutual Improvement Societies, Benefit Societies, and Working Men's Groups.


41. William Turner Levy, *William Barnes, The Man and the Poems* (Dorchester, 1960), p.17. Levy discovered this note amongst Barnes's collected papers at the DCM. I found there (DCM Vol.4, p.71) a letter from a teacher appearing to endorse Barnes's view, at least in so far as he found the poems' themes suitable for school children: the letter (September 1871) from Mr Curtis of the British and Foreign School Society, Borough Road, London, asks for permission to include certain poems in a Practical Reader for schools. The titles are difficult to decipher but appear to include 'The Mother's Dream' (p.551), which describes a mother's dream of her child in heaven: the child is telling her not 'to murn'. (The texts of Barnes's poems, and their page references, are given according to *The Poems of William Barnes*, edited by Bernard Jones, 2 vols (Carbondale, Illinois, 1962).)


43. His thoughts are drawn together in 'The Old Bardic Poetry', but see Note 19 above.


47. 'Old Bardic Poetry', p.314.


49. Barnes's lecture on education, given at Sherborne School in 1870, quoted by Hearl, p.81.

50. 'Education', p.7.


52. 'Dissertation', p.49.

53. *Notes on Ancient Britain*, p.129.

54. Athenaeum, p.52.

55. Wallis, p.31.

56. *Morning Post*, 5 February 1889. (Untitled, unsigned.)


63. Armstrong, p.xi.


65. V. de Sola Pinto, 'William Barnes, An Appreciation', *Wessex* (1 June 1930), 67-82 (p.77).

66. 'On Woman's Love', p.28.


73. Hearl, p.318, identifies in Barnes an 'inherent dislike of "pressure-groups", as a disruptive, antagonising force in society . . . [and a] life long distrust of organised political parties, Chartism and the Trades Union Movement'. I discuss, in Chapter Two, pp.92-94, Barnes's revision of a critical poem he has written on Chartism.

74. Armstrong, p.51.

76. Jones, p.xiii, notes that Barnes told his son, Miles Barnes, that the only poem he had ever written with 'a drift' was the eclogue 'The Times', p.226. See Note 73.


78. Hearl, p.242.

79. The articles appeared on April, 12, 19, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 1849.


81. Robert Young published New Recitations for Bands of Hope through James Burns, Progressive Library, Camberwell, in 1868. The publicity material reads: 'Amidst much that is amusing [these poems] convey a vast amount of sound moral instruction on dress, upstartism, drinking, and other follies and vices prevalent in Society'.

82. Hopkins replied, 1 September 1885, 'I feel the defect or limitation or whatever we are to call it that offended you: he lacks fire; but who is perfect all round? If one defect is fatal, what writer could we read?' The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Robert Bridges, edited by C.C. Abbott, (London, 1935, revised 1955), p.220. Hereinafter referred to as Letters.


86. The remark was made in *Gentleman's Magazine*, (May 1841), 510-511: quoted in Hearl, p.179.


92. *Nineteenth Century Minor Poets*, p.17.
On one page alone, Times Literary Supplement, Social Studies (16 August 1985), p.909, reviews five reminiscences of country life which have, as Pamela Horn comments (writer of the first review on H. St. G. Cramp's A Yeoman Farmer's Son: A Leicestershire Childhood, the whole article being entitled 'Making Do'), 'since the publication during the 1930s of A.G. Street's much-acclaimed autobiography, Farmer's Glory, and Flora Thompson's equally praised Lark Rise to Candleford... proved a popular literary form'.

William Cobbett, Rural Rides (London, 1912), p.120. Cobbett writes: 'At Uphusband. At this village, which is a great thoroughfare for sheep and pigs, from Wiltshire and Dorsetshire to Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and away to the north and north-east, we see many farmers from different parts of the country; and, if I had had any doubts before as to the deplorableness of their state, those would no longer exist'.

Young lived at Sturminster Newton close to Barnes's birthplace.


