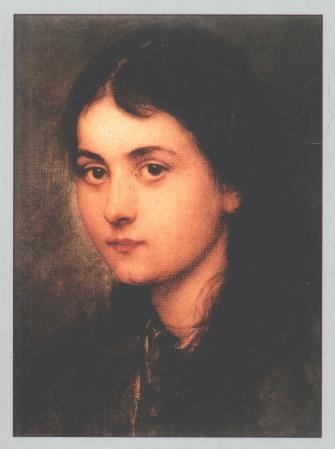
# TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES THOMAS HARDY



EDITED BY SCOTT ELLEDGE

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION
THIRD EDITION



#### A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

## Thomas Hardy TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

### AN AUTHORITATIVE TEXT BACKGROUNDS AND SOURCES CRITICISM

THIRD EDITION

Edited by

#### SCOTT ELLEDGE

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#### Preface to the Third Norton Critical Edition

Sixteen years after finishing his last novel, Hardy prepared the Wessex Edition of his collected works, published by Macmillan in 1912. In the General Preface to this handsome edition he classified his fourteen novels under three headings. The first of these classes, "Novels of Character and Environment," contained, as it happened, all the novels that he and his readers had judged to be his finest: Far from the Madding Crowd (1874), The Return of the Native (1878), The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886), Tess of the d'Urbervilles (1891), and Jude the Obscure (1895). Of these Hardy chose Tess, probably the most widely read, for Volume I of the new edition. It had been given a mixed reception by the reviewers in 1892 (one pronounced it Hardy's greatest novel while another was damning it as "an unpleasant story told in a very unpleasant way"), but it had been an immediate success with the public. Within a few years it had gone through many editions in England and America, and had been translated into German, French, Russian, Dutch, Italian, and other languages.

As this classic enters the second century of its life, one distinguished critic observes that of all Hardy's novels it "now appeals to the widest audience," and that it "has proved to be prophetic of a sensibility by no means emergent in 1891, . . . and seems to have moments of vision that are contemporary with us." <sup>1</sup> For such reasons, no doubt, it continues to appeal to college students and teachers, for whom I prepared its first Norton Critical Edition twenty-five years ago.

Since that edition, there has been a huge increase of published materials about Hardy and his works. In preparing the sections on "Hardy and the Novel" and "Criticism," I am grateful for the guidance provided by the annotated bibliographies of Helmut E. Gerber and W. Eugene Davis (1973 and 1983) and the up-to-date annotated bibliography of Donald P. Draper and Martin S. Ray (1989).

As I worked, I pleased myself to think of this edition as a modest part of a celebration of the one-hundredth anniversary of *Tess*, in that it

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includes selections from some other monumental contributions to the fame of the book and its author. First, thanks to Oxford University Press, I was able to replace the text of the Wessex Edition of 1912 with the new, definitive text edited by Juliet Grindle and Simon Gatrell (1983). Second, the section "Backgrounds and Sources" has been substantially enhanced by selections from the landmark biographies of Michael Millgate (1971 and 1981). And third, I was able to renovate my section of "Criticism" by introducing essays on the history of Hardy's debt to Darwin by Peter Morton and by Gillian Beer, whose *Darwin's Plots* (1983) seems to me to be a work of rare originality.

It now seems clear to me that an understanding of Darwin and of Hardy's Neo-Darwinian convictions is of prime importance for understanding the intellectual influences that helped shape *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. In addition, the sociological essay by the late Raymond Williams and the psychological essay by another Cambridge critic, Adrian Poole, which conclude my little critical anthology, are, I think, good examples of how the study of class-structures and of human sexual behavior may

enrich one's reading of the novel.

I have indicated sources for some footnotes by initials within brackets, as follows: [W] for Carl J. Weber's edition (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935); [F] for P. N. Furbank's New Wessex Edition (London: Macmillan, 1974); [EDD] for The English Dialect Dictionary, ed. Joseph Wright (London, 1898); and [OED] for the Oxford English Dictionary.

Without the resources of the Cornell University and the Bowdoin College libraries and the help of their librarians, I should never have finished any of the three editions of *Tess* I've been lucky enough to work on. My thanks to those institutions and to those people.

SCOTT ELLEDGE

Georgetown, Maine July 31, 1990

#### Hardy's Prefaces

#### Explanatory Note to the First Edition

The main portion of the following story appeared—with slight modifications—in the *Graphic* newspaper; other chapters, more especially addressed to adult readers, in the *Fortnightly Review* and the *National Observer*, as episodic sketches. My thanks are tendered to the editors and proprietors of those periodicals for enabling me now to piece the trunk and limbs of the novel together, and print it complete, as originally written two years ago.

