

THOMAS HARDY'S WESSEX WORLD

A Comparison Between:

Thomas Hardy's Major Novels

A Thesis

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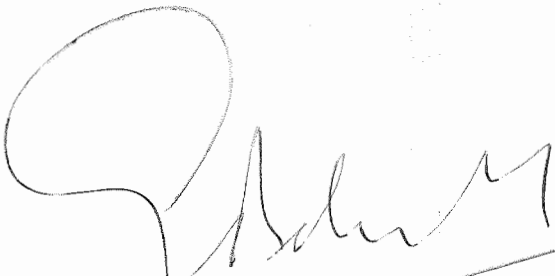
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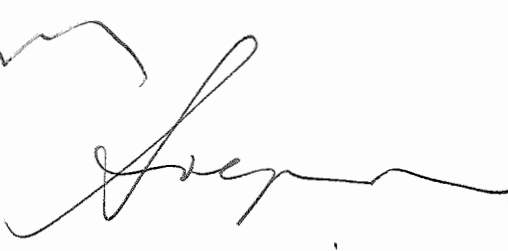


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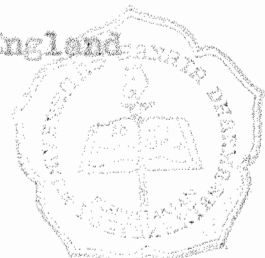
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INTRODUCTION

I. Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)

In this section I would like to introduce Thomas Hardy so that we may get some knowledge about the background of his life. In the presentation of this short biography I have depended to some extent on Irving Howe's "Thomas Hardy".

Thomas Hardy was born on June 2, 1840, in the village of Upper (or Higher) Bockhampton, near Dorchester. His father was a master-mason and his family stood between the gentry above and the peasants below. The Hardys were very fond of music and they played often. For Thomas Hardy, who was a bright but sensitive boy, music was very important.

"That music could lure and intoxicate, Hardy had known since childhood. Certain tunes played by his father would make him weep even as they made him dance,....." 1)

Thomas's mother encouraged her son to read books. She even gave him some books to help him start a library. As a mother, she provided him with some freedom.

"Mrs. Hardy had the even greater good sense to allow her son a measure of neglect. Often solitary and almost always shy, he (Thomas) would wander for hours through the countryside, learning to love - it might be more accurate to say, coming to be at one with - birds and small animals," 2)

Thus he had begun to love the country life and nature

1) Irving Howe, Thomas Hardy, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1968, pp. 3, 4

2) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 6

in general from early childhood, though not all was idyllic or even pleasant. He felt a shock when a boy was found under a hedge, dead of starvation, and also when he watched curiously through a telescope the hanging of a convict. Though this hanging was common in this old days and was even treated as a spectacle of excitement, the sensitive Thomas had his own feelings about it.

He loved his homeland with its traditional Dorset culture, its customs, work and pleasures of the rural country world.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the Industrial Revolution with its reform movement had begun to influence the life of the countryside in England. Yet, the transformation came very slow for the unchanged, unaffected Dorset, though it did come and frighten people.

Hardy recalled the earlier days as a time of charm, peace and social unity. Dorset was a religious community, but the way the people believed in Christianity was conventionally dogmatic. They accepted everything without question. In his early teens Hardy taught Sunday school.

When he was eight he went to a local school. He was a shy boy and very frail. A year later, he was sent to an excellent day school in Dorchester. He was a good scholar but not a prodigy. He was tender, ruminative and aloof. He began to study Latin and Greek and German and read many books. He was diligent and won prizes from his teacher. He also began to acquire the habit of self-education which would remain

with him till death.

At sixteen, Thomas Hardy was taken out of school and apprenticed to John Hicks, a Dorchester architect distinguished by "kindliness of nature and a knowledge of the classics." ³⁾ This period was very important for Hardy's life.

