“Hardy’s Settings Always Intrigued Me”

A Bibliography
of the
Richard Johnson Collection of Hardyana
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The start of what was to become an ongoing fascination with the writings of Thomas Hardy came for me in 1949-50 when I was in Grade XII at Gordon Bell High School in Winnipeg. At that time, the English requirement was a double course that represented a third of the year’s curriculum. The required reading novel in the Prose half of the course was *The Return of the Native*. The poetry selections in the Poetry and Drama half were heavily weighted with Wordsworth but included five or six of Hardy’s poems to represent in part, I suppose, “modern” poetry.

I was fortunate to have Gordon (“Pop”) Snider as my English teacher for Grades X through XII at Gordon Bell (the original school at Wolseley and Maryland). Up to that point English classes had involved an interminable run of texts in the “Vitalized English” series that entailed studies of word usage, required
readings, and the repetitive study of parts of speech that left me cold. Snider introduced us to figures of speech in a systematic way in Grade X and from there made literature come alive for me. At the same time, I was completing five years of Latin with W. A. Fyles in X and XI and Pop Snider in XII, the study of which, I frequently claim, contributed enormously to my appreciation of the structure of the English language. In Grade X or XI we had to read *Pride and Prejudice*, which I must admit I did not much appreciate – language or not! I forget what the novel was in the other grade, but then *The Return* hit me!

This was no boy’s adventure book where everyone, however captivating, was a cardboard hero or villain. It was a multi-dimensional portrait of real people pursuing their own ends – some noble and admirable, others misguided, dishonest or devious, still others strong or weak. Like them or not, they were all highly interesting characters. I suppose
that it came to me at this time that people in literature could be real like us; only the settings were different, be they in Shakespeare or Hardy. Also, although we had studied a good deal of Wordsworth’s nature poetry, it always struck me that his nature was mostly observed, passive and remote; here in The Return was nature engaged. Egdon Heath really is a remarkable invention. And the settings! I can still recall vividly the night-time scene out on the heath where Reddleman and Wildeve game to the light of a collection of glow worms. Hardy must have witnessed something similar to have evoked that scene so forcefully.

The summer after Grade XII, and as soon afterward as I could manage the time, I read all of Hardy’s other novels and short stories, which I borrowed sequentially from the Cornish Library. Subsequently, I bought or was given, various volumes, which were being issued at the time by Macmillan, until I had my own reading set. I have reread them over the intervening years and still do along with some of his poetry. Perhaps it is my way of retreating from the madding crowd. I have re-
read them all, that is, all but *Jude the Obscure*. It took me three or four tries before I was able to read it through that summer, and probably as a direct recollection of that experience, I haven’t read it since. It may have been that, on a personal level, it was just too tough to take. Here was an intelligent young man aspiring to higher education who, from the outset of the novel clearly does not stand a chance of succeeding to it – or probably anything else very pleasant. In contrast, there I was at the time, proceeding to university just as always planned and encouraged by my family, and with a classmate who should have done likewise but received no such encouragement.

After the passage of so many years, it is difficult to recall with any assurance just what it was that attracted me so much to Hardy’s writings; but I believe it was his use of language, his skill at portraiture and, certainly, his use of landscape. *The Return*, which remains my favourite, certainly provides all three with its carefully drawn, interesting characters and the uniquely effective setting of Egdon Heath – claimed by some critics to be
the principal character in that novel. And what vividly drawn scenes – like the one above! Having to read that particular novel with all those fascinating components provided me with a life-long interest. Perhaps there is a moral in that! Having to do something may have unexpected benefits.

Certainly when it comes to language, his poetry that we read in high school could not but impress even this naïve reader with its inventiveness and power. I recall particularly “Lyonnesse”, “The Darkling Thrush”, and “In the Time of the ‘Breaking of Nations.’”

Hardy’s settings always intrigued me. After I discovered from the map of Wessex on the endpapers of his books that Hardy had used many real places for the settings of most of his stories and novels, and since I was not in a position to travel to England at the time, I set about collecting books that described and illustrated “Wessex”. Then through most of the 1980s my wife and I visited many of them. In particular, I have walked on Egdon – or where part of the heath would have been behind the Hardy
Cottage. A large area of the heath is now covered by a modern fir plantation as part of a reforestation effort. [The Hardy Cottage was the model for the Yeobright home in *The Return of the Native* and is currently operated by the National Trust.] I have walked on High Stoy where Gabriel Oak watched his and Bathsheba Everdene’s sheep in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, and traced the steps of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* in Dorchester.

