

[0466] **OE GRINDAN - OFRIS. *GRINDA 'TO GRIND':**
AN ENGLISH-FRISIAN ISOGLOSS WITHIN GERMANIC

Etymologists dealing with the English word *to grind*, as we know it today or as Old English *grindan*, deem it to be an isogloss within English Germanic alone.¹ *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* of 1966, edited by C.T. Onions, bluntly says of *grind*: "... OF *grindan*, pt. *grond*, *grundon*, pp. *gegrunden*, of which there are no Germ. cogns [Gmc. cognates]"² Although the name of Ferdinand Holthausen is far from unbeknown to Frisianists, particularly to students of Old Frisian and North Frisian,³ in neither Holthausen's *Altenglisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* of 1934 (2nd ed. 1963), nor in his *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der englischen Sprache* of 1949 (3rd ed., rev.),⁴ is *grindan* or *grind* shown to have a cognate in Frisian. If an English and Frisian *Germanist* like Holthausen is seemingly unaware of a Frisian cognate for the English strong verb *grind*, then indo-Europeanists like Buck or Pokorny⁵ are hardly likely to come up with such.

In none of the three traditional dictionaries for Old Frisian⁶ is there a word to be found meaning 'to grind.' These dictionaries, to a marked degree, present words gathered from law texts. Less specialized post-Old Frisian vocabulary material is not lacking in examples of the word sought. Beginning with Island North Frisian dialects, the Söl'ring dialect of Sylt (dial. Söl') has *grinj* (see footnote 2): pt. *gruan*, pp. *grün'en*⁷; the West Fering dialect of Föhr (dial. Feer) has *grinj*, pt. *groomh*, pp. *grünjen*⁸; the closely related Öömrang dialect of Amrum (dial. Oomram) likewise has *grinj*, *groom*, pp. *grünjen*⁹; and, lastly, the Halunder dialect of Helgoland (dial. deät Lun 'The Land') has *grin*, pt. *grint* (weak), pp. *grin*.¹⁰ Willy Krogmann derives Halunder Frisian *grin*, as a strong verb of *Ablaut* Class III, from Old Frisian **grinda*, and does not fail to identify the latter with Old English *grindan*,¹¹ Nicolaus Outzen (1752-1826) had already made a like identification between the Old and Modern English word *grindan/grind* and its cognates "*grinne*" in Fering North Frisian and "*grönne*" in Mainland North Frisian.¹²

From 1787 on Outzen, a man of Danish background, was the Lutheran minister of Breklum¹³ (dial. Brääklem) in the heart of the North Frisian dialects of the Gooshiird (G Gosharde). In spite of a well-meant warning to be cautious in the use of his posthumous work of 1837 as a lexicographical source,¹⁴ it would be carrying caution a bit too far not to see in Outzen's *grönne* the Mainland North Frisian dialect form of the place of his ministry. North of the Gooshiird and, away from the marshland, in the higher and drier Kårhiird (G Karrharde), the corresponding form given by Jabben in 1931, which he twice identifies with OE *grindan*, is "*grynə*."¹⁵ Then on to the northwest in the eastern "moors" of the Böökinghiird

(G Bokingharde), in "Mooring" Frisian, we have *grüne*, pt. *grün(d)*, pp. *grüinen*¹⁶. Farther northwest still, as far as the Danish boundary, the Wiringhiird (G Wiedingharde) dialect has, with *y* for short "ü": *grynne*, pt. *grynd*, pp. *grynnen*.¹⁷

Backtracking, we return to the Gooshiird and then head west to Mainland North Frisian dialects of islands (southeast of the islands where Island North Frisian is spoken) called, in German, Die Halligen and, in dialect, e Halie.¹⁸ For Frisian here Ernst Löfstedt gives strong *grine* 'to grind grain,' identified by him in 1928 with Old English *grindan*.¹⁹

South of the North Frisian island of Helgoland lies the East Frisian island of Wangeroog. On the adjoining East Frisian coast in Varel the last two speakers of Wangeroog East Frisian died at the turn of the half-century.²⁰ For 'to grind with a quern' Wangeroog East Frisian has *grin*, pt. *grun*, pp. *grunen*, as transcribed a century before Wangeroog Frisian died out.²¹ Another East Frisian dialect cognate of Old English *grindan*, one from slightly beyond "North and Island Frisian" (see note 2) in the Parish of Stedesdorf in 1691, is *grihnen*.²² We are now in the costal Harlingerland, in the Old Frisian Herlingalond of yore, southwest of Wangeroog.