"For Hardy the several years he spent with Hicks not only marked the beginning of a lifelong absorption with church architecture, particularly untampered Gothic; these years also provided a kind of miniature college, with another apprentice, a few young people from town and Hicks himself transforming the office into a seminar where everything from pedobaptism to classical declensions was discussed." ⁴⁾

They read and discussed the books and magazines that came from London. They had long discussions on life, philosophy and religion. The contemporary thought so affected Hardy that he began to worry about problems of religious doctrine, though throughout his youth he was seriously considering to enter the ministry. At that time, people like John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), Charles Darwin (1809 - 1882) and others stirred the whole world with their radical, modern thought. Serious people like Hardy with their youthful traditionalist faith and background really felt uneasy about these modern ideas and they began to question the real truth.

In Dorchester Hardy met two friends who would prove decisive in turning him to literature and the

3) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 7.

4) Ibid, p. 7.

intellectual life. The first was the Reverend William Barnes, a poet and philologist who was close to folk life and sources and wrote in the local dialect. From Barnes, Hardy gained the conviction that the life of obscure country people could provide a sufficient subject and occasion for writing poetry. The second was Horace Moule whose influence would bring Thomas Hardy into an active relationship with the possibilities of modern thought. He was a young man, liberal and radical; his belief was "increasingly liberal in nature, proposing to free Christian doctrine of superstitious and dogmatic accretions." 5)

"Men like Horace Moule appear and reappear throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century. Brilliant, erudite and unstable, they are modern intellectuals somewhat in advance of modernity. Catalysts of the very disbelief toward which they hesitate to yield themselves, they are torn by the struggle between youthful pieties and mature intelligence, and they end by paying dearly for their heresies and doubts ----....." 6)

Thomas Hardy gradually became a skeptic and he abandoned forever his youthful idea of preparing himself for the church.

At twenty-two, Thomas' architectural training was completed and he left Dorchester for London, where he again worked in an architect's office, and was involved with church restoration. This period was very valuable for him to prepare for his career as a novelist.

5) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 10

6) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 10

He learned the impressions of cosmopolitan life, he formed the complex of opinions he would retain throughout his life, and he began writing poetry. He read widely and worked very hard. He attended lectures and visited galleries. He wrote some thirty poems during these four years in London. He wished to be a poet and became convinced that architecture was not for him.

His reading influenced him very much. He tried to discover the truth about God, man and nature, no matter how damaging that truth might be to the remaining fragments of his faith. He was anxious about this throughout his life and he regretted it very much.

Hardy never felt at home in London. He would retain a strong feeling of social inferiority, "caused not so much by his sense of where he stood in Dorset as by his sense of where Dorset stood in relation to London." ⁷⁾ Throughout his life, he would think of himself as a simple country man. He could not accustom himself to London's mode of life when he found it easier to accept the radical views of the city's intellectuals.

In July 1867 Hardy returned to Bockhampton and went back to Hicks' architectural office, now working part time, and began to write his first novel, "The Poor Man and the Lady" which was never published and lost. It was a social satire about a contrast of the fashionable London life with the naturalness of the country.

In 1872, he met a young woman, Emma Lavina Gifford, who impressed him very much and whom he married later.

7) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 3.

Between about 1868 and 1896 Hardy wrote fourteen novels and three volumes of short stories. Many of those novels appeared as magazine serials. Dorset was called Wessex in his novels. In them he poured out his heart and his love towards his homeland and his countryside. In his own life Hardy found himself, both in spirit and style, close to the ways of farmers and woodcutters; "they had not yet been infected with the diseases of restlessness, the peculiarly - as Hardy thought - modern diseases." ⁸⁾ He felt that there was health in a life close to the earth.

