

THE THOMAS HARDY FELLOWSHIP

NEWSLETTER No. 8 LATE AUTUMN 2004

Edited by John Pentney

Editor's Notes and Fellowship News

Most Fellowship members have renewed their subscriptions with commendable promptness in response to the pro forma letter enclosed with the last *Newsletter*, and are paid up until the end of 2005. The Treasurer and I are most grateful for this commitment. A reminder is enclosed for those very few who have overlooked their renewal. There has been only one definite resignation which is gratifying. If you did not receive a renewal notice, you had already made a pre-emptive payment (thank you) or had joined relatively recently with your initial payment covering membership until the end of next year.

We are rapidly approaching the end of the Fellowship's second year of existence, which has seen an even fuller programme than last year's. Accounts of our most recent events appear below.

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As related elsewhere in this *Newsletter*, the Fellowship's weekend visit to the Boscastle area and Plymouth went ahead successfully in September. Our experience of Boscastle convinced us that the decision not to cancel in the wake of the August flood disaster was the right one. Apart from being unable to walk around the harbour area - still out of bounds to visitors during reconstruction work - the aftermath did not impact unduly on our planned programme.

Although we had all seen television and newspaper pictures of the devastation, we were not quite sure exactly what to expect on our first post-disaster view of the village. It was possible to drive through on the main B road - we had been advised to ignore 'road closed' signs; but parking in the lower part of the village was difficult as the main car park was being used as a compound for the reclamation contractors' heavy plant and materials. However, it was possible to enjoy a meal and drink at the Cobweb Inn, which had been able to resume normal business with remarkable swiftness. The general stores was also back in business, but the other shops and businesses, along with many of the houses, at the lower end were shut and boarded up, giving something of a ghost town atmosphere. The upper part of Boscastle was relatively unscathed, being well above most of the flood waters. The Vallency Valley footpath to St Juliot was closed as much has been washed away, leaving the National Trust with a large repair operation. Fortunately, we were able to walk out to Beeny Cliff on the Saturday morning of our visit.

Overall, whilst it was sad to see so much destruction, in supporting local business we did not feel like ghoulish 'rubbernecks'. We remain optimistic that Boscastle's visual attractiveness will be fully restored within a year or two.

It was particularly satisfying for many of us to view and study for the first time the new Simon Whistler engraved-glass Hardy memorial window in St Juliot church. Although the form and placing of the finished window is somewhat different from the original conception, it should be placed on record that the idea of a Hardy memorial window in St Juliot church was that of Fellowship member Janet Scott-Puttock. Janet had originally proposed a stained-glass commemoration of Hardy in the window on the north side, between the two memorial tablets to Hardy and Emma Gifford. Hardy lovers have cause to be grateful to Janet for her inspired idea, even though others thought fit to revise the scheme.

Interestingly, *The Sunday Times* 'Travel' supplement for 24 October contained an account by literary biographer Claire Tomalin (who is working on a new Hardy biography) of a short break in the area, having stayed earlier that month at the Old Rectory, St Juliot. It was headed: 'The quiet corner of Cornwall where Thomas Hardy met his heroine' - I'm not sure Emma Gifford was Hardy's heroine rather than sweetheart, and I suspect the wording was the work of a sub-editor rather than Claire Tomalin. However, it was a generally good article as regards the Hardy associations and did mention Elfride's underwear episode in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. She pointed out the anomaly that St Juliot is not marked on the Ordnance Survey maps. The name St Juliot does not indeed appear on the current OS maps of smaller scale than the 1:25,000-scale Explorer map, where the name of the civil parish is printed. It is an unfortunate omission from the popular 1:50,000 Landranger map, the one that many tourists are most likely to use. This is because, unlike the old one-inch maps, on the Landranger sheets the Ordnance Survey does not separately identify civil parishes which do not have a nucleated village or hamlet of the same name. Since there is of course no nucleated village settlement called St Juliot, but only scattered tiny hamlets and farms, the parish is not named. This must be inconvenient for would-be visitors seeking 'St Juliot', even though the church is marked with the symbol for a church with a tower.