Baxter, p.6.


a) Morning Post, 5 February 1889.

b) From a letter to Miles Barnes (Barnes's son) from Sophia Williams (February 1887) who lived at Herringston, the house of the poem 'Herrenston', p.340: quoted in Dugdale, William Barnes, p.185. (The DCM collection includes Barnes's Scrapbooks which contain amongst their items newspaper cuttings on history, politics, religion, sociology, education and the economy at home and abroad.)

A recollection of the Bishop of Salisbury who visited Barnes 7 January 1886: quoted in Dugdale, William Barnes, p.227. The Family Herald objected to such selectivity. A cutting from 25 February 1888, now in DCM Vol.9, p.26, reads: 'Where are the sweet maidens of whom Barnes sings?... maidens... are a set of very unclean slatterns; their clothing is miraculous in its ugliness and bad taste, their boots are quite indescribable, and they have a general air of frownseness which is very oppressive'.


F.E. Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy (London, 1962), pp.228-229. A cutting from Athenaeum (April 1868), in DCM Vol.4, p.19, reads 'the poems have that just elevation over positive reality which arises from giving prominence to essential things rather than to accidental ones'.


110. Baxter, pp.82-83.


113. As Note 102.

114. Colloms, p.143. And see Kilvert's Diary, pp.242-243: 'The Poet went on to say that in all which he himself had written there was not a line which was not inspired by love for and kindly sympathy with the things and people described.'


116. Raymond Williams, The Country and the City (St. Albans, 1975), p.20. Williams writes, 'Against sentimental and intellectualized accounts of an unlocalized "Old England", we need, evidently, the sharpest scepticism. But some at least of [its] witnesses were writing from direct experience. What we have to inquire into is not, in these cases, historical error, but historical perspective'.

117. Bryant, p.17.

118. C.H. Sisson, Art and Action (London, 1965), p.42, quoting a phrase of Barnes's. 'Barnes's theme -- so far as a poet can be said to have a theme apart from the poems he writes -- is nothing less than what is fit "for the good continuance" of the human animal'.


121. Reed, p.490.

122. William Barnes, 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', MacMillan's Magazine, 4 (1861), 126-137. Unless otherwise stated, all of Barnes's comments in the following paragraphs about harmony (pp.31-32) are derived from this article, particularly from its pages 126, 127, 132, 135, 136.


124. 'Rivers Don't Gi'e Out', p.112.

125. Hearl, p.209.


CHAPTER TWO


2. Quoted in Dugdale, William Barnes, p.11.


5. 'Rustic Childhood', p.643.


7. 'The Echoing Green' from 'Songs of Innocence', Blake, p.105. Authorial anxiety is, as I mention elsewhere in the text, particularly at the end of Chapter Five, rather more prevalent in the standard work.


9. Hearl, p.313, explains Barnes's dislike of compulsory education. Barnes wrote to the Dorset County Chronicle, 4 January 1873, signing the letter 'A Friend of the Voluntary System', 'If the law goes into a man's house and drags his children to school . . . he is taught to feel that it is the law that wants the teaching of them for its own good and not his . . . I do not allow that the poor are unwilling to send their children to school for the sake of the schooling. As elders or children feel the good of the good schooling, they will most likely quicken others to see it'. I have explained above (p.11) Barnes's preference for local knowledge gained by experience.


11. The phrase, one of Barnes's own, was used to entitle Giles Dugdale's edition of the poems: Poems, Grave and Gay, by William Barnes (Norchester, 1949).
12. Thomas, p.191.
18. 'The Girt Woak Tree That's in the Dell', p.81.
23. 'A Bit o' Sly Coorten', p.95.
28. 'A Father Out, an' Mother Hwome', p.238.
30. 'The Little Hwomestead', p.525.
32. 'Mother o'Mothers', p.510.
33. 'Come an' Meet me wi' the Childern on the Road', p.532.
34. V. de Sola Pinto, p.81.
35. V. de Sola Pinto, p.79.
36. V. de Sola Pinto, p.71.


42. Massingham, p.408.

43. Massingham, p.408.


45. Levy, p.54.


47. He wrote in the 'Dissertation', p.50, 'The dialect in which he writes is spoken in its greatest purity in the villages and hamlets of the secluded and beautiful Vale of Blackmore'.