In 1871, "Desperate Remedies", his second novel, was published anonymously. The next novel was "Under the Greenwood Tree", published in 1872, a story of the rural world. "A Pair of Blue Eyes" came out a year later. It contained Hardy's recollections of courting Emma Gifford. Then Leslie Stephen, editor of the "Cornhill Magazine", asked him to do a serial for his magazine. The result was "Far From the Madding Crowd", a novel rich with incident which appeared in 1874. With the success of "Far from the Madding Crowd", Hardy became established as an English novelist. It also encouraged him and Emma Gifford to marry. They lived in London, at Yeovil, and in 1876 at Sturminster Newton, in a pretty cottage overlooking the Dorset Stour where Hardy wrote some verses and "The Return of the Native". "The Hand of Ethelberta" came out in 1876. In 1878, "The Return of the Native" was published. In the same year, they returned to London where Hardy began HIS research into the Napoleonic war that would lay the

8) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 19

foundation for "The Dynasts" and was also used in "The Trumpet Major" which came out in 1880.

Hardy was now being treated as a famous writer, but he also showed scattered signs of melancholy, mostly of a philosophic kind, which was native to his temperament. Yet the gradual disagreements with his wife became clearer.

"..... with time it became clear that there were also deep ethical and intellectual differences. Mrs. Hardy was both more pious and more worldly." 9)

There were no children, and that was also reason for unhappiness.

In 1881, "A Laodicean" was published, but it was not regarded as a true novel.

"The book sold poorly and caused Hardy both pain and embarrassment. He was caught out in a minor plagiarism," 10)

He felt seriously ill during the writing of that book. Now, he worried about money to keep his and his wife's style of life, he worried about his health, he worried about his work, he worried about the difficult relations with his wife. But he gradually realized that his wife, the human being closest to him, still remained faithful during his troubles. He tried to console himself and would soon recover his health. He even proved to be a productive and fruitful novelist, full of energy and inspiration, by the mid 1880s.

For reasons of both health and work Hardy apparently needed to spend his time in the country,

9) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 41

10) Irving Howe, Ibid, p. 69

and his wife recognized this and agreed to it. They moved to Wimborne in Dorset. In 1882 "Two on a Tower" came out. They again moved to Dorchester in 1883. At about this time, he began to set another work designing and building a house, Max Gate, which was located about a mile on the outskirts of Dorchester. He began to write his essay "The Dorsetshire Labourer" and his great novel "The Mayor of Casterbridge".

In 1885, they moved into Max Gate and in 1886 "The Mayor of Casterbridge" was published and Hardy obtained his mastery in literature. A year later, "The Woodlanders" appeared. In 1888, Hardy published his volume of short stories under the title of "Wessex Tales". In 1891, "A Group of Noble Dames" was published and also appeared in the same year "Tess of the d'Urbervilles". "The Well-Beloved" appeared in serial in 1892 and was published later in 1897. Then he also published "Life's Little Ironies" in 1894. A year later, in 1895, "Jude the Obscure" came out, Hardy's last and most bitter novel. The publication of this novel led to so much abuse and accusations of "shocking immorality" that Hardy, tired of appeasing the reading public, gave up prose fiction and turned to poetry.

In 1902, Hardy began writing an epic drama on the Napoleonic war after planning it for years, "The Dynasts". It was published in three parts from 1904 to 1908.

Hardy was going through much private suffering. His wife, whom he had so much idealized, fell into delusions and even into quite an unhinged state of

mind, she was publicly rude to Hardy and even claimed that she had written much of her husband's work.

In 1912 Emma died suddenly. Hardy's grief and regret led him to write many poems in memory of her and their early love and happiness. But he found it hard to live by himself. He was lonely and disorganized. However a happier period soon followed, and in 1914 he married Florence Emily Dugdale, a woman much younger than he, but charming, sympathetic and comforting. At the time of this marriage, Hardy was seventy-three and his bride thirty-five.

Some of his novels were staged or made into films with some success. Hardy made friends with a new generation of young writers. Numerous honours also came to him in his late years and he accepted them with easy pleasure and grace. Cambridge awarded him a honorary degree in 1913, and Oxford a Doctorate of Letters in 1920. Other prizes and recognitions were frequent. However, the outbreak of the First World War made Hardy regret having ended "The Dynasts" on a note of hope.

He continued writing poetry, though, and his last volume, his eighth, appeared posthumously. He died on 11 January 1928 quietly, as he was about to celebrate his eighty-eight birthday by publishing a new volume of his poems.