I will just add that the story is sent out in all sincerity of purpose, as an attempt to give artistic form to a true sequence of things; and in respect of the book's opinions and sentiments, I would ask any too genteel reader, who cannot endure to have said what everybody nowadays thinks and feels, to remember a well-worn sentence of St. Jerome's: If an offence come out of the truth, better is it that the offence come than that the truth be concealed.

November 1891.

Т. Н.

#### Preface to the Fifth and Later Editions

This novel being one wherein the great campaign of the heroine begins after an event in her experience which has usually been treated as fatal to her part of protagonist, or at least as the virtual ending of her enterprises and hopes, it was quite contrary to avowed conventions that the public should welcome the book, and agree with me in holding that there was something more to be said in fiction than had been said about the shaded side of a well-known catastrophe. But the responsive spirit in which *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* has been received by the readers of England and America, would seem to prove that the plan of laying down a story on the lines of tacit opinion, instead of making it to square with the merely vocal formulae of society, is not altogether a wrong one, even when exemplified in so unequal and partial an achievement as the present. For this responsiveness I cannot refrain from

expressing my thanks; and my regret is that, in a world where one so often hungers in vain for friendship, where even not to be wilfully misunderstood is felt as a kindness, I shall never meet in person these appreciative readers, male and female, and shake them by the hand.

I include amongst them the reviewers—by far the majority—who have so generously welcomed the tale. Their words show that they, like the others, have only too largely repaired my defects of narration by their own imaginative intuition.

Nevertheless, though the novel was intended to be neither didactic nor aggressive, but in the scenic parts to be representative simply, and in the contemplative to be oftener charged with impressions than with convictions, there have been objectors both to the matter and to the rendering. <sup>1</sup>

The more austere of these maintain a conscientious difference of opinion concerning, among other things, subjects fit for art, and reveal an inability to associate the idea of the sub-title adjective with any but the artificial and derivative meaning which has resulted to it from the ordinances of civilization. They ignore the meaning of the word in Nature, together with all aesthetic claims upon it, not to mention the spiritual interpretation afforded by the finest side of their own Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Others dissent on grounds which are intrinsically no

1. By "scenic parts," Hardy means dramatic or narrative parts, as distinct from contemplative parts, in which the author makes observations about what happens in the story. When Hardy revised the title page by adding to Tess of the d'Urbervilles "A Pure Woman/Faithfully presented/by Thomas Hardy," he first wrote "depicted by," using a word that suggests that he thought of himself as painting a portrait, not inventing a subject. He said often, in various ways, that he had not wished to persuade his readers to a point of view, but only to present from his point of view an accurate account of what he had observed. Hardy had given a subtitle to an earlier novel, Under the Greenwood Tree, "A Rural Painting of the Dutch School" [Editor].

2. In an earlier edition (1895) Hardy continued this sentence, after a semicolon, as follows: "and drag in, as a vital point, the acts of a woman in her last days of desperation, when all her doings lie outside her normal character."

As a meaning of *pure*, "chaste" is "artificial and derivative," as Hardy says, as a glance at a good dictionary will confirm. The root meaning of *pure*, "clean" or free from foreign matter, is what Hardy refers to when he speaks of "the meaning of the word in Nature," a scientific meaning as in "pure oxygen" and "pure chocolate." In "a pure literary style" and "pure folly" the meaning is "derived"; but "chaste" is, as Hardy implies, a farfetched derivation.

In the King James Version of the Bible, pure is most frequently used in the phrase "pure gold."

In the Old Testament it is used once to modify "heart," as in "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully" (Psalms 24.4). In the New Testament, the word appears most frequently in reference to heart and soul; it seems never to be used as a synonym for chaste.

Hardy may have hoped his readers would read "pure woman" to mean "all woman" or "thoroughly woman" or "unadulterated woman," as in the phrase "pure womanly" in Thomas Hood's well-known poem "The Bridge of Sighs," cited by P. N. Furbank in his note in *The New Essex Edition* of the novel:

Touch her not scornfully; Think of her mournfully, Gently and humanly; Not of the stains of her. All that remains of her Now is pure womanly.

Hardy says that Tess had become "an almost standard woman" (71), and "what would have been called a fine creature" (77). What Angel Clare first regarded as an "interesting specimen of womankind" might be said to have turned out to a perfect specimen of womankind, or a pure woman.

Still, Hardy said himself that his "heroine was essentially pure, purer than many a so-called unsullied virgin. See Kathleen Blake's essay "Pure Tess: Hardy on Knowing a Woman," listed in the bibliography at the back of this edition [Editor].

more than an assertion that the novel embodies the views of life prevalent at the end of the nineteenth century, and not those of an earlier and simpler generation—an assertion which I can only hope may be well founded. Let me repeat that a novel is an impression, not an argument; and there the matter must rest; as one is reminded by a passage which occurs in the letters of Schiller to Goethe on judges of this class: 'They are those who seek only their own ideas in a representation, and prize that which should be as higher than what is. The cause of the dispute, therefore, lies in the very first principles, and it would be utterly impossible to come to an understanding with them.' And again: 'As soon as I observe that any one, when judging of poetical representations, considers anything more important than the inner Necessity and Truth, I have done with him.'