Next, proceeding deeper into the European continent to the south, we come to the nowise maritime Saterland, as it is called in German, or Seelterlound (from OFris. Sageleterlōnd), as it is known in "Seeltersk," the last surviving dialect of East Frisian. In this Frisian speech island 'to grind flour' was *griene*.²³ I say "was" in spite of *griene* appearing in a 1961 dictionary of "Seeltersk," for in 1854 Johann Friedrich Minssen (1823-1901), classifying it as a weak verb, remarked that *grine*, as he spelled it, was then no longer in use but that the older people recall having heard it in their youth.²⁴

From the evidence gathered and assembled in the foregoing, there is little reason not to conclude that within the frontiers of what is today the German Federal Republic all post-Old Frisian dialects were once or are still in possession of a form that goes back ultimately to an Old Frisian **grinda*. Hence the absence of the word north of presentday Bremerhaven in two Wursatian (East) Frisian glossaries recorded in 1688 and 1723, respectively, may be taken to mean that the target word was in all likelihood present in both dialects but not surprisingly omitted in two by no means exhaustive glossaries.²⁵

"OFris. **grinda*, pt. **grand*, **grunden*, pp. **grunden* as a strong Germanic verb of Ablaut Class III²⁶ remained/ remains untouched by the workings of analogy among Frisian islanders, the weak preterite of the Helgolandians notwithstanding. It is when islands and coastlands on peninsulas

are left behind and Seelter Frisian has been reached that **grinda* is found represented by what had become a weak verb. But strong or weak the verb stands out as distinctly Frisian. It is not known in any kind of Danish or Low German.

Nearer English, Frisian in the Netherlands has *meal(l)e* as its verb meaning 'to grind.'²⁷ This Common Germanic word is *malan* in Bible Gothic, Old Saxon and Old High German, *mala* in Old Icelandic and Swedish (*male* in Danish), and *malen* in (Middle) Dutch, yet in English a corresponding form of the word has never been known.²⁸ In Seelter Frisian there is *määlne* (cp. feminine *ju Määlne* 'the mill'),²⁹ which Minssen writes *mélnje*.³⁰ *Määlne* could have arisen by analogy with *Määlne*, which Theodor Siebs derives from an Old Frisian **meln*.³¹ Its being more like G *mahlen* than *griene* is must have strengthened it in its position as the word for 'to grind'.³²

Not knowing what 'to grind' was called in the Frisian dialects once spoken between Seelter and extinct Harling Frisian, in the east, and Frisian in Friesland (Netherlands), in the west, one can only wish that more were known to permit sounder guessing. As matters stand, the one thing which is known is that Frisian in the Netherlands has the Common Germanic word for 'to grind' over against English and the remainder of Frisian, where an English-Frisian "exclusivism"³³ within Germanic holds or once held sway.

What needs to be determined is whether or not Fris.. *meal(l)e* is a Frisianized Dutch loan word that replaced what would today in the Frisian language be **grine*, pt. **groun(en)*, pp. **groun*,³⁴ with *grind*, pt./pp. *ground* off to the west across the North Sea in English. Yet it may be that the portion of Frisian nearest English never gave up the Common Germanic word for 'to grind.' Somewhere between Harling and Seelter Frisian, in the east, and today's Frisian language area of the Netherlands, in the west, there may once have run the isogloss for an eastern **grinda* and another for a western **mala*.

The Frisian speech territory of the Netherlands that lies nearest the Harlingerland and the Island of Wangeroog, following the coastline of the North Sea from northeast (in East Friesland, Federal Republic) to southwest (Friesland, Netherlands), is located on the 'Grey Monk's Isle': Fris. *Skiermuontseach*, Du. *Schiermonnikoog*.³⁵ The islanders call it *Lytje Pole* 'Little Tussock (of growing grass),' and 'to grind' they call *môle*, pt. *mail/môlde*, pp. *mailen* (*mailene kofje* 'ground coffee').³⁶ In his published University of Copenhagen doctoral dissertation, Arne Spenter systematically derives the stem vowel of *mola*, and forty

other Skiermuontseach dialect words, from "Old West Frisian short *a* in open syllable" where this goes back to Proto-Gmc. short *a* in words where there is no umlaut factor present.³⁷