II. THE LIST OF WORKS BY THOMAS HARDY

A. Novels

1. The Poor Man and The Lady
1868 Never published; and in its
original form, beyond recovery
2. Desperate Remedies
Published: March 1871
3. Under the Greenwood Tree - A Rural Painting of
the Dutch School
Published: June 1872
4. A Pair of Blue Eyes
Serial: September 1872 - July 1873
Published: May 1873
5. Far From the Madding Crowd
Serial: January - December 1874
Published: November 1874
6. The Hand of Ethelberta - A Comedy in Chapters
Serial: July 1875 - May 1876
Published: January 1876
7. The Return of the Native
Serial: January - December 1878
Published: November 1878
8. The Trumpet Major - A Tale
Serial: January - December 1880
Published: October 1880
9. A Laodicean or, The Castle of the De Stancys.
A Story of today
Serial: December 1880 - December 1881
Published: November 1881

10. Two on a Tower - A Romance

Serial: May - December 1882

Published: October 1882

11. The Mayor of Casterbridge - The Life and Death of
a Man of Character

Serial: January - May 1886

Published: May 1886

12. The Woodlanders

Serial: May 1886 - March 1887

Published: March 1887

13. Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman faithfully
Presented

Serial: July - December 1891

Published: November 1891

14. The Well-Beloved - A Sketch of a Temperament

Serial: October - December 1892

Published: March 1897

15. Jude the Obscure

Serial: December 1894 - November 1895

Published: November 1895

B. Collections of Stories

1. Wessex Tales: Strange, Lively, and Commonplace.

(1888)

2. A Group of Noble Dames. (1891)

3. Life's Little Ironies - A Set of Tales with some
Colloquial Sketches entitled "A Few
Crusted Characters" (1894).

4. A Changed Man, / The Waiting Supper, and Other Tales.

(1913)

C. Collections of Poems, and Dramatic Works

1. Wessex Poems and Other Verses. (1898)
2. Poems of the Past and Present. (1901)
3. The Dynasts. A Drama of the Napoleonic Wars. Three Parts. (1904, 1906, 1908).
4. Time's Laughing Stocks and Other Verses. (1909)
5. Satires of Circumstance. Lyrics and Reveries. (1914)
6. Moments of Vision and Miscellaneous Verses. (1917)
7. Late Lyrics and Earlier. (1922)
8. The Famous Tragedy of The Queens of Cornwall at Tintagel in Lyonnese (1923).
9. Human Shows, Far Phantasies, Songs and Trifles. (1925).
10. Winter Words, in Various Moods and Metres. (1928).

D. Essays and Articles

Life and Art. New York. (1925). A Collection of essays, notes, and Letters not previously in book form. Edited with an introduction by E. Brennecke.

The List is taken from: Michael Millgate's "Thomas Hardy" and Irving Howe's "Thomas Hardy".

III. PURPOSE OF THE THESIS

I am trying to make a tentative analysis of Thomas Hardy's literary works by attempting a comparison between "Far from the Madding Crowd" , "The Return of the Native" , "The Mayor of Casterbridge" and "Tess of the d'Urbervilles". They are major works written by Thomas Hardy and have been published between 1874 and 1891.

Thomas Hardy became known and established as an English novelist with the success of "Far From the Madding Crowd". The second success was "The Return of the Native" where he wonderfully depicted his Egdon Heath. Thomas Hardy obtained mastery in the literary world after "The Mayor of Casterbridge" had come out. While Tess in "Tess of the d'Urbervilles" was Hardy's most favourite character, that the novel itself was regarded as a great tragedy. Therefore, I think that these books have a fair right to be presented and sampled as a prelude to the judgement on Thomas Hardy's work.

The purpose of the thesis is mainly to present how Thomas Hardy creates his imaginative Wessex World, its people and its country, by making an analysis, comparison and evaluation of the characters and the place-names created in these four major novels.

Besides talent, will, creativity and chance, I think that there presents the cause which has driven Hardy to write his novels, to create his characters, to idealize his world. In this case, his life is very important to be known. I present this in chapter One

as Introduction.

