

THE
THOMAS HARDY
FELLOWSHIP

NEWSLETTER No. 31

Autumn 2010

Edited by John Pentney

Editor's Notes and Fellowship News

I would particularly like to draw members' attention to the arrangements for this year's Fellowship Christmas lunch party which will be found on the back page of this Newsletter. As last year, the venue is Pimperne' pleasant modern village hall, with Gill Jackson providing most of the catering ably assisted by Janet Scott-

Puttock and Fred Hoskins. As Gill is anxious to buy in and prepare the food as soon as possible, she will greatly appreciate your urgent attention to making your booking without delay. This is always a very convivial occasion true to the Fellowship's ethos and you will not be disappointed if you attend for the first time. It's always a good opportunity to catch up with old friends in a relaxed atmosphere.

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Being away at university (no talk of 'uni' in those now distant days) with no ready access to television, I missed the 1973 BBC TV adaptation of six of Hardy's short stories entitled *Wessex Tales*. In fact the stories were drawn from *Life's Little Ironies* and *A Group of Noble Dames* as well as *Wessex Tales* itself. I have the Pan Books paperback tie-in volume *Thomas Hardy's Tales From Wessex* containing 'The Withered Arm', 'Fellow-Townsmen', 'A Tragedy of Two Ambitions', 'An Imaginative Woman', 'Barbara of the House of Grebe' and 'The Melancholy Hussar of the German Legion'. At long last though, I shall have the chance to catch up with these adaptations as the series has now been issued on DVD with extra features by Acorn Media (0207 627 7221). It now requires only the 1969 BBC TV version of *The Woodlanders* to be issued to complete the availability for home viewing of 1960s and 1970s TV and cinema film Hardy adaptations which began with John Schlesinger's superb 1967 cinema version of *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

It is interesting to note that three of the short stories chosen for TV adaptation had featured in the seven stories chosen by John Wain for the 1966 Papermac *Selected Stories of Thomas Hardy*, perhaps indicative of some consensus as to which were Hardy's best essays in this genre. They are 'The Withered Arm', 'An Imaginative Woman' and 'Barbara of the House of Grebe'.

With about 50 to choose from, there must surely be scope for many further TV versions of Hardy's often under-rated short stories, which tend to be overshadowed by his great novels.

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On the subject of dramatic adaptations of Hardy's works, it is worth noting that this autumn the excellent Dorset County Museum is staging a temporary exhibition 'Thomas Hardy on Stage and Screen', which runs until 11 December. This focuses on many of the numerous live theatre, cinema and television productions inspired by Hardy's writings.

MEETING REPORTS

1. Stinsford and the Bockhamptons

by Professor Fran Chalfant

On Thursday 10 June 2010, the Fellowship marked the occasion of Hardy's birthday on the 2 with a circular perambulation, 'The Heart of Hardy's Wessex' led by John Pentney. It began around 11.30 am with an early picnic lunch in Thorncombe Wood car park just west of Hardy's Birthplace at Higher Bockhampton. Next, the approximately dozen walkers set off south on a splendidly sunny day with moderate temperatures. Upon arrival at Bockhampton Cross (Mellstock Cross in Hardy's works), John Pentney read 'By Henstridge Cross at the Year's End' and explained that this poem's original title had been 'By Mellstock Cross at the Year's End'. The group then continued about half a mile southwards to Lower Bockhampton hamlet and turned west briefly in order to view the one-time school which Hardy first attended at age eight in a new building. It was instituted by Julia Augusta Martin, wife of the new owner of the nearby Kingston Maurward estate; Hardy excelled in arithmetic and geography but had 'indifferent' handwriting (*Life*). Like many such village schools it combined a schoolroom with residential accommodation for a teacher and it also features as the home of schoolmistress Fancy Day in *Under the Greenwood Tree*. While Fellowship members were viewing the premises, Mrs. Vulliamy, the present resident, came to the window and answered questions about the property's history. A delightful added touch was her husband's ringing the original school bell above the porch for the benefit of the onlookers.