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It is said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but Hardy's numerous verse forms have probably inspired fewer parodies than, say, Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*. However, Simon Curtis has kindly drawn my attention to a respectful reworking of Hardy's 'Weathers' by Felix Dennis, entitled 'Silly Seasons'. This accompanied an article on Dennis in *The Independent on Sunday* on 10 October. For copyright reasons, I cannot reproduce it in full, but the first of the two stanzas reads:

This is the weather an editor likes,
And so do I;
When the rag is full of gossip and strikes,
And sales are high;
And a train derails for want of a brake,
And drunk celebrities drown in a lake,
And ministers' wives are burned at the stake.
And readers laugh 'til their bellies ache
And so do I.

* * *

My wife and I were privileged to attend the celebration of the life of Sir Alan Bates, held at London's Royal Court Theatre on 26 September. We were representing the Fellowship at this tribute to a remarkable actor, who died late last year, and whose career included definitive interpretations of two major Hardy rôles. Many of his friends in the thespian world paid moving personal tributes to a man highly regarded both as a decent person and as a consummate actor, intercut with clips from many of his film and TV performances. Fittingly, the programme was prefaced by Alan's sensitive recorded reading of Hardy's valedictory poem 'Afterwards'. This was one of the readings Alan made for a 1998 National Trust CD of Hardy prose and verse, interspersed with music by the Mellstock Band.

In the theatre bar after the formal programme, we were able to talk to Jack Galloway who played Donald Farfrae to Bates' Henchard in the 1978 BBC *Mayor of Casterbridge*. It seems that both actors were big Elvis Presley fans and that news of the 'King's' death broke during the making of the production in 1977. They consoled themselves by playing Elvis recordings during the breaks from filming, and whilst resident at the now demolished Grosvenor Hotel in Swanage. I'm not sure what Hardy would have made of such music - he was definitely not into blue suede shoes.

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At Bristol Temple Meads station on 18 October, a diesel railway locomotive was formally named *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Pam Rayer of Pershore had won a Wessex Trains competition in the *Bath Chronicle* to choose a name and unveiled the nameplate at the ceremony. Below the cast metal

nameplate is another smaller plate with a silhouette image of the view looking up Dorchester High Street. The locomotive is Class 31 number 31601 and is leased by Wessex Trains from Fragonset Railways. Until the end of October it worked a daily Bristol-Weymouth and return train, appropriately calling at Dorchester West station. It is currently used on a Fridays only Bristol-Brighton and return service via Bath, Salisbury, Southampton and Chichester; but otherwise it can sometimes be seen stabled in a former parcels platform at Temple Meads station. Hopefully, it will return to Bristol-Weymouth services next summer.

This is the first time that a Hardy novel has lent its name to a locomotive, although one steam locomotive bore the name *Thomas Hardy* as do a modern electric locomotive and a an electric multiple unit (motorized coaches without a separate locomotive).

Boscastle and Plymouth Weekend

24-26 September

Robert Scott-Puttock writes: Members met on Friday evening 24 September 2004, to enjoy the 'fleshpots' of Boscastle, to wit, The Cobweb inn, seemingly one of only two functioning businesses at the harbour end of the village following the disastrous flood. Stephen Mottram had taken the trouble to drive down previously, but despite his booking we were not expected. Understandable, given the upset caused to the area and the current efforts to renovate. However, a pleasant meal was provided in the first-floor restaurant. On Saturday morning at 10.00 a.m. we forgathered at St. Juliot church to view the Simon Whistler window in memory of Hardy, in the quiet, lonely little church. Several expressed the opinion that, upon first impression, it was a smaller work than they had imagined, but upon further scrutiny praised the detail and exquisite workmanship. We stood before it a long while savouring this tribute to Hardy. Under John Pentney's supervision we then sat under the Hardy plaques in the north aisle opposite to hear poems appropriate to the occasion. There were heartfelt readings of some of the greatest love-poems in the English language. We all know of the expression of sentiment that flowed from Hardy's pen following Emma's passing. Most members took a turn and the result was a very moving experience.