53. 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', p.133.

54. Daniel Ricketson wrote to Henry Salt, 9 December 1889, 'I will conclude by making a copy of lines published twenty years ago, entitled "The Autumn Sheaf", three copies of which I sent to England, - one each to my honored old friends and correspondents, the late William Howitt, Rev. William Barnes, the Dorset poet, late Rector of Winterborne-Came, near Dorchester, and Reginald Cholmondeley, Esq., Shrewsbury, Shrops.': quoted in Towards the Making of Thoreau's Modern Reputation, edited by Fritz Oehlschlaeger and George Hendrick (Chicago, 1980), p.64. Letters from Ricketson to Barnes are preserved DCM, e.g. Vol. 9, p.17, and Vol.14, A,B,C. A letter (filed alphabetically amongst the letters in DCM 'R') dated 28 June 1870 describes Ricketson as 'a lover of Nature like yourself'. It goes on, 'I had a classical (not collegiate) education . . . admitted to the bar at the age of 23, but after two unsuccessful years, left the profession for the more congenial one of rural life and occupation. A lover of nature and poetry I have ever been, and the productions of my humble muse have been drawn from the simple sources around me'.
55. 'Trees by Company', p.312.  
 'Nanny's Cow', p.199.  
 'The Dog wi' Me', p.567.


57. 'Beauty Undecked', p.455.


59. Bloomfield, p.23.

60. From a letter to Patmore, 6 October 1886, in Further Letters pp.370-371.

61. Massingham, p.408.

 These publications are hereinafter referred to by the name(s) of the editor(s).


64. 'Hay-meaken', p.114.  
 'Bees A-zwarmen', p.131.  
 'Riden Hwome at Night', p.292.


69. 'Hallowed Pleáces', p.284.  
 See however my discussion, particularly in Chapter Three and Chapter Five, of a hint of anxiety in this and other poems of security.

70. 'Our Father's Works', p.270.


73. Williams, pp.76-77.

74. 'The very mildness of his rule seemed to act as a charm against the intrusion of any lurking spirit of insubordination, and constrained even those boys who were troubled with unruly proclivities, not only to love but to respect their master.' Wallis, p.30.

76. From a letter to Dorset County Chronicle. 16 July 1829, (signed 'Dilettante'), quoted in William Barnes, The Dorset Poet, introduced and selected by Chris Wrigley (Wimbourne, 1984), p.231.

77. Quoted in Heath-Stubbs, p.90.

78. 'The Happy Days When I wer Young', p.171.


82. Grigson, Poems and Poets, p.137.

83. The quotations in this paragraph are taken from Barnes's 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', which was previously discussed in Chapter One, pp.30-32. The poem quoted is 'Wayfaring', p.305.

84. C.J. Wallis remarked, p.31, 'Credence, indeed, may fairly be given to the assertion that most of the passions which stir the human breast were in him either non-existent, or exercised a more or less feeble influence'.


88. 'The Spring', p.71. See, however, Conclusion for a qualification of Barnes's optimism, particularly in regard to the late poem, 'The Geat A-valen to'.

89. 'Rivers don't gi'e out', p.112. Tess, p.406.

90. 'In Tenebris II', Complete Poetical Works, Vol.1, p.207.

91. 'The Weather-beaten Tree', p.152. See also Chapter Three, pp.116-123.

92. 'The Spring', p.71.

93. 'The Spring', p.71.