The walkers then returned to their original southerly route, crossing over Bockhampton Bridge and following the river westwards along a delightful wooded footpath for about half a mile where a turn north led to Stinsford Church. Here in the first of two adjoining cemeteries the group halted to read several Hardy poems, including 'Friends Beyond.' After exploring the interior of Stinsford Church with its several Hardy associations, the group sat down to hear John Pentney read 'Afternoon Service at Mellstock' from the pulpit.

After passing northwards through the churchyard near the Hardy family and

related graves, Fellowship members came into the Kingston Maurward estate, the former major private, but now institutional, landholding in this part of Dorset. A walk of about ten minutes led to the 'new' Palladian-style manor house, dating from 1720, Knapwater House in Hardy's *Desperate Remedies*, and now the headquarters of a large regional agricultural college. Further east, also passed by the visitors, was the old manor house (c. 1590), mentioned as the Mellstock Quire 'go the rounds' in *Under the Greenwood Tree* and home to villain Aeneas Manston in *Desperate Remedies*, today in private hands.

By following a very pleasant series of often animal-related footpaths and tracks, the group was able to stroll through the estate property and farmland back to the start of the walk. At this point, all were glad to make the short drive east for tea at Pine Lodge Farm south west of Rainbarrow. Besides offering a full range of meals, Pine Lodge is very much a working farm, with animals in easy view of visitors. On this occasion these included a five-day-old lamb and her mum in a barn near the restaurant.

2. Portland: The Isle of Slingers

by Professor Fran Chalfant

The Saturday 10 July 2010 circular walk led by Stephen Mottram on the Isle of Portland provided ample proof of the diversity of landscape to be found in the county of Dorset. On 10 June the Fellowship had explored the gentle layout of lush meadows and woodlands of the environs of Stinsford.

Although only about a dozen miles to the south, few locales can offer more contrasts than Portland, a tear-shaped peninsula hanging off the coast near Weymouth, termed by Michael Pitt-Rivers as 'one of the strangest pieces of country in England. . . high, barren, treeless and grey.' The locale's remoteness was long reflected by its inhabitants. Hardy termed them 'a curious and well-nigh distinct people, cherishing strange beliefs and singular customs now for the most part obsolescent' (*The Well-Beloved*).

Progress, however, cannot be held back, and Fellowship members on this outing saw a number of commercial and residential developments en route related to the forthcoming 2012 Olympics sailing events and the release of property after the

closure of the local Royal Naval base.

After a level approach along the Chesil Bank, a strenuous almost circular climb resulted in a superlative view of terrain including the curve of the West Dorset coast, Weymouth, and the Chesil approach. South of Weymouth the seascape revealed the Portland stone slabs of the huge breakwater enclosing Portland's harbour. The foundation stone was laid in July 1849 by Prince Albert, whose passage through Dorchester en route was remembered by Hardy and recorded in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. The quarry workers were largely convicts housed in the original prison, now a young offenders' institute. The prison role has now been assumed by the Verne, a one-time fortress near Portland's north coast. Their sentences involved the hard labour of quarrying the high-quality local stone, much of which had earlier been shipped to the capital to grace such London landmarks as the Banqueting House in Whitehall and St. Paul's Cathedral.

The walkers passed on close as legally possible to the south entrance of the prison, still in use, before turning south along a series of often quite steep and narrow coastal footpaths. Making this part of the excursion especially memorable were the contributions of the approximately eight walkers on their respective specialties: botany, ornithology, ecology, small animals, reptiles, etc.

Because the excursion was on foot and largely devoted to lesser-known locales on Portland, time did not permit visits to more familiar Hardy sites such as Avice's cottage (*The Well-Beloved*), once the home of birth control pioneer Dr. Marie Stopes, now Portland's local history museum. Nor of course did time allow for a visit to the Bill, Portland's southernmost point, where in *The Trumpet-Major* Anne Garland travelled in hopes of seeing the *Victory* sail by en route to Trafalgar with her lover Bob Loveday aboard.

After the earlier trek along coastal footpaths, walkers turned westward to the pleasant village of Easton (East Quarriers in *The Well-Beloved*), where they much enjoyed tea at the Sugar Loaf Café, which offers visitors liberal opening hours and a wide choice of refreshment.