After leaving the church, the more hardy amongst us drove to Beeny hamlet for the footpath walk to Beeny Cliff in indifferent misty weather. It was arranged that we would lunch in Camelford before various members went on for an afternoon visit to Lanhydrock House (Endelstow House in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*) near Bodmin. The appointed caf é was closed but fortunately another opposite pleasantly provided sustenance to hungry Hardyans.

On Saturday evening we met and fell upon the Crossbow inn at Tintagel. Here dishes of gargantuan portions arrived, which in some cases mysteriously disappeared. Large desserts too vanished and the more temperate among us could but sit in mute surmise as to where such quantities of food could go. An advance party had gone on to Plymouth where, on Sunday, Pene and David Manford were kindly providing hospitality and guidance to appropriate venues relating to Emma's life there. My own party, after five days in the locality, decided to repair home to Dorset. We look forward to a Plymouth trip in the future. Our thanks to John and Jo Pentney for their work and planning for this pleasant weekend.

Lorelei Edwin writes: At Camelford, the restaurant where we'd planned to have Saturday lunch was closed. So we looked around and spotted a small café which most of the group went into. However, a smaller group headed for the pub next door. Being disinclined to eat, I was one of those who headed for alcohol! We enjoyed an extremely lively chat covering everything from World War 1 to absent fiends(!) and jolly reminiscences, which led to our totally forgetting the time and all those we'd left next door. So we were surprised when one of them popped in to tell us that the others had already left for Lanhydrock. We dashed to catch up and, in an example of 'more haste, less speed' being required, got lost!

We then had to zoom around Lanhydrock gardens and House, until we found the delightful Pene Manford, who led us to the rest of the group. Several of us were affected by the sad history of the favourite son and heir Tommy's death in World War 1 and how this had devastated the entire family. His suitcase, still full of the possessions that went to the Front with him, lies open on his bed, as if there

is still hope of his eventual return. The poignancy of this was made all the more powerful by the understatement of the gesture. We then headed off for tea, again splitting into two groups. While others showed restraint and opted for an ordinary tea, others threw caution to the wind and headed for cream teas and a lovely coffee cake (the latter being the option which I recommend). A short walk through the ever impressive grounds led us to the final chat in the car park, as we didn't want the visit to end, before leaving for our evening destination.

Stephen Mottram writes: On the Sunday, our guide in Plymouth was Pene Manford who gave us well-researched notes with colour photographs, all in an attractive binding. We met at her house for coffee and then went to the house occupied by Emma Gifford's family until 1859 (and the move to Cornwall). From the upper front windows of 9 Bedford Terrace they had glorious views over the city. The road in front was a carriage drive leading to the Tavistock Road and large beautiful gates.; beyond the drive were gardens belonging to each house in the Terrace. Today you can easily imagine how grand it would have been. Emma was very sad to leave the city in which she was born, and we read Hardy's 'During Wind and Rain' which refers to Bedford Terrace in its last stanza.

Further down the Tavistock Road is Charles Church, now a ruined monument to the Second World War, but where Emma's family had been buried. Emma once wanted to be buried there too, but when she returned to Plymouth for her father's funeral she found that the family vault had been interfered with. It is still a lovely building, the tower and spire complete despite the bombs, and it is a pity that it is in the middle of a traffic island, inaccessible to pedestrians because of three lanes of fast-moving traffic, except once a year at Christmas when police guide carol singers across the road for the annual carol service.

Onward we went, towards the Barbican, passing lovely old buildings that the bombs did not touch and into Tin Street. There Emma taught at a Ragged School, one of the schools set up from 1848 for children from the lowest classes of society. Beyond is Plymouth's Barbican (where we had lunch) which leads eventually to the Hoe (where we had refreshments). All this overlooks Royal Naval establishments (and much more) and is a most attractive part of the city, somewhere that Emma would have been very familiar with. She would not have known Smeaton's Tower in its present position, however, (except perhaps when attending her father's funeral in 1890) for this former Eddystone lighthouse was not moved to this prominent position on the Hoe until 1862.