95. 'Address to Plenty', J.W. Tibble, Vol.1, p.45.
96. 'The Railroad: I', p.309.
98. 'The Pleaše our own Ageën', p.344.
99. In a postscript to a letter to Florence Henniker, 22 October 1900, Hardy wrote, 'Have you read T.E.B.'s poems? It is a pity he was a parson, as it compels him to write parsonically - as it did Barnes also'. Quoted in One Rare Fair Woman, edited by Evelyn Hardy and F.P. Pinion (London, 1972), p.98. 'T.E.B.' refers to Thomas Edward Brown (1830-1897) who wrote in Manx English. Hardy omitted from his edition of the poems several stanzas, including those which he considered to be 'parsonical'. These omissions are discussed in Chapters Five and Six.
100. Dugdale, William Barnes, p.196.
101. Colloms, p.23.
103. Thomas Carlyle, Past and Present (London, 1843), Bk III, Chapter 11.
104. Snell, pp.392-394.
106. Bloomfield, p.15.
107. 'The Milk-maid o' the Farm', p.80.
110. Wallis, p.28.
111. Crabbe, 'The Village', Bk I, 1.21, 1.25, p.43.
115. From a letter signed Dilettante, Dorset County Chronicle, 19 November 1829: quoted in Wrigley, William Barnes, the Dorset Poet, p.226.
117. 'The Bit o' Ground at Hwome', p.345.
118. 'Hay-carren', p.115.
119. 'Sam'el down vrom Lon'on', p.481. Amongst the letters from Barnes
to Julia, catalogued together in DCM, there is one from 1847
approving of the coming of the railway.
120. 'Zummer Winds', p.396.
121. 'The Thresher's Labour', Stephen Duck, Poems on Several Occasions,
122. Forster, p.212.
123. Sisson, p.42.
124. D.H. Fussell, 'The maladroit delay: the changing times in Hardy's
The Mayor of Casterbridge', Critical Quarterly, 21:3 (1979), 17-30,
(p.18).
125. William Barnes, a 'Humilis Domus' article, Poole and Dorset Herald,
10 May 1849.
126. Wright, Seven Victorian Poets, p.148.
127. Parins, p.47.
128. Wrigley, William Barnes the Dorset Poet, p.11, quoting Ruskin's
Praeterita.
129. 'Rusticus Emigrans', p.482.
130. 'The Times', p.226.
131. Forster, p.197.
132. C.J. Wrigley, 'William Barnes and the Social Problem', Dorset
134. Wrigley, Social Problem, p.21.
135. William Barnes, Dorset County Chronicle, 19 November 1829: quoted in
Chris Wrigley, 'William Barnes and Self-Help', Journal of the
Loughborough Victorian Studies Group, 1 (October, 1976), 14-16.
136. Wrigley, William Barnes the Dorset Poet, pp.11-12.
CHAPTER THREE

3. Hardy spoke of 'poems of still life, brief and unaffected, but realistic as a Dutch painting'. New Quarterly, p.470.
4. 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', p.137.
10. Palgrave, pp.822-838
12. 'The Young Rhymer Snubbed', p.493.
15. 'Tokens', p.421.
18. 'Mornen', p.147.

21. J. Rayner, Thomas Bewick (Harmondsworth, 1947): quoted in Hearl, p.15. There are a fair number of Barnes's engravings kept in DCM, mostly catalogued in Vols.1 and 7.


26. 'The Nightingale's Nest', J.W. and Anne Tibble, p.211.

27. In a letter to Bridges, August 14, 1879; Letters, p.88.


31. 'Brothers', Hopkins, p.87.


36. Quotations are from 'Went Hwome', p.392, and 'The Vrost', p.162.


39. 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', p.137.

40. 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', p.132.


42. 'A Brisk Wind', p.566.
43. 'The Hwomestead', p.188.
44. 'Harvest Hwome', p.137.
45. 'The Lilac', p.298.
46. As Note 9, Chapter Three.
47. 'May', p.86.
48. 'The Thresher's Labour': quoted in Williams, p.113.
49. 'Hay-meHken', p.114.
51. 'Woodley', p.103.
53. 'Lowshot Light', p.562.
54. As Note 89, Chapter One.
56. About 1556, Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum.
57. Gombrich, p.296.
58. 'Grammer's Shoes', p.167.
59. 'The PleHce A TeHle's A-twold 0''', p.208.
60. Paulin, p.188.
62. For example, 'Burncombe Hollow', p.673.
63. Parins, pp.33-34.
64. Hardy's edition, p.ix.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Feingold, p.138.
2. Sisson, p.45.