Next, the Fellowship had hoped to visit the imposing eighteenth-century church of St. George, Reforne, just to the west, notable for its array of period features and monuments. Unfortunately, it was locked, as it is maintained by only a small group of dedicated volunteers for the Historic Churches Trust.

The northward walk back to the car park followed Portland's north-west coast,

where much evidence remains of the former practice of tipping the local quarry waste over the cliffs into the sea.

All in all, it was truly a day of discoveries in an area still unfamiliar to many.

Thomas Hardy and West Somerset: Sir Morton Peto, *A Laodicean* and Dunster/Stancy Castle

by John Pentney

Sir (Samuel) Morton Peto: There can be no doubt that the real-life railway contractor Samuel Morton Peto (he evidently preferred his second name to his first for he was known as Sir Morton rather than Sir Samuel following his knighthood) was the inspiration for the posthumous character of John Power, the recently deceased father of the heroine Paula Power in Hardy's novel *A Laodicean*. There are too many points of coincidence to be able to resist the identification: both men were major railway contractors, staunch Baptists who built chapels, Members of Parliament and country house owners. Paula's father had acquired Stancy Castle as his country residence, symbolic of his financial success and upward social mobility; and likewise Morton Peto had purchased and substantially rebuilt in enlarged form Somerleyton Hall near Lowestoft in Suffolk. East Anglia was the main focus of Peto's railway contracting (and indeed promotion) empire in Britain, but his business was international and he was created a baronet in 1855 for speedily building a railway in the Crimea to assist the British military efforts in the Crimean War.

Peto (1809-1889) first impinged on Hardy's world in 1845-47 in that he was the contractor for the construction of Dorset's first mainline railway - the Southampton and Dorchester, which passed a little to the south of Hardy's childhood home in Stinsford parish. The young Hardy may well have seen Peto's navvies at work and he was to travel on the line many times during the course of his long life. Hardy was probably aware of Peto's association with his local railway; but in any event he no doubt learnt enough about the contractor from newspapers or architectural journals like *The Builder* to base John Power on him, for the biggest railway



Sir Morton Peto

contractors like Peto and Thomas Brassey were amongst the leading captains of Victorian industry with a high public profile.

However, although Hardy's Stancy Castle in *A Laodicean* is generally identified with Dunster Castle in west Somerset, at least as to its location, Peto had no connections with the area. Apart from the Southampton and Dorchester, his only other West Country railway contract was the Cornwall Minerals Railway, so he was not involved in the construction of the West Somerset Railway from Taunton (Norton Fitzwarren Junction) to Watchet (1862) and its later (1874) end-on Minehead Railway extension with one of its stations at Dunster. Much smaller contractors were responsible for these lines.

It is interesting to note that Thomas Hardy was not the only nineteenth-century writer to make fictional use of Morton Peto. The quarrelsome George Borrow, probably best known now as the author of *Wild Wales*, lampoons Peto in a satirical rant in his novel *The Romany Rye* (1857), which is a mixture of autobiography and fiction and continues his earlier *Lavengro*. The reactionary Borrow, through his wife, had acquired land at Oulton not far from Peto's Somerleyton estate and had resented Peto's construction of the railway between Norwich and Lowestoft across part of his land. Railway company-enabling private parliamentary Acts gave them powers of compulsory purchase though most land was acquired by negotiation. In Chapters IV and V of the Appendix to *The Romany Rye* (The Appendix comprises about a quarter of this oddly-structured book) Peto appears as Mr Flamson:

This person makes his grand débüt in the year 'thirty-nine, at a public meeting in the principal room of a country inn. He has come into the neighbourhood with the character of a man worth a million pounds, who is to make everybody's fortune; at this time, however, he is not worth a shilling of his own, though he flashes about dexterously three or four thousand pounds, part of which sum he has obtained by specious pretences, and part from certain individuals who are his confederates. But in the year 'forty-nine, he is really in possession of the fortune which he and his agents pretended to be worth ten years before—he is worth a million pounds. By what means has he come by them? By railroad contracts, for which he takes care to be paid in hard cash before he attempts to perform them, and to carry out which he makes use of the sweat and blood of wretches who, since their organization, have introduced crimes and language into England to which it was previously almost a stranger—by purchasing,