His views about life are best observed by learning the characteristics and fate of his heroes and heroines. In order to get the general idea, I analyze each major character and then make some comparisons to distinguish the agreements and differences. By doing this I hope to be able to picture the general character and the fate of the important heroes and heroines of the novels.

Hardy's belief about nature and the involvement of the universe in man's life and fate are brought forward in Chapter Four Section III.

Hardy's creativity in producing his Wessex Region is described in Chapter Four Section I and II, where I give the readers some impressions on the landscape. In doing these sections I have consulted several maps of Wessex area which accompany the novels and books, taken information from the development of the stories, from some guide to literary topography by John Freeman and from "One Fair Woman" - Thomas Hardy's letters to Florence Henniker 1893 - 1922. I then make adjustments of them in order to fit the needs of this tentative analysis.

As a whole, by reading and forming this analysis and giving the summary in Chapter Five I hope that finally some special distinctive features of Hardy's novels in relation to his own experience in life will come out.

In this case I would focus my attention on:

- a) the background of the novels connected with the background of the people in Thomas Hardy's books
- b) the creation of the place-names in the novels.

CHAPTER ONE

I. SUMMARY OF THE NOVELS

1. Far From The Madding Crowd

Gabriel Oak, a young farmer of Norcombe Hill, is a bachelor of twenty-eight. He meets Bathsheba Everdene, a beautiful girl of twenty who helps her aunt in Norcombe Hill for a short time as a milkmaid. Gabriel is attracted by her beauty and expresses his love for her, even ventures to offer a marriage. Bathsheba at that time is still young and playful. She does not want to have any married life yet.

One day, Oak loses all his sheep and finds himself penniless. He travels around to find a job. Unfortunately nobody takes him as he looks too good for an ordinary workman. It happens that one day he sees a burning rick-yard near Weatherbury. He saves the rick-yard with his skill and cleverness. The owner of the rick-yard is Bathsheba Everdene who has just inherited a large farm from her uncle. Bathsheba takes Gabriel as her workman for a reward and he works as a shepherd on her farm.

In the same night, two unusual incidents happen. First of all, Fanny Robin disappears. Fanny is a female servant who works for Bathsheba. Secondly, Bathsheba finds Pennyways, her bailiff, stealing some corn and barley, and thus he is fired. Instead of choosing one of her men to be promoted as a new bailiff, Bathsheba decides not to have any and to manage everything with her own hands.

There is a rich gentleman-farmer, Mr. Boldwood, who owns a large farm at Little Weatherbury. He is a

bachelor of about forty, proud and distinguished, and indifferent towards other people and his surroundings. The vain Bathsheba, who is admired by all men in Casterbridge except by Boldwood, is annoyed, and tempts to attract his attention by sending him a valentine's letter with a seal 'Marry me' on it, without thinking of any further consequence. The effect is remarkably powerful. Poor Boldwood excessively falls in love with Bathsheba, much to Gabriel's disappointment, because he still loves Bathsheba.

In the meantime, Gabriel, who had once helped Fanny Robin by giving her some money, gets a letter from her stating that she is going to surprise Weatherbury by coming there as the newly married wife of Sergeant Troy. Sergeant Troy is a handsome and attractive soldier, but he is selfish and cruel and he is the sort of person who is only seeking easy life and pleasure. On account of Fanny's error in coming to the church for the wedding ceremony, Fanny is desperately left by Troy. Fanny has gone and waited at a church called All Souls' instead of All Saints'. Troy, who has been waiting for some while for the ceremony in front of the public in All Saints', felt very much despised, when it happened that the bride did not come on time. Troy's anger is too much for Fanny.

Meanwhile, Boldwood is almost successful in making Bathsheba promise to marry him though she does not love him at all. Gabriel, the wise lover who had lost all his hope to get Bathsheba, is sent away by Bathsheba after he advised her not to do such a foolish thing as to lead Boldwood into marriage by send-

ing him a valentine's letter. Again Gabriel saves Bathsheba's sheep, and is asked to come back to work in the farm again.