Behind the Hoe is Sussex Street - Emma's home at number 9 (referred to in the first stanza of 'During Wind and Rain') was another casualty of the war, and we cannot be sure exactly where it was. Pene's notes include copy correspondence between Denys Kay-Robinson and the City Librarian in 1969, but we do not have 'the sketch map to indicate the rather complicated numbering' scheme on the east side of the street where the Gifford house was. Pene's notes copy the entry for number 9 from the 1851 Census which lists a servant, Emma's father as 'attorney at law', Emma (and her brothers and sisters) as 'scholars' (she was 10 at the time), and her grandmother's occupation as 'annuitant'. It was because grandmother died (and because the money had in any case run out after she had started to spend the capital) that the family had to make the move to Cornwall. Nearby is the site of Emma's school 'kept by dear refined ladies of perfect manners' who drew down the blinds when military drills took place on the Hoe. Little girls should not see men parading.

On our way back to Pene's house and a lovely welcome tea, we passed St Andrew's church, sadly closed on Sunday afternoons. It has John Piper windows, installed to replace those shattered in the war, and it is worth visiting the church for this stained glass alone. But the church is an important part of the Emma trail and the 'stammering chimes' of the tower (untouched by the bombs) are referred to in the second stanza of Hardy's poem 'Places'. Hereabouts, the marble street paving is referred to in 'The West of Wessex Girl'. Hardy's poem was 'begun in Plymouth', and as we walked these streets it was easy to imagine how he would have been drawn to St Andrew's church and the Hoe by Emma's phantom when he made his visit in March 1913. Many thanks to Pene for her meticulous research and our enjoyable day. There are many other Plymouth/Emma/Hardy connexions and we will be back.

Puddletown and Athelhampton Visit

by Stephen Mottram

It was good to see about twenty people on Sunday 29 August outside Puddletown church. Our numbers were swelled by people from the village, anxious about the effects the proposed parish hall will have on the churchyard. We moved to the grave of Maria Sparks, and tried to visualise what will happen if her headstone and others' and yew trees are removed to make way for the hall. John Pentney read extracts from *Far from the Madding Crowd* and explained the architecture of the church tower in relation to Hardy's description and traced the likely position of Fanny Robin's grave, so carefully attended by Troy. If the parish hall is constructed, it will encroach to within thirty metres of this important Hardy site.

John Antell took us on a tour of the churchyard and pointed out the positions of the Hardy and Antell gravestones. The Antell family achieved Hardy fame when John the shoemaker (1816 - 1878), husband of Hardy's Aunt Mary, became in part a model for Jude Fawley. Hardy had recorded his thoughts about his uncle in an undated notebook entry and the 'way in which he had been driven to drinking and violence, to isolation and self-disgust, and ultimately to an early grave, largely as a consequence of Society's denial of any opportunity to develop his many and considerable talents' (Millgate, 1982, *Thomas Hardy: A Biography*, p. 348). Our own John Antell, distant relative to John and Mary Antell, to Maria Sparks (whose gravestone will be removed) and to Hardy himself was born at the shoemaker's shop in the village, and here he was guiding us around the churchyard and village with his wonderful anecdotes in that richest of accents. We urged him to write down his memoirs for our own sakes, for the sake of Hardy studies and simply because it seemed to us so important that this last Hardy relative interested in Hardy the writer and his relatives should place on record the many things he still clearly remembers. So, John, when you read this, remember what we want you to do please!