Aside from Skiermuontseach Frisian the other dialect of Frisian in the Netherlands that is reputedly hardest for speakers of relatively non-dialectal Frisian to understand is that of the one time flourishing Zuider Zee port of Hynljippen (dial. Hylpen, Du. Hindelopen).³⁸ Here the weak Frisian verb *meal(l)e* is found in an earlier undiphthongized state: [mɛ:lə].³⁹ Both **mala*, yielding Skiermuontseach [mqle], and **mela*, yielding [mɛ:lə], could be Old Frisian variants like *draga* and *drega* (cp. in the Middle Dutch of Holland *draghen* and *dreghen*⁴⁰), also a strong verb of Ablaut Class VII.⁴¹

An innovation need not spread to all dialects of a language area. It is possible that OFris. **grinda* never penetrated the west of the Frisian speech community. It is tempting, however, to believe that between the Old Frisian era and the time of Modern Frisian, during "it Midfryske tiidrek..." (the 'Middle Frisian period') from about 1550 to about 1800,⁴² there may be hidden written evidence somewhere of this word in the Frisian of the Netherlands. But until such evidence is forthcoming what has been systematically presented in this paper gives a geographic picture within Germanic of a pan-North Sea isogloss within which lies English-speaking Britain and the Frisianspeaking lands, past and present, in what is today the Federal Republic. In what is today the Netherlands, where Frisian was or is spoken, the Common Germanic word for 'to grind,' as represented in the Frisian language by the word *meal(l)e*, seems to have remained the Frisian word for 'to grind', at least west of the Lauwers. To the east, however, a new word replaced the old and was borne by Angles, Saxons and Jutes to Britain. English etymologists, please note that this innovation of the North Sea Germanic East is no less part of the lexical heritage of Frisian east of the Lauwers or the Ems (Fris. Iems) than it is of English.⁴³

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NOTES:

1. See, e.g. Walter W. Skeat, *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, 3rd ed., rev. 1897 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, [1963]; *Chamber's Etymological English Dictionary*, 2nd edn. 1949 by A.M. Macdonald (Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers, Ltd., with supplement added in [1966]; Eric Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, 4th ed., rev. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, [1966]; Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (Amsterdam-London-New York: Elsevier, 1966-67).

2. See W.E. Collinson, "Some further English-Frisian parallels", in *Studia Frisica in memoriam Prof. Dr. K. Fokkema 1898-1967 scripta*, Fryske Akademy Nr. 332, ed. H.D. Meijering, H.T.J. Miedema, and Y. Poortinga (Grins [Groningen]: Wolters-Noordhoff n.v., 1969), pp. [35]-40. On p.37 Professor Collinson, like the present writer but independent of him, rightly objects to the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* article on *grind*: "... However, these [Germanic cognates] are existent in North and Island Frisian, e.g. Sylt *grinj*."
3. H.T.J. Miedema, *Paedwizers fan de Fryske filology*, Diss. Amsterdam 1961, Utjefte fan de Fryske Akademy, nr. 200 (Ljouwert/Leeuwarden: R. van der Velde, 1961), pp.176, 237, 241-246, 251, 262-264, 287, 288, 293, 320.
4. (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1963); (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949).
5. Carl Darling Buck, *A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, [1949]), p. 362; Julius Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch, I* (Bern and München or Munich: Francke Verlag, [1959]), p. 459.
6. Karl Freiherr von Richthofen, *Altfriesisches Wörterbuch*, 2nd edn. (1840; rpt. Aalen: Scientia, 1961); F. Holthausen, *Altfriesisches Wörterbuch*. (Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1925); G.A. Nauta, *Oudfriesche Woordenlijst: Met de vertaling in het Nederlands en vergelijking met Nieuwwestfriesche woorden* (Haarlem: H.D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon, 1926).
7. Hermann Schmidt, *Wörterbuch der Sylterfriesischen Sprache. Söl'ring Uurterbok* (Keitum: Söl'ring Foriining e.V., 1969), p. 76.
8. Reinhard Arfsten, *Fering Wurdenbuk (weesdring)*, Nordfriisk Instituut, Nr. 2 (Bi a Wik [Wyk auf Föhr"], [Druckerei J. Asmussen], 1965), p. [74].
9. Nils Århammar, "Die Amringer Sprache: Die Amringer Literatur, mit einem Anhang über die Amringer Pflanzen- und Vogelnamen," Sonderdruck aus *Amrum - Geschichte und Gestalt einer Insel*, ed. Margot and Nico Hansen (Itzehoe-Voßkate: Verlag Hansen & Hansen, 1964), pp. 16, 19.
10. Willy Krogmann, *Helgoländer Wörterbuch*, (Wiesbaden: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, [1957]-), I, 1. Lieferung: Einleitung: A-Beesemerwecht, pp. 53-54.
11. *Ibid.*, 3. Lieferung: *federt-Hartfeäler*, p. 268.
12. N. Outzen, *Glossarium der friesischen Sprache, besonders in nordfriesischer Mundart* (Kopenhagen: Gyldendal'sche Buchhandlung, 1837), p. 106.
13. Miedema, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
14. Nils Århammar, "Friesische Dialektologie," in *Germanische Dialektologie: Festschrift für Walter Mitzka zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Ludwig Erich Schmidt (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1968), pp. [264]-317, specifically p. 303.
15. See pp. 25 and 52 of Otmann Tjardes Jabben, *Die friesische Sprache der Karrharde: Lautlehre*, Veröffentlichungen der Schleswig-Holsteinischen Universitätsgesellschaft, Nr. 30: Schriften der Baltischen Kommission zu Kiel, 19 (Breslau: Ferdinand Hirt, 1931).