Sergeant Troy meets Bathsheba by accident. As he usually does, he flirts with Bathsheba, and then, attracted by her beauty and wealth, he tries to get her by his flatteries. Actually, Bathsheba is entrapped by his fascinating swagger and his bright appearance. She leaves Boldwood instantly and develops a courtship with Troy which leads her into a marriage with him.

Boldwood loses his zest of life. But Gabriel remains mentally strong and works on Bathsheba's farm as usual.

Gradually Bathsheba regrets her marriage. Troy is not a true farmer and not a responsible man. It is worse when Bathsheba begins to suspect that he has another lover. They often quarrel now. One day Troy meets Fanny and finds out that she is very ill and dying. His old love for her comes back and he leaves his wife to go to her. But Fanny and her baby have died. Bathsheba knows that Fanny, her former servant, was an old lover of Troy, her husband. Life becomes a misery for her. Troy leaves Weatherbury. People then find his clothes and some witnesses declare that they saw him drowned in the sea. They believe he was killed in that accident. Actually, a ship has saved him and taken him to America. He ^{was} stayed there for sometime.

Gabriel now acts as the manager of both Bathsheba's and Boldwood's farms while both master and mistress are gloomily brooding in their houses. Boldwood

gradually approaches Bathsheba again and offers marriage. Bathsheba, feeling uncertain about the death of her husband, is forced to promise to marry Boldwood. Troy comes exactly when Boldwood gets the promise from Bathsheba. Boldwood is so disappointed that he shoots and kills Troy. Then he surrenders to the police and is put in jail. We have a happy ending then, with Gabriel marrying Bathsheba.

2. The Return of the Native

The setting of place is Edgdon Heath, a unity of barren, open waste land and heath in the southwestern quarter of Hardy's Wessex area. The date is set down as between 1840 and 1850.

The beauty of Edgdon Heath is Eustacia Vye who lives with her grandfather in Mistover Knap, the loneliest of the lonely places in the middle of Edgdon Heath. She is a reserved, proud girl and lives alone and hardly mixes with other heathfolk, and thus is rumoured to be a witch among the superstitious, almost illiterate people of the Heath.

She has been an old lover of Damon Wildeve, an ex-engineer, now the owner of Quiet Woman Inn at East Edgdon. Yet she regards him as not worthy enough to be her husband and does not care much about the possibility of marriage until she hears that he is going to marry another respectable girl of Blooms-End, at the west part of Edgdon Heath, Thomasin Yeobright.

Mrs. Yeobright, Thomasin's aunt and guardian, does not really like Wildeve and she even forbids the banns in front of public in church as soon as she hears the announcement. This is the reason why Wildeve is not very serious and somewhat careless about the wedding procedure. The result is that the clergyman refuses to marry them and Thomasin runs home in shame and broken-heartedly.

Eustacia makes advances again towards Wildeve and their present situation makes them remember the old romantic attachment. Wildeve asks her to marry him and flee the country. Eustacia, again thinking he is

not really her hero, delays her consent.

There is a kind of guardian angel for poor Thomasin. He is a young reddleman, whose business is dealing with buying and selling redde used for marking sheep. His name is Diggory Venn. He loves Thomasin with all his heart. Thomasin regards him not worthy enough to be a member of the Yeobrights and does not like to oppose her aunt's wishes. So she refuses him. Unlike Wildeve, Venn's love is so pure that he tries to help Thomasin unselfishly in her awkward situation in several ways he can think of. He achieves his attention when Eustacia falls in love with Clym Yeobright, Thomasin's cousin who has just come back from Paris, so that Wildeve at last marries Thomasin.

Clym, who is fed up with town life, prefers to stay and live in Egdon Heath forever. This unexpected plan disappoints his mother and Eustacia as well.