Inside the church, John Pentney read to us 'The Children and Sir Nameless' and other Hardy poems. This church still has the unspoilt 17th-century interior, though the rebuilding of the chancel in 1910 caused Hardy to assist the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in its (unsuccessful) opposition to the scheme. In a box pew under the gallery is carved (very neatly) the name HENERY, later used for the character Henery Fray in *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

Our next stop was Athelampton, the late-medieval house where Hardy was often a visitor. In the gardens we looked at the various features. These now include an old turnpike keeper's cottage, adjoining the former main road, now bypassed. An exhibition in the cottage told us that the first keeper was named Reuben Day - surely this influenced Hardy for the names of his characters Reuben Dewy and the Day family in *Under the Greenwood Tree*. This is especially likely since Hardy was assistant to John Hicks when the latter built Athelampton church (1861-62) opposite the toll house, and Hardy must surely have visited the site of the church and seen the toll house at some stage. In any case the name Reuben Day would have been known to Hardy's family. It is, perhaps, a typical Hardy touch that in the novel, Geoffrey Day is a different kind of keeper from a turnpike keeper. We concluded our visit with a self-guided tour of Athelhampton Hall.

Later, some of us joined others at the Bagber home of Janet and Bob Scott-Puttock, where Janet had kindly laid on another of her sumptuous high teas. One of the topics of conversation was whether Arabella's trick on Jude of claiming pregnancy in order to get him to marry her, was autobiographical. We all went home satisfied with a good day and with thanks to Janet and Bob for the food; and thanks to John Pentney for organizing the day and to John Antell for his recollections.

Thomas Hardy's 'The Abbey Mason', Gloucester Cathedral and the Origins of Perpendicular Architecture

by John Pentney & Stephen Mottram

- Well: when in Wessex on your rounds,
Take a brief step beyond its bounds,

And enter Gloucester: seek the quoin
Where choir and transept interjoin

from 'The Abbey Mason'

On Saturday 16 October, a few Fellowship members strayed beyond the marches of Wessex to meet at the south porch entrance to Gloucester Cathedral. This was in order to celebrate and study Hardy's imaginative medieval-fantasy poem 'The Abbey Mason.' Our immediate access to the church was prevented by a service for the Gloucestershire Federation of Women's Institutes, so we first visited the nearby Beatrix Potter's Tailor of Gloucester's house before taking lunch in the New Inn. This is a fine late-medieval hostelry with a traditional galleried courtyard such as would have been used for dramatic performances.

After lunch we visited the redundant medieval St Nicholas church before making a leisurely exploration of the cathedral church. We gave particular attention to the Perpendicular-style work in the south transept and the choir, and paid to visit the choir and presbytery triforium gallery with its exhibition on the great Perpendicular stained-glass east window. In the south transept, we compared Hardy's detailed architectural terminology in the poem with the medieval masons' art that inspired its composition. After tea in the refectory, we adjourned outside beneath the south window of the south transept, where Stephen Mottram read 'The Abbey Mason.', with its numerous rhyming-couplet stanzas. We had planned to read this inside, but the time for Evensong had caught up with us and we felt it inappropriate to compete with the liturgy. The reading of Hardy's works at the actual scenes described always enhances our understanding of a writer with such a great sense of place. So ended another enjoyable Fellowship excursion.

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The following essay is based on the background notes prepared for the visit by Stephen Mottram and John Pentney.

Despite turning from architecture to full-time writing as a career in 1874, Hardy maintained a lifelong interest in medieval architecture and continued to visit historic buildings in Britain and on the Continent. His first recorded visit to Gloucester Cathedral was in July 1898 on a bicycle tour as he records in the *Life*, and in greater detail, in a letter of 22 July 1898 to Florence Henniker 'I went to the afternoon service at Bristol Cathl & next day to the same service at Gloucester - a most interesting building, for it was there that the Perpendicular style was *invented*: you can see how it grew in the masons' minds.' (*Collected Letters* Vol.2, p. 197). This idea of the organic development of the style was expanded in his 1911 poem 'The Abbey Mason' (*Collected Poems* 332) which followed another visit to the city in that year:

Being interested at this time in the only Gothic style of architecture this can be called especially and exclusively English - the perpendicular style of the fifteenth century - Hardy made a journey to Gloucester to investigate its origin in that cathedral, which he ascertained to be in the screen between the south [choir] aisle and the transept - a fact long known to other investigators, but only recently to him. He was so much impressed by the thought that the inventor's name, like the names of the authors of so many noble songs and ballads, was unknown, that on his return he composed a poem thereon, called "The Abbey Mason", which was published a little later in Harper's Magazine, and later still was included in a volume [Satires of Circumstance] with other poems.