From there it was only a natural step to accumulating and reading the various biographies and critical books and essays that related to Hardy’s life and writings. The result is this rather idiosyncratic collection of Hardyana which has provided me with much pleasure from its inception some fifty years ago. I now hope that students and scholars will find its various parts of interest and use.

Richard A. Johnson
Winnepeg, 2005
Bibliography

Information about the books listed on the following pages derives from:


*This icon indicates books held in the Rare Book Room, in the Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba. It has been adapted from Thomas Hardy’s monogram medallion, used on the covers of the Wessex Novels series, published by Osgood, McIvaine & Co. in the late 19th Century. (See Fig. 4).*
Books about Hardy, his Writings, and his World


_____. *Young Thomas Hardy.* London: Heinemann, 1975.


Holland, Clive. *Wessex: Painted by Walter Tyndale Described by Clive Holland*. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1906. *(See Fig. 1).*


Fig. 1.


Books by Thomas Hardy


This volume gathers twelve of Hardy’s stories, all of which had appeared in serialized form prior to this edition. (Purdy 152) A review of the journals and newspapers in which the stories appeared illustrates Hardy’s broad appeal to Victorian readers in England and in the United States. In England, the stories appeared in: The Sphere; Murray’s Magazine; Dorset County Chronicle; The Manchester Weekly Times; St. James’s Budget; English Illustrated Magazine; Illustrated London News; The Graphic; The Saturday Review; and The Bolton Weekly Journal. In America, The Cosmopolitan,


The Dynasts: An Epic-drama of the War with Napoleon and the Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall. London: Macmillan, 1931.

The Dynasts: An Epic-drama of the War with Napoleon, in Three Parts, Nineteen Acts, & One Hundred & Thirty Scenes the Time covered by the Action Being About Ten Years. London: Macmillan, 1923.

The last of Hardy’s books published during his lifetime, *Human Shows, Far Phantasies: Songs, and Trifles*, contains 152 of his poems. On the day before publication, the publisher wrote to Hardy, telling him that nearly the entire print run of 5,000 copies had been pre-sold. Less than a week later, the second edition was released. The third edition followed the next month. (Purdy 247-248)


*Late Lyrics and Earlier.* London: Macmillan, 1922.
This copy, signed by Hardy (See Fig. 2), has been professionally rebound in quarter leather. Originally in an olive-green cloth binding, this book of 151 poems and an “Apology”, was bound by Best & Co. (Bookbinders) along with the original front board and spine, and what looks to be a book review, lacking citation information.

According to Purdy, this is Hardy’s “most significant and extended utterance on poetry and criticism”. (214) Late Lyrics and Earlier first appeared in May 1922, in an edition of 3,250 copies, and was reprinted twice that year. (Purdy 227)

Fig. 2.
Tess of the D’Ubervilles: A Pure Woman. London: Macmillan, 1927. (See Fig 3)


A collection of 105 poems, written over a span of sixty years. All but eleven of the poems appeared in print for the first time in this book. Winter Words was published in an edition of 5,000 copies, with a second impression appearing in the same month. (Purdy 262) This particular copy is a first edition, containing no mention of an impression, and thus is very likely a first impression.
Tess of the D'Urbervilles

A Pure Woman

Faithfully Presented by

Thomas Hardy

"... Poor wounded one! My bosom is a bed
Shall lodge thee."—W. Shakspere.

Macmillan and Co., Limited
St. Martin's Street, London
1927

Fig. 3.
Collected Editions


Osgood, McIlvaine & Co. became Hardy’s sole publisher in 1894. This collected edition appears early on in Hardy’s relationship with the publisher, which only lasted until 1902. Five of Hardy’s books were published in their first editions in this collection: *Jude the Obscure; The Well-Beloved; Wessex Poems; Poems of the Past and the Present;* and *A Changed Man.* The Wessex Novels were bound in dark green cloth and show a gold-blocked TH monogrammed medallion. (See Fig. 4)
Fig. 4.