with paper, shares by hundreds in the schemes to execute which he contracts, and which are his own devising; which shares he sells as soon as they are at a high premium, to which they are speedily forced by means of paragraphs, inserted by himself and agents, in newspapers devoted to his interest, utterly reckless of the terrible depreciation to which they are almost instantly subjected. But he is worth a million pounds, there can be no doubt of the fact - he has not made people's fortunes, at least those whose fortunes it was said he would make; he has made them away; but his own he has made, emphatically made it; he is worth a million pounds. Hurrah for the millionaire! The clown who views the pandemonium of red brick which he has built on the estate which he has purchased in the neighbourhood of the place of his grand débût, in which every species of architecture, Greek, Indian, and Chinese, is employed in caricature—who hears of the grand entertainment he gives at Christmas in the principal dining-room, the hundred wax-candles, the waggon-load of plate, and the ocean of wine which form parts of it, and above all the two ostrich poult, one at the head, and the other at the foot of the table, exclaims, "Well! if he a'n't bang up, I don't know who be; why he beats my lord hollow!" The mechanic of the borough town, who sees him dashing through the streets in an open landau, drawn by four milk-white horses, amidst his attendant out-riders; his wife, a monster of a woman, by his side, stout as the wife of Tamerlane, who weighed twenty stone, and bedizened out like her whose person shone with the jewels of plundered Persia, stares with silent wonder, and at last exclaims "That's the man for my vote!" You tell the clown that the man of the mansion has contributed enormously to corrupt the rural innocence of England; you point to an incipient branch railroad, from around which the accents of Gomorrah are sounding, and beg him to listen for a moment, and then close his ears.

Borrow was against the progress represented by the growth of railway communication and despised the *nouveau riche* Victorian entrepreneurs like Peto. In *A Laodicean*, Hardy, through the words of his characters, gives a much more temperate debate about the relative merits of the old aristocracy represented by the decaying de Stancy family and new men like John Power who have constructed engineering works of great public utility.

Anthony Trollope also presents a railway contractor in an unfavourable light in his

Barset novel *Doctor Thorne* (1858) in the unsavoury person of Sir Roger Scatcherd 'who was whilom a drunkard stone-mason in Barchester'. Scatcherd was made a baronet for expeditiously completing a railway contract like Peto. It seems that Trollope's railway contractor, like Hardy's, was inspired by Peto, though Peto was a man of non-conformist sobriety. In turn, *Doctor Thorne* may well have influenced Hardy's *A Laodicean*. Overall, it seems that Hardy, perhaps on account of his own relatively humble origins, was the writer most favourably disposed to self-made entrepreneurs, for his John Power is by no means disparaged.

Three biographies of Morton Peto have appeared in recent years:

Edward C. Brooks, *Sir Samuel Morton Peto Bt. 1809-1889: Victorian Entrepreneur of East Anglia*, Bury Clerical Society, 1996 – this is the only one to mention Hardy and *A Laodicean*.

John G. Cox, *Samuel Morton Peto*, Railway & Canal Historical Society, 2008.

Adrian Vaughan, *Samuel Morton Peto: A Victorian Entrepreneur*, Ian Allan, 2009.

Also worth consulting on railway contractors generally is R.S. Joby, *The Railway Builders*, David & Charles, 1983.