8. From a letter written by Barnes: quoted in Baxter, p.35.


10. See Bibliography to this study.


14. For example, 'Address', p.62, experiments with the dramatic monologue. It displays an ability to suggest natural conversational rhythms, and there are in this poem touches of a mild humour that crops up again in 'The Aquatic Excursion', p.53, and 'Destiny', p.25. 'Orra', p.37, works with a number of rhyme schemes, and it describes images in the clear, distinct detail which becomes a marked feature of the dialect work. (see, for instance, the closing stanza: 'And softly now her snowy eyelids close, / Weighed down by slumber, o'er her bright blue eyes, / As bound beneath the cold and wintry snows, / The azure wave of ocean frozen lies'). However, Barnes's treatment of love and death -- in say, 'The Farewell', p.28, 'On Woman's Love', p.28, or 'Lines', p.29 -- has a conventional air, and the syntax and vocabulary of these poems tend to be mannered (see, for instance, 'On Woman's Love', 'And think'st thou that Woman will smile upon those, / Whom Adversity marks for her own? / Ah, no! - hand in hand with dame Fortune she goes, / On the affluent only her love she bestows '). Reference to Barnes's work in standard English, both early and late, will be made again in Chapters Five and Six.


16. Barnes's belief in a 'first forming will' was discussed in Chapter One, pp.31-32. He refers to the origins of language in the Preface to Philological Grammar, and in other articles (see Bibliography). Barnes's conception of the origin of writing is explained in his note kept in DCM, Vol.21, p.44. The alphabet was not, he writes, given to Moses by God at Sinai: instead he believed it began
symbolically, so that a sign for 'eye' would be ☺, and this symbol would eventually be refined to i, therefore 'we must conclude that the alphabet which is most symbolical, and least conventional, is the most ancient, the original one'.


18. William Barnes, TIW, or A View of the Roots and Stems of the English as a Teutonic Tongue (London, 1862).


21. For example, William Barnes's 'Formation of English Compounds', Gentleman's Magazine (3 November 1830), pp.393-396. See Bibliography for other titles.

22. For example, William Barnes, An Outline of Rede-craft (London, 1880).


27. Philological Grammar, p.50.


30. Philological Grammar, p.70.

31. As Note 30.

32. Preface to Philological Grammar.

34. 'Education in Words and Things', p.22.

35. Wallis, p.31.


37. 'Education in Words and Things', p.24.

38. A remark made in an address which Barnes gave at Sherborne School in 1870: quoted in Hearl, p.316.

39. As Note 38.

40. Details of Barnes's curriculum, and his underlying attitudes to education, are extensively documented in Hearl.


E. Haugen, 'Dialect, Language, Nation', in Sociolinguistics, edited by J.B. Pride and Janet Holmes (Harmondsworth, 1972), pp.97-111. (Considers the process by which one dialect becomes selected as 'standard'.)
J.C. Wells, Accents of English, I (Cambridge, 1982). (Looks at phonology rather than the whole grammar of a dialect.)


49. Henry V, for example Act III, Sc.2.


51. Skeat lists the following authors of dialect dictionaries:
T. Batchelor, 1809, Bedfordshire; Job Lousley, 1852, Berkshire; R. Wilbraham, 1820, 1826, Cheshire; J.C. Atkinson, 1868, Cleveland (Yorks); W. Carr, 1824, Craven; R. Forby, 1830, East Anglia;


54. Four volumes, 1869-1874.

55. Skeat, p.4.

56. 'Dissertation', p.50.


58. Quoted in David Sampson, 'Wordsworth and "The Deficiencies of Language"', English Literary History, 1:1 (1984), 53-68 (p.54).