16. V. Tams Jörgensen, *Frasch-Tjüsch-Dansch Uurdebök* (Hüsem [G. Husum]: (Jungfräsch-seelschap, Risem/Risum, North Friesland, West Germany), 1955). Mooring Frisian, the strongest of the Frisian dialects in Germany, could develop on the North Frisian-speaking mainland into the second supradialectal variant of Frisian as a kind of small-scale replica of Frisian in the Netherlands.
17. P. Jensen, *Wörterbuch der nordfriesischen Sprache der Wiedingharde* (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz, 1927).
18. All North Frisian territorial, island and place names cited in this study are taken from the 1:100,000 map *Nordfriesland Nordfriislon*, Publication Nr. 13 of the *Nordfriisk Instituut* at Bredstedt/Bräist, Kreis Nordfriesland, Land Schleswig-Holstein, German Federal Republic. The map was published in 1970 "with the Frisian place names worked up by Reimer Kay Holander and V. Tams Jörgensen."
19. See p. 332 of Ernst Löfstedt, "Beiträge zur nordseegermanischen Lexikographie," *Niederdeutsche Mitteilungen*, 19/21 (1963/65), [281]-345. He classifies the verb *grind* as "North Sea Germanic" (p. 315), by which he means "English-Frisian (OE-OFris.) ..."; see also the first page of Löfstedt's "Ergebnisse" or results in *ibid.*, 25 (1969), [25]-45. In the first volume of his published Lund (Skåne, Sweden) doctoral dissertation, to wit, *Die nordfriesische Mundart des Dorfes Ockholm and der Halligen, I* [Lund: Gleerupska Univ. - Bokhandeln, 1928], Löfstedt on p. 17 gives the dialect form as *grenø*, with [ɛ:] as stem vowel (see p. xxii). The hali or Hallig whence *gren* comes is de Nees or Nordmarsch-Langeneß: portion Langeneß, also called de Nees in dialect. As a footnote to this he adds "Ags. [Anglo-Saxon] *grindan*."
20. Benno Eide Siebs, "Zur Volkskunde der Insel Wangeroog," *Oldenburger Jahrbuch*, 54 (1954), 157-163; Geart B. Drooge, Last Speakers of Wangerooge Frisian Died in 1950," *Frisian News Items* (Frisian Information Bureau, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 22 (1966), 38.
21. See p. 49 of H.G. Ehrentraut, "Mitteilungen aus der Sprache der Wangeroger," *Friesisches Archiv: Eine Zeitschrift für friesische Geschichte und Sprache*, I (1849, rpt. Wiesbaden: Dr. Martin Sändig oHG, [1968], [3]-109. *G vermahlen* is matched by *fargrî n* in this Frisian dialect, *G zermahlen* by *tôgrî n* (p. 49).
22. *Johannes Cadovius Müllers Memoriale Linguae Frisicae: Nach der Jeverschen Originalhandschrift*, ed. Erich König, *Forschungen... Verein für Niederdeutsche Sprachforschung*, 4 (Norden [East Friesland]) and Leipzig: Diedr. Soltau's Verlag, 1911), pp. 58, 5.
23. P. Kramer, *Seelter Woudebouk: Seeltersk-Dütsk-Wäästfraisk/ Saterfriesisches Wörterbuch: Saterländisch-Deutsch-Westfriesisch/ Sealtersk-Dütsk-Frysk*, Utjeft fan de Fryske Akademy, nr. 197 (Ljouwert: Fryske Akademy, 1961).
24. J.F. Minssen, "Mitteilungen aus dem Saterlande," *Friesisches Archiv* [see note 21 above], 2 (1854; rept. same as above, 2 vols. bound together), 135-227, specifically p. 197 where Minssen writes and I quote: "*grîne* Mehl mahlen, ist nicht mehr gebräuchlich aber die älteren Leute erinnern sich, es in ihrer Jugend gehört zu haben."
25. Rudolf Möllencamp, *Die friesischen Sprachdenkmale des Landes Wursten* (Bremerhaven: Sonderveröffentlichung der Männer vom Morgenstern, Heimatbund an Elb- und Wesermündung, 1968).