Life pp384-85

Although now one of England's great cathedrals, the large and magnificent church of the former St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, did not acquire cathedral status until after the dissolution of the monasteries: the Abbey was dissolved in January 1540 (one of the last to be dissolved); and in September 1541 a new diocese was created, carved out of the see of Worcester. (A similar process occurred at Bristol). The church's survival between its surrender to Henry VIII's commissioners and its new cathedral rôle may have been due to royal patronage as the burial place of Edward II. This explains why Hardy's poem, set in the 14th century, is entitled 'The Abbey Mason' rather than 'The Cathedral Mason'.

It would perhaps be too easy to regard the medieval period as one of intellectual, technical and artistic stagnation between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance, but such a view would be very mistaken. Despite Education Secretary Charles Clarke's myopic and philistine dismissal of the study of medieval history, the Middle Ages were, in many ways, a sophisticated and vibrant era and nowhere is this more apparent than in architectural development. The progression from the heavy ponderous Norman or Romanesque style to the lightness of late-gothic testifies to the willingness of master masons and their patrons to experiment with bold, innovative styles and techniques. The three main phases of English gothic architecture extending from the late-12th century to the mid-16th century are traditionally designated Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular. While the first two derived from France, the evolved and mature Perpendicular style was, as Hardy realised, a development unique to England (though it spread to Wales, Scotland and the English possession of Calais), even if its earliest forms were influenced by the French Rayonnant style and motifs from Middle Eastern Islamic architecture.

The study of medieval architectural history has progressed greatly since Hardy's day, and we now know that the Perpendicular style did *not* originate at Gloucester even though the rebuilding of its south transept is in part a very early example of the style, and may be regarded as an important prototype which marked an influential stage in its evolution. It is the oldest *surviving* example of the true Perpendicular style. The earliest Perpendicular buildings were constructed under royal patronage - the chapter house and cloisters (1332-35) of Old St Paul's Cathedral (demolished after severe damage in the 1666 Great Fire of London, but known from a Hollar engraving). The master mason responsible for these works was William Ramsey (the separate profession of architect had not yet developed and the leading master masons were the nearest equivalents - they were architects in all but title). Ramsey is one of many medieval master masons whose names are known to us - the late John Harvey compiled *English Mediaeval Architects: A Biographical Dictionary down to 1550*. Even earlier than the work at St Paul's was St Stephen's Chapel (1292-1348) at the Palace of Westminster (all but the crypt destroyed by fire in 1834) which although not stylistically Perpendicular, embodied some of the concepts such as decoratively-panelled walling that were to characterize the later style.

The rebuilding of Gloucester's south transept and shortly afterwards the choir and presbytery was probably inspired during the abbacy (1329-37) of John Wigmore (Wygmore in Hardy's poem) by the desire to provide a more fitting setting for the tomb (c.1330-35) of Edward II who had been murdered at nearby Berkeley Castle in 1327, and which had become a shrine attracting pilgrims (unworthy king though he had been). The works are likely to have been financed by pilgrims' gifts and donations by his son and successor Edward III. This royal patronage doubtless explains why the new (Perpendicular) Court style was adopted at Gloucester. However, the earliest rebuilding work in Gloucester's south

transept c.1331 does not display Perpendicular features - these appear with the south window c.1335-36 with tracery that is recognizably Perpendicular such as the horizontal transom and vertical mullions that rise to the window head. This window, together with the Perpendicular work in the choir and presbytery, has been attributed to William Ramsey either directly or in a consultant capacity, although the name of another master mason - Thomas of Canterbury - has also been suggested. Yet another master who may have worked at Gloucester in the 1330s was John de Sponlee, whose name suggests that he may have originated from Spoonley near Winchcombe in Gloucestershire.