60. Bloomfield, p.321. Horkey was evidently a kind of beer.


62. Matthews, p.73.

63. Anthony Burgess, 'When to lend an ear', Times Literary Supplement (28 December 1984), 1491-1492 (p.1491).

64. Parins, p.20.

65. Pinto, p.82, draws attention to this comparison between Barnes and Mistral.

66. The cutting from Hampshire Advertiser, August 1846, is in DCM Vol.1, p.46.

67. These were included with the 1844 edition of Poems in the Dorset Dialect. Both were enlarged for its 1847 edition and it is these from which I work. Both were dropped from the 1862 edition. Though I believe Barnes's academic linguistic interests lay behind his wish to include such explanatory notes, it is true that some readers were perplexed by the dialect. There is a Bookworld Review of 1859 cutting in DCM Vol.3, p.14, which approves the poems but remarks 'There are several that we can "make neither head nor tail of", but then we are not Dorsetshire labourers', and, also in DCM Vol.3, p.14, there is a clipping from the Spectator (30 May 1868) which welcomes standard English poems from Barnes since '"Dorset" peculiarities are something of a stumbling-block'.
68. 'Understanding a Subject', p.160-161.
69. DCM Vol.21.
70. Land, p.124.
71. Philological Grammar, p.28.
72. Speechcraft, p.36.
75. Halliday, Explorations. For the contrast between the traditional and modern definitions of 'grammar', see Palmer, p.13.
76. Halliday, Explorations, p.37.
79. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Barnes's language model in the following pages (pp.151-156) may be located in his 'Dissertation'.
80. For references to Labov, Bernstein, and to Barnes's own remark, see Note 36 this Chapter.
Also see V.K. Edwards, The West Indian Language issue in British Schools: Challenges and Responses (London, 1979). Edwards discusses the critical attitude of British standard speakers when they hear West Indian dialects: 'the grammar is manifestly non-standard and is often dismissed as 'bad', 'sloppy' or 'inadequate'. (p.14) For instance, Creole has verb particles which 'show that an action has been completed . . . He did see the teacher'. (p.27) I would point out that Dorset uses, as I demonstrate on pp.160-162, particles to indicate the very reverse: they imply that an action is persistent and is not completed. But the Dorset variants are as systematic as the Creole which Edwards argues are 'logical and regular and it would therefore be quite wrong to consider them in any way "broken" or "inferior".' (p.19). The semantic effect of this particular Dorset variation is discussed, with others, in the remaining chapters.
82. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Barnes's comments upon poetry, given in the following pages (pp.158-162) are taken from his Philological Grammar.

84. According to 'Old Bardic Poetry', p.307, Barnes admired poems which 'while they keep all the strait rules of verse, yet flow as freely as if they were wholly untied'.

85. Baxter, p.45.

86. Hearl, p.71.

87. As Note 86.

88. 'Old Bardic Poetry', p.306.


90. Young, p.3. See Chapter Six, pp.217-218, for a development of this point.


92. Hardy wrote, his edition p.iii, 'In the villages that one recognises to be the scenes of these pastorals the poet's nouns, adjectives, and idioms daily cease to be understood by the younger generation'.

93. 'The Girt Woak Tree That's in the Dell', p.81.


95. 'Hay-carren', p.115.

96. 'A Wife A-prais'd', p.332.


98. See Chapter Six, pp.235-236.

99. Willis D. Jacobs, William Barnes: Linguist (Albuquerque, 1952), p.72. Jacobs explains his method of checking neologisms through the following example. Taking the word bird-lore, constructed from noun + traditional suffix lore, Jacobs discovers words of this same form in Hall's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, and in Bosworth and Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, and Stratman and Bradley's A Middle-English Dictionary, but bird-lore itself is not among them. The Oxford English Dictionary, however, suggests that it was first offered as a substitute for ornithology in Gentleman's Magazine (June 1830) by a contributor under the name Dilettante. As Barnes's daughter, Lucy Baxter, mentions in her father's biography that he used this name for the Dorset County Chronicle on linguistic matters, Jacobs suggests (p.69) that Barnes is the author of the Gentleman's Magazine article and consequently is the inventor of bird-lore.

101. From a letter to Patmore, 6 October 1886, in Further Letters, pp.370-371.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. The remark was made in a letter to Edmund Gosse, dated 6 September 1886: in Basil Champney, Memoirs and Correspondence of Coventry Patmore, 2 vols (London, 1900), Vol.1, p.258.


4. Strang, p.159.

5. 'The Death of Adonis', p.31.