26. See p. 33 of P[iter] Sipma, *Ta it Frysk, III: Bûgingslear, Sinlear, an útjefte* or publication of the Fryske Akademy (Ljouwert: R. van der Velde, 1949).
27. Pronounce as a falling diphthong with one l and a rising diphthong with two: "meale, mealle [mɪ.ələ, mǣlɐ] wv. to grind" (see p. 156 of P. Sipma's *Phonology and Grammar of Modern West Frisian ...* (London, etc.: Oxford University Press, [1913])).
28. Friedrich Kluge, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, ed. Walter Mitzka, 20th ed. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1967), p. 454 (mahlen).
29. Kramer, *op. cit.*
30. Minssen, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
31. Theodor Siebs, *Zur geschichte der english-friesischen sprache*, 1 (Halle a Saale: Max Niemeyer, 1889), p. 184.
32. The Seelter Frisians have traditionally had a high regard for High but not for Low German. Borrowing from Low German was met with social disapproval. This is why I see HG *mahlen* rather than LG *malen* as a factor supporting *määlne* over *griene*. See p. 20 of Pyt Kramer, "Saterland - Insel im Moor: Probleme einer kleinen friesischen Sprachgemeinschaft," *Nord Friesland: Kultur, Politik, Wirtschaft* (Nordfriisk Instituut, see note 18 above), 3 (1969), 17-24.
33. That is to say, shared only by English and Frisian. I borrowed this kind of linguistic application of the term from A.A.Weijnen's Engels-Nederlandse parallellen, in *Verslagen en Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Taal- en Letterkunde*, 1965, 385-401.
34. Sipma, *Ta it Frysk, op. cit.*
35. *Encyclopedie van Friesland*, uitgegeven onder auspiciën van de Fryske Akademy, ed. J[elle] H. Brouwer (Amsterdam and Brussel: Elsevier, 1958), p. 571.
36. D. Fokkema sr., [mooi hulp fan/with the help of] Pita Grilk and H. Pebesma, *Wezzenlist fan it Schiermonnikoogs mooi ieursatting yn it Friesk en Hollands* (Ljouwert/Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy, 1968). This is Publication "Nr. 335" of the Frisian Academy.
37. Arne Spenter, *Der Vokalismus der akzentuierten Silben in der Schiermonnikooger Mundart: Eine geschichtliche Studie des autochthonen westfriesischen Inseldialekts* (Kopenhagen.: Munksgaard, 1968), pp. 42-44.
38. *Encyclopedie, op. cit.*, pp. 250 ("Dialect"), 361 ("Hindeloopen").
39. T. van der Kooy, Dz., *De taal van Hindeloopen: Grammaticaal overzicht en woordenboek ...*, Noord- en Zuidnederlandse Dialectbibliotheek, VII ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1937), pp. 114, 25.
40. A. van Loey, *Middelnederlandse spraakkunst, I: Vormleer*, 2nd rev. ed. (Groningen, Djakarta: J.B. Wolters/Antwerpen: De Sikkel, 1955), p. 80; II: *Klankleer*, 2nd rev. ed. (Groningen, Djakarta: J.B. Wolters/Antwerpen: Uitgeverij De Sikkel n.v., 1957), pg. 41.
41. Sipma, *Ta it Frysk, op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.
42. P. Sipma, *Ta it Frysk, I: Ynlieding, klanklear, stavering* (Ljouwert: R. van der Velde, 1948), p. 24.
43. OE grindan - OFris. *grinda could well be added as a fourth "Anglo-Frisian isogloss" on p. 38 of Herbert Pilch's *Altenglische Grammatik ...* (München: Max Hueber Verlag, [1970]).