Dunster and *A Laodicean*: The late Claudius Beatty has convincingly argued (*Procs. Dorset Nat. Hist. & Archaeol. Soc.* Vol. 90 for 1968 pp.258-60) that Hardy's Stancy Castle owes much to the layout of Corfe Castle and Hutchins' *History of Dorset* account of Corfe's picture collection. As Hardy was ill and bed-bound when writing much of the novel, he would have drawn on his memory of Corfe and used his copy of Hutchins. No doubt Emma would have had to help Hardy with the large heavy folio volumes of Hutchins, probably reading the relevant passages to him, as he was obliged to lie on his back with his feet raised. Dunster is more like Stancy Castle in that it remains habitable, unlike Corfe which was effectively destroyed by the Parliamentarians after its second Civil War siege. Hardy *may* have visited west Somerset before writing *A Laodicean* in 1880-81, and it would have been particularly easy when he was living at Yeovil in 1876 with just one change of train at Taunton, but there is no record of such a trip. Indeed his only recorded visit to the area is a reference in a letter of 22 August 1911 to Florence Henniker describing a trip with his sister Kate earlier that month 'to the north coast of Somerset & Devon: to Minehead, across Exmoor by coach ... to Lynmouth ... Lynton, Ilfracombe by steam boat, Exeter Cathedral &c.' They would probably have seen the 'fairy-tale' silhouette of Dunster Castle from the train as it neared Minehead, though in some light conditions it tends to blend inconspicuously into its background. Hardy does not mention that this is a return trip nor visiting the small town of Dunster. It therefore seems unlikely, but not impossible, that Hardy had made an earlier visit to the area.

The topography of *A Laodicean* is rather vague, particularly in the earlier editions where one of the references to Toneborough (Taunton, Somerset) in later editions, appears as Casterbridge (Dorchester) suggesting a Dorset location. Even so, a Somerset and indeed a Dunster element seems to have been present in the novel from the outset - the hero's surname is Somerset and the name of the character Havill was doubtless suggested by the River Avill a small stream that flows through Dunster below the castle. So if Hardy had not visited the area by 1880, he must have consulted a guide book and/or a map to find the river name - I suspect that Hardy often used Ordnance Survey one-inch maps: this small stream would not be named on smaller scale maps. In Hardy's hand-drawn map of Wessex, Stancy Castle is located where Dunster is, and in a letter of 28 September 1896 to Bertram Windle identifying his Wessex place-names he lists Dunster Castle as 'The "Castle de Stancy"'.

Hardy did not begin his novel-writing career with a predetermined master plan of a 'Wessex' topographical background. Rather, his notion of a semi-fictional Wessex evolved gradually during the 1870s and 1880s. However, as he came to realise that there was probably a sales synergy to be derived from the use of Wessex as his 'unique selling point' for what were later marketed under the banner of 'The Wessex Novels' rather like Sir Walter Scott's Waverley novels, Hardy revised his earlier novels and short stories for later collected editions such as the Osgood McIlvaine edition of 1895-96 and the Wessex Edition of 1912. *Inter alia* he made the Wessex topography much more consistent throughout his prose fiction. Nevertheless, several anomalies remain. For instance, the same Stinsford parish locale forms the principal backdrop to both *Desperate Remedies* and *Under the Greenwood Tree* with different fictional Wessex names. Various changes were made to *A Laodicean*: the early reference to Casterbridge becomes Toneborough, and earlier scenes at Markton are divided between a small town corresponding with Dunster which remains as Markton, and Toneborough, the much larger county town of Outer Wessex (Somerset). The inn where Somerset stays is changed from the King's Arms, suggestive of Dorchester (though Taunton also has a King's Arms pub), to the Lord Quantock Arms suggestive of Somerset's Quantock Hills a few miles to the east of Dunster. Attempts by Hardy topographers such as Herman Lea to identify the Lord Quantock Arms with the Luttrell Arms Hotel are predicated on Hardy's unlikely familiarity with Dunster. These changes generally reinforce the idea of a Somerset location.

Another possible Somerset connection is in the family name de Stancy that Hardy uses for the former owners of Stancy Castle – it is very similar to de Courcy, the name of the medieval magnate who gave his name to the village of Stogursey or

Stoke Courcy near Bridgwater and built a castle there. Little more than earthworks and the gatehouse survives of Stogursey Castle, now used as a Landmark Trust holiday let. This also suggests another possible Trollope influence on Hardy, for the Earl and Countess De Courcy are characters in *Doctor Thorne* (see p10 above).

The publication in recent years of Hardy's fiction using his earlier first volume edition texts such as in the Penguin Classics and the Oxford University Press World's Classics series has made it much easier to disentangle the evolution of Hardy's Wessex, even if such scholarly editions run the risk of marginalizing the importance of the author's final thoughts in revising his prose fiction. Guides to Hardy's Wessex ranging from Herman Lea's *Thomas Hardy's Wessex* (1913) via Denys Kay-Robinson's *The Landscape of Thomas Hardy* (1984 – a revision of his 1972 *Hardy's Wessex Re-appraised*) to F.P. Pitfield's *Hardy's Wessex Locations* (1992) are largely based on Hardy's Wessex Edition texts with little or no reference to earlier editions which would help to elucidate some of the Wessex topography and its inconsistencies.