So Hardy's suggestion in 'The Abbey Mason' that the Perpendicular style adventitiously derived from rainwater altering the chalk lines on a drawing board must remain what it always was - a fanciful conceit. If, as seems likely, William Ramsey was the principal originator of the style, we have to reject Hardy's notion of an anonymous local master mason being its inventor.

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HARDY, OXFORD AND CHRISTMINSTER

by John Pentney

'Oxford: "Cowley's Latin Quarter"
quoted in John Piper, *Oxon Shell Guide*, nd [1930s]
[Cowley is the car factory industrial suburb]

On 19 December 1863, Hardy wrote to his sister Mary who was a National School mistress at Denchworth near Wantage, about 15 miles south west of Oxford: 'I am glad you have been to Oxford again. It must be a jolly place. I shall try to get down there some time or other.' His first recorded visit to the Oxford area had been shortly before this in April 1863 to see Mary at Denchworth, but clearly he did not visit the city, which is a little surprising, given his interest in architecture and literary associations. During an 1864 visit to Mary, he was more interested in visiting Great Fawley, south of Wantage, for its associations with his paternal Head ancestors. It is questionable whether Hardy assisted Arthur Blomfield in the building of Oxford's Radcliffe Infirmary chapel in 1864 - while Beatty (Introduction to *The Architectural Notebook of Thomas Hardy*) accepts the notion, Gittings (*Young Thomas Hardy*) rejects it. We are on firmer ground on 11 May 1875: Hardy went to Oxford to watch college boat races and to respond to the toast to 'Literature' at a dinner of the Shotover undergraduate society at the Mitre Hotel.

Hardy's next visit to Oxford (and Fawley again) was in late September 1892, at the time when he was starting to formulate his ideas for the novel published in 1895 as *Jude the Obscure* - not his first choice of title. He annotated his copy of *Alden's Oxford Guide*: 'Though I am alive with the living, I can only see the dead here, and am scarcely conscious of the happy children at play.' This was a far cry from the 'jolly place' of Hardy's 1863 visualization of Oxford, but grimly accordant with his bitterly satirical depiction of Britain's oldest university city, thinly disguised as Christminster, in *Jude*. A further visit to the city followed in June 1893 to witness the University's Commemoration (Encaenia) ceremonies.

Despite his decidedly unflattering representation of Oxford University and its colleges in *Jude*, Hardy was awarded an honorary Oxford Doctor of Letters degree in February 1920; and elected an honorary fellow of Queen's College (not one of the colleges identifiably satirized in *Jude*!) in November 1922. In June 1923, Hardy and Florence motored to Oxford via Salisbury, Fawley and Wantage for a two-day visit to Queen's. He took the opportunity to see again some of the city's sights such as the Martyrs' Memorial and the famous curve of the High Street (commonly known as the High) of which Queen's classical façade forms a prominent part. This was Hardy's last overnight absence from Max Gate.

Christminster or Oxford is just outside Hardy's Wessex, being on the Mercian or left bank of the Thames (also known as the Isis in the vicinity of Oxford), which until 1974 basically formed the county boundary between Berkshire (Hardy's North Wessex) and Oxfordshire. Jude Fawley first enters Christminster on foot from the west having walked down Cumnor (Lumsdon) Hill and traversed the 'the level way between pollard willows' of Botley Road. He would have passed the Great Western Railway station (rebuilt twice since the 1890s). The station, on the western fringe of the city centre, is used several times by the protagonists in *Jude* in their various journeyings.

HARDY'S CHRISTMINSTER LOCATIONS

Beersheba - the now gentrified but formerly working-class 'Jericho' area where Jude lodged.

St Silas Church - St Barnabas Church in 'Jericho' where Sue worshipped after the death of her children. Very High Church, Byzantine style, cement-rendered (this has not weathered well), built 1869 to Arthur Blomfield's design.