15. Wesling, p.19.


21. In Chomsky's terminology a grammar 'generates (and thereby defines as 'grammatical') all the sentences of the language and does not distinguish between those that have been attested and those that have not ... So concerned were the Bloomfieldians (and various other 'schools') with asserting the status of linguistics as a descriptive science that they made it a point of principle not to venture any judgements about the grammaticality, or 'correctness', of sentences, unless these sentences had been attested in the usage of native speakers and included in the corpus of material which formed the basis of the grammatical description. Chomsky insisted that the vast majority of the sentences in any representative corpus of recorded utterances would be 'new' sentences, in the sense that they would occur once, and once only; and that this would remain true, however long we went on recording utterances made by native speakers. The English language, like all the natural languages, consists of an indefinitely large number of sentences, only a small fraction of which have ever been uttered or will ever be uttered'. John Lyons, Chomsky (London, 1970, revised edition 1977), pp.37-38. In this sense Hardy is of the Bloomfieldian view.

22. Remark made in a letter to Bridges, 30 May 1878, Letters, p.54.


24. 'Spring and Fall', Hopkins, p.83.


26. The phrase is attributed in Barnes's 'Dissertation' to a Mr Jennings, writer of Observations on some of the Dialects of the West of England. The two philologists evidently shared similar beliefs about language and personality.


28. 'No worst, there is none', Hopkins, p.100.


30. 'Hurrahing in Harvest', Hopkins, p.70.

31. 'The Spring, p.71.

32. Charles Lock, 'Hopkins as a Decadent Poet', Essays in Criticism, 34:2 (April, 1984), 129-154, pp.139-140.


34. Doyle, p.44. Though as Norman Rogers, Wessex Dialect (Bradford-on-Avon, 1979), himself a West Country speaker, remarks, 'Non-dialect speakers, when they come across a dialect metaphor, attribute to it an originality - an 'earthiness' or a 'pithiness' are favourite descriptions - which, in fact, they
do not have. I think no more of saying in dialect 'I be so cold as a frog', than I do of saying 'I'm as cold as ice' in R.P.' The point is the one I am making generally: dialect is neither more, nor less, rich and flexible than a standard variation of a language.

35. Doyle, p.54.
37. 'Education', p.7.
39. 'Spring and Fall', Hopkins, p.88.
41. Bloomfield, p.67.
43. Preface to the 1844 collection.
44. D. Crystal and D.D. Davey; Investigating English Style (London, 1969); see pp.60-91 for a discussion of register.
46. 'Harvest Hymn', p.603.
47. Rachel Trickett 'To instruct and inflame', Times Literary Supplement, (21 December 1984), pp.1467-1468.
50. Hopkins's letters to Bridges, 14 August 1879, and 1 September 1885, Letters, pp.85-89 and pp.220-222. There is also, in DCM, Vol.2, p.13, a letter from William Allingham dated 4 March 1857, expressing a similar, if rather less specifically localised view: a volume of Barnes's work seemed to him the 'only Book of true Rural Poems I know. Every one in it is genuine, and breathes out country air!.

CHAPTER SIX

8. 'Rariora', p.37.
11. 'Dissertation', p.50.
13. Jones, p.2. I note that phonology used in Barnes's first collection had altered by the time the poems were published in a larger work in 1879. Take for example the poem 'The Rwose that Deck'd her Breast' (p.198). By 1879 ruose was printed as rwose, and the diphthongs of the 1879 version of the sixth line of the fourth stanza are no longer as in the first collection, ia (biaby, fiace) but read 'A little beaby wi' his feace'. It has been difficult to obtain copies of the early editions and I am grateful to Manchester Library for their co-operation in this respect.
14. 'Northern Farmer, Old Style', Tennyson, p.1123.
15. Tennyson, p.1327.
16. For example, take 'The Spring' (p.71). In 1844 its fifth line read, 'An' we can hear birds zing, and zee'. By 1847 this had become the more flowing 'When birds da zing, an' we can zee' (softer presumably because of the greater length between the two z phonemes and because of the presence of an extra w fricative in the later version). By 1879 the line has do for the rather 'harder' da.
17. Barnes had appended a glossary to the first two editions of his 1844 collection. Jones includes a word-list in Vol.1.
18. As Note 6, Chapter Six.
19. Grigson, Selected Poems, p.26. There is also a note in Barnes's hand, DCM Vol.2, p.29, dated 5 January 1855: 'I began also to take notes, in my walks with the boys of colours which in nature are... not found to touch each other'.