Mrs. Yeobright is against the marriage of his son and Eustacia. She thinks Eustacia is not a proper wife for him and she knows that her reputation is not good in Egdon Heath. After some quarrels Clym leaves his mother in order to be able to marry Eustacia. He takes his wife to live in a cottage at Alderworth at East Egdon. The situation is getting worse when Mrs. Yeobright happens to meet Eustacia and they exchange sharp words.

Meanwhile, Wildeve is trying to see Eustacia secretly again and again. Eustacia who begins to regret her married life because Clym is so headstrong and wants to stay forever in Egdon Heath to become a teacher, and even worse, is half-blinded of too much

reading, finds comfort in seeing Wildeve again.

Both Mrs. Yeobright and Clym begin to feel that they ought to make a reconciliation again as a loving mother and a loving son and, possibly, a loving daughter-in-law. Mrs. Yeobright is then encouraged by the good Venn to go to her son's house, a place which is far from Blooms-End and needs a hard journey to cross the vast, barren Rainbarrow.

Clym, who has become a furze-cutter to spend his time while he has stopped his reading on account of his weak sight, is sound asleep after his hard manual labour when his mother reaches his house. Eustacia does not open the door for her mother-in-law because Wildeve is in the house at that moment and because she is still angry with her. She only hopes that her husband is awake and opens the door for her. Mrs. Yeobright, thinking her son and his wife have joined together in refusing her, crosses the heath once more, now quite exhausted and broken-hearted. She dies on her hard journey back to Blooms-End.

Clym learns how Eustacia has refused to open the door for his mother. He is very angry and feels grief and starts blaming himself for not obeying his mother's wishes. Their quarrels send Eustacia back to Mistover Knap, and Clym moves out for Blooms-End too. Eustacia loses her hope of living. She tries to escape and go abroad with Wildeve. But her grave disappointment and her pride make her choose to finish her own life. She commits suicide. Wildeve is killed in his attempt to save Eustacia.

Diggory marries Thomasin, but Clym continues his lonely life and turns preacher.



3. The Mayor of Casterbridge

The hero of this novel is Michael Henchard. In the beginning of this story, we encounter him as a young, poor hay-trusser but a skilled countryman. He is of fine figure, dark and stern. He is walking with his wife and his baby approaching Weydon Priors to try to get a job. There is a vivid impression that the family-relation is not good. When they come in the Weydon-Fair, the situation becomes worse, though the silent wife, Susan, is a very patient woman. Henchard cannot find any job. He is weary and depressed by his frustrated ambition. As a result, and also because of over-drinking, he sells his wife for five guineas in that Fair. Poor Susan cannot stand him anymore and furthermore her extreme simplicity and ignorance make her believe that the transaction is legal and valid. Taking her baby with her, she goes away with the stranger who has bought her, a sailor named Richard Newson.

When the next morning Henchard realizes what he has done, he is very angry, not with himself, but with his wife's "idiotic simplicity" which would bring him into disgrace. Gradually, he also feels that because it was his own deed, he ought to bear it. He, then, goes to a church and takes an oath that he will avoid all strong liquors for the coming 21 years which is the amount of his present age.

He tries to find his wife and the baby, but without any result. As he runs short of money, he decides to go and settle in a town called Casterbridge, in a far distant part of Wessex.

He is a man of strong character. After a long

interval, he becomes amazingly successful as a corn and hay dealer, and is elected Mayor of Casterbridge. He has a manager for his business, a young clever energetic man, Donald Farfrae.

Then Susan and her daughter return to him because Susan gradually realizes that she was wrong to leave Henchard and also Newson was lost in a ship-accident and they think he died.

Henchard never really loves and respects his simple-minded wife, but he is very fond of Elizabeth-Jane, the daughter, who regards him as her step father, because both Henchard and Susan have agreed to cover their old secret and disgrace on account of Henchard's name as Mayor of the town.

Gradually, Donald Farfrae rises and becomes popular among people in Casterbridge, while Henchard, though good and responsible, is not very kind and his fiery passions often overpower his judgement. Donald then works on his own and becomes richer and more popular.

One day, Susan dies making a will for his husband with a note not to open the letter till Elizabeth-Jane gets married.