In the introductory words to the first edition I suggested the possible advent of the genteel person who would not be able to endure something or other in these pages. That person duly appeared among the aforesaid objectors. In one case he felt upset that it was not possible for him to read the book through three times, owing to my not having made that critical effort which 'alone can prove the salvation of such an one.' In another, he objected to such vulgar articles as the Devil's pitchfork, a lodging-house carving-knife, and a shame-bought parasol, appearing in a respectable story. In another place he was a gentleman who turned Christian for half-an-hour the better to express his grief that a disrespectful phrase about the Immortals should have been used; though the same innate gentility compelled him to excuse the author in words of pity that one cannot be too thankful for: 'He does but give us of his best.' I can assure this great critic 3 that to exclaim illogically against the gods, singular or plural, is not such an original sin of mine as he seems to imagine. True, it may have some local originality, though if Shakespeare were an authority on history, which perhaps he is not, I could show that the sin was introduced into Wessex as early as the Heptarchy itself. Says Glo'ster in Lear, otherwise Ina, king of that country:

> As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods; They kill us for their sport.<sup>4</sup>

The remaining two or three manipulators of *Tess* were of the predetermined sort whom most writers and readers would gladly forget; professed literary boxers, who put on their convictions for the occasion; modern 'Hammers of Heretics'; sworn Discouragers, ever on the watch to prevent the tentative half-success from becoming the whole success later on; who pervert plain meanings, and grow personal under the name of practising the great historical method. However, they may have causes

<sup>3.</sup> Andrew Lang, in Longman's Magazine for November 1892 [Editor].

4. Shakespeare, King Lear 4.1.36–37 [Editor].

to advance, privileges to guard, traditions to keep going; some of which a mere tale-teller, who writes down how the things of the world strike him, without any ulterior intentions whatever, has overlooked, and may by pure inadvertence have run foul of when in the least aggressive mood. Perhaps some passing perception, the outcome of a dream hour, would, if generally acted on, cause such an assailant considerable inconvenience with respect to position, interests, family, servant, ox, ass, neighbour, or neighbour's wife. <sup>5</sup> He therefore valiantly hides his personality behind a publisher's shutters, and cries 'Shame!' So densely is the world thronged that any shifting of positions, even the best warranted advance, galls somebody's kibe. <sup>6</sup> Such shiftings often begin in sentiment, and such sentiment sometimes begins in a novel.

July 1892.

The foregoing remarks were written during the early career of this story, when a spirited public and private criticism of its points was still fresh to the feelings. The pages are allowed to stand for what they are worth, as something once said; but probably they would not have been written now. Even in the short time which has elapsed since the book was first published, some of the critics who provoked the reply have 'gone down into silence,' <sup>7</sup> as if to remind one of the infinite unimportance of both their say and mine.

January 1895.

The present edition of this novel contains a few pages <sup>8</sup> that have never appeared in any previous edition. When the detached episodes were collected as stated in the preface of 1891, these pages were overlooked, though they were in the original manuscript. They occur in Chapter X.

Respecting the sub-title, to which allusion was made above, I may add that it was appended at the last moment, after reading the final proofs, as being the estimate left in a candid mind of the heroine's character—an estimate that nobody would be likely to dispute. It was disputed more than anything else in the book. *Melius fuerat non scribere.* <sup>9</sup> But there it stands.

The novel was first published complete, in three volumes, in November 1891.

March 1912.

T. H.

<sup>5.</sup> Exodus 20.17: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house \* \* \* thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant \* \* \* nor his ox, nor his ass \* \* \* " | Editor|.

<sup>6.</sup> Shakespeare, Hamlet 5.1.146: "The age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes

so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe" [Editor].

<sup>7.</sup> Psalms 115.17: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" [Editor].

8. P. 47ff. [Editor].

<sup>9.</sup> It would have been better not to write it [Editor].