23. From a letter to Patmore, 6 October 1886, in Further Letters, pp.370-371.


27. 'In so far as the more specific semiotic needs of one society differ from those of another, languages will tend to differ from one another in their grammatical and lexical structure. At its most trivial ... this implies that a language will not provide a lexeme denoting any object or class of objects which the society using the language never has occasion to refer to. More generally, it means ... that the grammatical and lexical structure of different languages will tend to reflect the specific interests and attitudes of the cultures in which they operate. What it does not mean, however, is that every grammatical and lexical distinction must be correlated with some important differences in the patterns of thought of the society using the language. One cannot legitimately draw inferences about differences of world-view solely on the basis of differences of linguistic structure: the cultural and linguistic differences must be independently identifiable before they can be correlated.' Lyons, Vol.1, p.249-250. Cassirer's point is made in Language and Myth, translated by Suzanne K. Langer (London, 1946).


29. 'During Wind and Rain', Hardy, Complete Poetical Works, Vol.2, p.239. Thomas Hardy, 'The Dorsetshire Labourer', pp.9-13, describes Lady Day removal largely favourably: Hardy seems to have believed that moving sharpened the intellect by widening experience.

30. 'Fair Emily ov Yarrow Mill', p.265.


34. 'Easter Sunday', p.75. See also a discussion of narrative structure in W. Labov, Language in the Inner City (Pennsylvania, 1972), chapter entitled 'The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax'.

35. As Note 44, Chapter Four.

37. See Crystal and Davey, Note 44, Chapter Five, for a discussion of natural conversational features.

38. Sisson, p.44.


40. For a discussion of intonation and the conventions used to indicate patterns here, see David Crystal, The English Tone of Voice. (London, 1975), for example pp.100-101. Here arrows indicate pitch, the symbol \ indicates a tone nucleus (i.e. tone change).

41. Parins, p.60.

42. Hardy's edition, p.177.


44. 'The Village Wife', Tennyson, p.1272.


46. Parins, pp.57-61.

47. Wells, p.91.

48. Wells, p.84.

49. Wells, p.326.

50. Wells, p.176.

51. Wells, p.83.

52. Jones, p.xviii.

53. G.M. Hopkins, As Note 126, Chapter One. The DCM letter, Vol.5, p.16, is dated 25 October 1877 and refers to a setting of the standard sonnet 'In ev'ry dream thy lovely features' (p.657). There are also, in DCM, settings by R. Swaffield of 'Bob the Fiddler' (p.88) and 'The Wind in Woone's Face' (p.421) and a setting of the standard 'A Winter's Night' (p.667) by K.B. Rowsell.


55. Hertz, p.113.


57. As Note 99, Chapter Two.

58. For example, from 'The Spring' (p.71), 'Hope in Spring' (p.89), 'The Wold Vo'k Dead' (p.271), 'Wayfearen' (p.305), 'The Please our own agea\n' (p.344).
60. As Note 59.
61. From a letter to Patmore, 6 October 1886, in Further Letters, pp.370-371.
63. See Barnes's detailed discussion of rhyme in Philological Grammar, pp.277-308.
64. See Barnes's discussion in his 'Old Bardic Poetry'.
66. David Wright, Selected Poems: Thomas Hardy, p.17.
67. David Wright, Selected Poems: Thomas Hardy, p.18, quoting The Later Years of Thomas Hardy.
68. Hertz, p.119.
70. Epstein, p.75.
72. Cluysenaar, p.41.
73. DCM, Vol.21, p.34.
74. As Note 12, Chapter Five.
75. Grigson, Selected Poems, p.12.
77. Turkish also displays marked vowel harmony and it may be that Barnes, given his wide knowledge of foreign languages, was familiar with the feature. Turkish is a non-fusional agglutinating language, and affixes alter their vowel shape in order to harmonise with the base morphemes.
80. Tacitly endorsing Grigson's view of Barnes's 'art of wholes', I have quoted all the remaining poems in full before discussing them.
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