Bibliol College - Balliol College, founded c. 1263. Its Master rejected Jude's application for admission.

Cardinal College - Christ Church. Hardy was not necessarily following Harrison Ainsworth in calling it Cardinal College, as this was its original name when founded in 1525 by Wolsey. Refounded by Henry VIII as Christ Church, 1532, after Wolsey's fall from favour. Christ Church (Oxford) Cathedral is also the college chapel, where Jude went to see Sue at a service.

Cardinal Street - St Aldate's, which Christ Church fronts.

Chief Street - The High Street or the High, noted for its famous curve giving an interesting perspective to its many fine buildings.

Church with the Italian porch - St Mary the Virgin, the University church, which has an early Renaissance-style south porch with helical-carved (spiral) columns as Hardy describes.

Circular theatre - Probably an amalgam of the D-shaped Sheldonian Theatre (Christopher Wren, 1664-69, used for University ceremonies and concerts) and the nearby circular (strictly speaking, polygonal at ground-floor level) Radcliffe Camera (James Gibbs, 1737-48, part of the Bodleian Library). Both buildings are surmounted by a cupola, and Hardy describes the view Jude has from the Sheldonian cupola.

Cross in the pavement - actually in the middle of the road, where Sue and Jude met in Broad Street. Here the Protestant Bishops Latimer, Cranmer and Ridley were burnt at the stake, 1555-56. Not to be confused with the 1841 Martyrs' Memorial to them in nearby St Giles.

Crozier College - possibly Oriel College, founded 1326; but if the **Crozier Hotel** is based on the former Mitre Hotel (latterly a Berni restaurant) owned by Lincoln College, Crozier could be Lincoln, founded 1427. Lincoln's coat of arms includes a mitre (a bishop's hat) and a crozier is a bishop's staff of office.

Fourways - Carfax, the city centre crossroads.

Lamb and Flag Inn - appears under its own name. Property of St John Baptist College (founded 1555). The lamb and flag or *agnus dei*, is a symbol of Christ, but is also associated with St John the Baptist who proclaimed Christ as the Lamb (*agnus*) of God. Here Arabella works intermittently as a barmaid; and Jude in a state of intoxication, is provoked into reciting the Creed in Latin to demonstrate that he is as learned as the University undergraduates.

Oldgate College - New College, founded 1379 by William of Wykeham. Closely associated with Winchester College public school. Arabella briefly walks in the gardens in the final chapter of *Jude*.

Rubric College - identified by Hardy as possibly based on Brasenose College, founded 1509.

Sarcophagus College - could this be Corpus Christi College (founded 1517)? A sarcophagus is a stone coffin and corpus is Latin for body.

Fellowship Contacts

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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 disk or by e-mail *attachment* (rich text format please) - the latter two methods entail the least amount of editorial re-typing.

THOMAS HARDY FELLOWSHIP EVENTS 2005

Saturday 8 January: 11.00 a.m. Meet at Simon Curtis' house (9 Caernarvon Close, Dorchester). Please bring food for an indoor 'picnic' lunch. After lunch, we will walk to Stinsford church and have some Hardy readings.

Saturday 5 March: 11.00 a.m. Meet at the north porch entrance to the Minster church at Wimborne Minster for an exploration of Hardy's Warborne in *Two on a Tower*. After a pub lunch we will walk or drive to The Avenue to view the outside of 'Lanherne', Hardy's rented Wimborne residence.

Other 2005 events will be listed in the next *Newsletter*, due to appear in February. Activities planned include a Nine Barrow Down walk from Swanage to Corfe Castle following Ethelberta's donkey's hoofprints (Swanage Railway steam train from Norden Park & Ride to Swanage); explorations of Dorchester based on the themes of crime and punishment, and the photographs of Harry Pouncy; and a London visit in connection with the Trafalgar bicentenary celebrations. Ideas for future meetings always welcome.