#### From the General Preface to the Wessex Edition of Hardy's Novels (1912)

It has sometimes been conceived of novels that evolve their action on a circumscribed scene—as do many (though not all) of these—that they cannot be so inclusive in their exhibition of human nature as novels wherein the scenes cover large extents of country, in which events figure amid towns and cities, even wander over the four quarters of the globe. I am not concerned to argue this point further than to suggest that the conception is an untrue one in respect of the elementary passions. But I would state that the geographical limits of the stage here trodden were not absolutely forced upon the writer by circumstances: he forced them upon himself from judgment. I considered that our magnificent heritage from the Greeks in dramatic literature found sufficient room for a large proportion of its action in an extent of their country not much larger than the half-dozen counties here reunited under the old name of Wessex, that the domestic emotions have throbbed in Wessex nooks with as much intensity as in the palaces of Europe, and that, anyhow, there was quite enough human nature in Wessex for one man's literary purpose. So far was I possessed by this idea that I kept within the frontiers when it would have been easier to overlap them and give more cosmopolitan features to the narrative.

Thus, though the people in most of the novels (and in much of the shorter verse) are dwellers in a province bounded on the north by the Thames, on the south by the English Channel, on the east by a line running from Hayling Island to Windsor Forest, and on the west by the Cornish coast, they were meant to be typically and essentially those of any and every place where

Thought's the slave of life, and life time's fool

—beings in whose hearts and minds that which is apparently local should be really universal.

But whatever the success of this intention, and the value of these novels as delineations of humanity, they have at least a humble supplementary quality of which I may be justified in reminding the reader, though it is one that was quite unintentional and unforeseen. At the dates represented in the various narrations things were like that in Wessex: the inhabitants lived in certain ways, engaged in certain occupations, kept alive certain customs, just as they are shown doing in these pages. And in particularizing such I have often been reminded of Boswell's remarks on the trouble to which he was put and the pilgrimages he was obliged to make to authenticate some detail, though the labour was one which would bring him no praise. Unlike his achievement, however, on which an error would as he says have brought discredit, if

these country customs and vocations, obsolete and obsolescent, had been detailed wrongly, nobody would have discovered such errors to the end of Time. Yet I have instituted inquiries to correct tricks of memory, and striven against temptations to exaggerate, in order to preserve for my own satisfaction a fairly true record of a vanishing life.

One word on what has been called the present writer's philosophy of life, as exhibited more particularly in this metrical section of his compositions. Positive views on the Whence and the Wherefore of things have never been advanced by this pen as a consistent philosophy. Nor is it likely, indeed, that imaginative writings extending over more than forty years would exhibit a coherent scientific theory of the universe even if it had been attempted—of that universe concerning which Spencer owns to the 'paralyzing thought' that possibly there exists no comprehension of it anywhere. But such objectless consistency never has been attempted, and the sentiments in the following pages have been stated truly to be mere impressions of the moment, and not convictions or arguments.

That these impressions have been condemned as 'pessimistic'—as if that were a very wicked adjective—shows a curious muddle-mindedness. It must be obvious that there is a higher characteristic of philosophy than pessimism, or than meliorism, or even than the optimism of these critics—which is truth. Existence is either ordered in a certain way, or it is not so ordered, and conjectures which harmonize best with experience are removed above all comparison with other conjectures which do not so harmonize. So that to say one view is worse than other views without proving it erroneous implies the possibility of a false view being better or more expedient than a true view; and no pragmatic proppings can make that *idolum specus* stand on its feet, for it postulates a prescience denied to humanity.

And there is another consideration. Differing natures find their tongue in the presence of differing spectacles. Some natures become vocal at tragedy, some are made vocal by comedy, and it seems to me that to whichever of these aspects of life a writer's instinct for expression the more readily responds, to that he should allow it to respond. That before a contrasting side of things he remains undemonstrative need not be assumed to mean that he remains unperceiving.

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#### The Text of TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

hitehale. To superiede copy previous TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES; A PURE WOMAN. Hairpully depocted by momen Handy " Poor wounded name! my bosom, as a hed, shall lodge thee:" W. Shakespeare.

Hardy's draft of the title page of Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 1891

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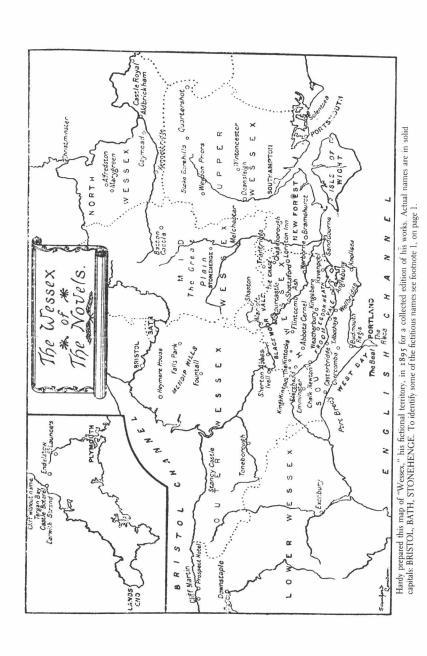
<sup>†</sup> Though he divided the novel into what he called "phases" and gave each of the seven phases a name, Hardy simply numbered his fifty-nine

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