Volume 5. *Two on a Tower*. 1895.


This is the first edition of *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy’s last novel. (Purdy 279) The novel first appeared in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, in serial form between December 1894 and November 1895. (Webb 30) Both of Hardy’s

Johnson’s copy, now in the Libraries’ collection, may well be from the first impression of the first edition. According to Purdy (87), the first eight book signatures (A – H) exist in two distinct states in this edition – with page numbers on partially blank pages, and without them. The printer’s first impression included page numbers on partially blank pages; the second impression omitted them. Hardy’s personal copy, and those held in the Bodleian, the British Museum, and Cambridge all contain the first impression signatures. Johnson’s copy shows page numbers on partially blank pages, and therefore may be a first impression as well.


This is the first edition of the novel, first published serially in
the *Illustrated London News* and, simultaneously, *Harper’s Bazar*, in 1892. (Purdy 92-94; Webb 73)


Published over a period of nearly twenty years, this series arranges 24 volumes of Hardy’s works in two broad categories: The Wessex Novels, and Verse. The Wessex Novels are subdivided into “Novels of Character and Environment” (volumes 1 to 9), “Romances and Fantasies” (volumes 10 to 14), “Novels of Ingenuity” (volumes 15 to 17), and “Mixed Novels” (volume 18). Johnson’s collection includes five volumes from the set.

Prior to 1903, Hardy published his works with Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., in England, and with Harper & Brothers, in the
USA. Hardy transferred to the London-based Macmillan & Co. after Harper & Brothers acquired Osgood, McIlvaine & Co. Hardy revised his novels for publication in this “new and definitive edition” (Purdy 286) and wrote a general preface, printed in the first volume.

THE WESSEX NOVELS

I. Novels of Character and Environment


VERSE

Volume 2. *The Dynasts: An Epic Drama of the War with Napoleon, in Three Parts, Nineteen Acts, and One Hundred and Thirty Scenes*. Parts First and Second. 1920.


Harper & Brothers issued an “autograph” edition of 20 volumes of this collection in 1915, limited to 153 sets, each autographed by Hardy. This 1920
reissue, called the Anniversary Edition was also limited, to 1,250 sets, and includes a 21st volume, titled *Satires of Circumstance: Moments of Vision. Lyrics and Reveries with Miscellaneous Pieces and Miscellaneous Verses.* (Purdy 286)


Volume 3. *Jude the Obscure.* 1920


Volume 19. *The Dynasts: an Epic-Drama of the War with Napoleon, in Three Parts, Nineteen Acts, and One Hundred and Thirty Scenes*. Parts first and second. 1920.


About Richard A. Johnson

Richard Johnson, the first graduate in Engineering Physics from the University of Manitoba, joined the Department of Electrical Engineering in 1955. He held the position of Head of the Department from 1972 to 1977. In 1977, he moved to the senior academic administration of the University where he served as: Provost 1977-1982; Associate Vice-President (Programs) 1982; Associate Vice-President (Planning and Analysis) 1982-1987; Secretary of the Committee of Presidents, 1977-1992; (Senior Traveling Fellowship, Association of Commonwealth Universities, 1984); Associate Vice-President (Academic) 1987-1991; and Vice-Provost 1991-1997. He retired in 1997. From July 2005 he has held the position of Senior Scholar in the Office of the President of the University of Manitoba.

Professor Johnson has served on the board of the Winnipeg Community and Long Term Care Authority. He has continued to promote contact between the Icelandic government,
contact between the Icelandic government, the Manitoba Icelandic community and the University of Manitoba. In 1982 he received an Outreach Award from the University and then in 1996 the William J. Condo Award for Distinguished Service to Inter-Universities North.

Professor Johnson’s close ties with the University began with his father, Skuli Johnson, who was Head of the Department of Classics from 1939 to 1955. This pedigree may also account for the appeal the study of humanities has had for him over the years.

Professor Johnson has had many publications in refereed engineering journals, philatelic publications, and more recently in the *Icelandic Canadian* and *Manitoba History*. He is a founding member of the Winnipeg Gilbert and Sullivan Society. His poem ‘Domicilium II’ (after Thomas Hardy) was the winning entry in the New Iceland Poetry Competition Islendingadagurinn 1988.