A Tale of Two Castles: Dunster Castle has much in common with Corfe Castle, though it was baronial rather than royal. Both were established by the time of Domesday Book (1086) and are built on natural hilltops which in the case of Dunster provided a convenient motte-and-bailey site after some artificial scarping. Claims still sometimes made that both were Saxon strongholds are erroneous - the Saxons *did not* build castles which were a Norman import to the British Isles. A few castles had been built in the Welsh Marches of Herefordshire by Norman favourites of Edward the Confessor prior to 1066, but these are exceptions of the rare kind that genuinely prove the rule. A true castle is a fortified residence of the feudal era. Both castles were defended for the Empress Matilda against King Stephen during the 'Anarchy' of that troubled reign, and continued to develop architecturally during the Middle Ages. Like Hardy's Stancy Castle they both command views of passing trains (both lines are now coincidentally preserved steam railways) though Corfe's railway did not open until 1885 a few years after *A Laodicean* was written. Neither castle has a railway tunnel in the vicinity (apart from a minor narrow-gauge mineral railway tunnel near Corfe) - the novel's main-line tunnel was probably suggested by those on the Yeovil-Dorchester-Weymouth line such as Bincombe or Poundbury with which Hardy would have been familiar. Dunster also looks across the Bristol Channel to the Vale of Glamorgan, where the Turberville family first appears in Anglo-Welsh history in the early twelfth century; the Dorset branch became the inspiration for Hardy's d'Urbervilles. Unlike Corfe though, Dunster's medieval buildings were extensively modernized in the early 17th century to provide greater domestic comfort; and again

remodelled in the late 1860s/early 1870s by architect Anthony Salvin to create today's stately home. He had helped to 're-medievalize' parts of another castle - the Tower of London. Only the two gatehouses at Dunster preserve their genuine medieval aspect. Although the castle was rendered indefensible after being held for Charles I in the Civil War, the main residential block was repaired and continued as a Luttrell family home. This contrasts with Corfe which was necessarily abandoned at this time after drastic Parliamentary demolition with gunpowder and replaced after the Restoration by a new classical-style house at Kingston Lacy near Wimborne Minster for the Banks family. It is quite likely though that the unmodernized Corfe would have been replaced in any event by a house offering much greater domestic comfort and convenience, even without the Parliamentary destruction. Dunster and Corfe castles passed to the National Trust in 1976 and 1981 respectively.

NB Cecilia Hynes-Higman's account of the Fellowship's September weekend visit to west Somerset including Dunster Castle will appear in the next Newsletter. The above paper is a much expanded version of the notes prepared for that weekend. Corfe Castle was visited earlier this year – see Stephen Mottram's extended account in Newsletter No 30.

HENCHARD WASN'T THE ONLY ONE

by Gill Jackson

During a recent short break in Suffolk, I came across a promotional brochure for Blythburgh, a village on the A12 between Ipswich and Lowestoft. My eyes fell upon the reproduction of a Notice in the *Ipswich Journal* in 1789 relating to the selling of a wife and I immediately thought of Michael and Susan Henchard:

“Oct 19th Samuel Balls sold his wife to Abraham Rade in the parish of Blythburgh in this county for 1s. A halter was put round her and she was resigned up to this Abraham Rade. No person or persons to instruct her with my name, Samuel Balls, for she is no longer my right.”
Witnessed etc

This genuine case of wife-selling took place about 100 years before *The Mayor of*

Casterbridge was first published. It seems that selling one's wife was not unusual, with some 400 documented cases being known from the 17th-20th centuries. In those days divorce was almost impossible except for the very rich and required the great expense of promoting a private Act of Parliament prior to 1858. Even when there was a little relaxation in the laws, it was restricted and expensive. The sale of a wife could, therefore, be regarded as a way round the divorce process and, hedged about (as in the above case) with quasi-legality in the form of an announcement in the local paper, the exchange of money, the use of a halter and the presence of an 'auctioneer', it seems to have been an acceptable way of ending a marriage and, presumably, effecting a "remarriage" in one fell stroke. It must not be assumed, though, that the wife was always unwilling!

We do not know the circumstances of the wife-sale in Blythburgh, but the use of the word 'right' at the end of the announcement and of a halter, to indicate the wife's status as a chattel of her husband, must have been demeaning, but probably necessary to add weight to the transaction.

Although Susan Henchard was, understandably, shamed and humiliated by her drunken husband's insufferable behaviour, in the end she called his bluff and went with Newson, taking Elizabeth-Jane with her, leaving Henchard hazily surprised that she had actually done so, with five guineas in exchange. The difference in price from one shilling to five guineas (105 shillings) over a period of about 100 years leaves one thinking that Henchard, financially only, did pretty well!

Editor's Note: The Fellowship visited Blythburgh's splendid 'wool' church during last autumn's extended visit to Suffolk in search of the Hardy-Edward Clodd associations. There are no plans to include spouse-sale adverts in the Newsletter. The new divorce law of 1858 features in *The Woodlanders*.

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The Editor welcomes contributions of short articles, accounts of Fellowship activities, letters, book reviews etc. in typescript, legible handwriting, on 3.5" floppy disc, CD, DVD+/-RW or by e-mail (either as a file attachment or in the body of the e-mail) - the electronic methods entail the least amount of editorial re-typing.

THE THOMAS HARDY FELLOWSHIP FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME 2010

Please enter these dates in your diary if you have not already done so.

For walks, please dress according to the weather forecast and choose footwear appropriate to the likely underfoot conditions.

Sunday 24 October: Meet at 1.00 pm at Pimperne village hall for an afternoon of Hardy etc. readings and tea. Small charge per head for hall hire. Please bring your favourite prose and poetry texts by Hardy etc., **No need to bring food for tea as previously requested, since Janet Scott-Puttock is kindly providing the catering. Names to John Pentney please as soon as possible.**

Saturday 11 December: the annual Fellowship Christmas lunch party at Pimperne village hall near Blandford Forum, with catering kindly provided by Gill Jackson and Fred Hoskins assisted by Janet Scott-Puttock. Also a good opportunity to exchange/sell your surplus Hardy/Wessex etc. books, and exchange Christmas cards to save on postage.

Menu

Main Course

Roast Beef with Yorkshire Pudding
Chicken and Mushroom Pie
Vegetarian Feta Cheese and Spinach Pie
All served with roast potatoes and seasonal vegetables

Bring own wine if required

Sweet Course

Christmas Pudding

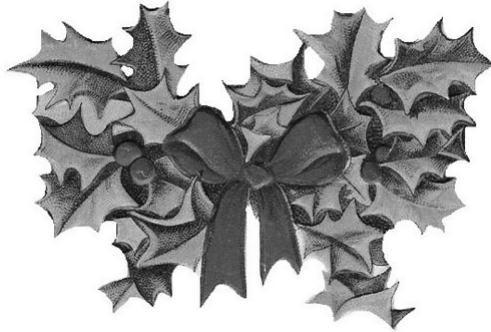
Sherry Trifle

Fruit Salad

All served with custard or cream as appropriate

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Tea or Coffee with Mints



Meet at 11.15 a.m. onwards for coffee and Janet's famous mince pies. - lunch will be at about 1.00 p.m. and followed by seasonal readings from Hardy and other writers. **Confirmation of booking and choice of menu with cheque for £12.50 per person (payable to: Mrs G Jack-son)** to Gill at 5 Hyde Gardens, Pimperne, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8XG (01258 - 453376) **by 31 October please.** No increase on last year's price!

Pimperne is about 3 miles north east of Blandford, off the A354 Salisbury road. The hall, which has a car park, is located on the north side of the village at NGR 903097 opposite a right-angled bend on the minor road leading from the village to the 'top' Blandford-Shaftesbury road.



www.the-thomas-hardy-fellowship.org