Donald actually loves Elizabeth-Jane and she also returns his love. But Henchard regards Donald now as the bitterest rival in his life, so he forbids his daughter to see Donald.

Feeling lonely, as all people turn their heads to Donald and because of the ignorance of his own daughter, Henchard reveals the secret and tells Elizabeth-

Jane that she is his real daughter. Elizabeth-Jane is very amazed and excited, and tries to accept this fact. On the same day the happy father searches his old documents to prove that Elizabeth Jane is his real daughter. In doing so, he finds out from Susan's letter that Elizabeth-Jane is in fact not his daughter, but Newson's daughter, the first Elizabeth-Jane being dead in babyhood. The mockery and most bitter irony anger him and then make him sad. But he says nothing to the girl and tries to accept her just as she has accepted him.

However, as he now realizes she is not his daughter, he does not love her, and even starts criticizing her for her uncultivated manner. He is cold and rough to her, though he feels sometimes sorry for her. Elizabeth Jane, thinking that her uneducated behaviour angers him, begins to acquire the habit of self-study. She reads and writes and studies Latin. But Henchard gradually feels that he cannot bear to live with her anymore. Especially when he learns he will not be appointed Mayor anymore. He thinks that it is Elizabeth-Jane's humble manner which has brought him to disgrace. He writes Donald Farfrae telling him that he does not wish to interfere with his courtship of Elizabeth-Jane anymore and that he gets her off his hands.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth-Jane meets a young lady who offers her to live together with her as a housekeeper and companion. The lady is Lucetta, to whom Henchard was engaged before his wife's return. She has now inherited some amount of wealth from her aunt and become a rich lady. She comes to stay in Casterbridge.



bridge to make a reconciliation with Henchard as now Susan is dead. First of all, she offers Elizabeth-Jane to live with her to find an excuse for Henchard to see her. But when Lucetta falls in love with Donald Farfrae, she uses her as a 'watch-dog' to keep her step-father off as it is clear that Henchard does not care at all to see his step-daughter and even tries to avoid her. So again Henchard finds Donald as his rival, now in love. But Henchard can force Lucetta to promise to marry him by threatening her to open their old love-affair.

Meanwhile, Henchard loses all his possession on a great gamble in his trade because he was so anxious to defeat Farfrae^{so} that he went to a weather-caster and ^{asked}ask for his advice. At the worst moment, his old secret story of selling his wife at Weydon-Fair becomes known. His name is dragged into the ditch and he gives up his position as a Mayor of the town. Lucetta marries Donald, who now is appointed the new Mayor of Casterbridge and manages to buy all Henchard's possessions. As a true man, though bitterly hurts, Henchard does not reveal anything about his attachment to Lucetta. He also admits his old disgrace of having sold his wife. In Court he promises to pay all his debts.

The kind Elizabeth-Jane, who has accompanied Lucetta during her difficult times, now is accompanying and helping her step-father in his disgrace and trouble. Henchard has lost his wife, his daughter, his manager, his name, his wealth, his position, his house, his farm and his Lucetta, and now it seems that the

only possession is Elizabeth-Jane, his step-daughter who still believes that he is her real father. Now Henchard thinks more of her and even begins to cling to her. He even sets to work as a hay-trusser for Donald Farfrae because he feels he has to earn money for both Elizabeth-Jane and himself. But he becomes worse, especially when his twenty-one year vow of not taking any liquor is released, he becomes a heavy drinker, much worse than before he took his vow. Then people who do not really sympathize with Lucetta find Lucetta's love letters addressed to Henchard and they learn that she was actually Henchard's old lover. They perform a kind of traditional mummerly, just the evening after Donald and Lucetta's great triumph and success in organizing the Royal visit, a rough local satirical effigy called the skimmington-ride, which results in the cruel death of Lucetta.

Henchard, who has lost his good name, is not even believed by people when he tried^s to help Farfrae and Lucetta in their crises. Everybody has turned their heads except Elizabeth-Jane who still loves him despite his rough treatment towards her in the past-time. Now Henchard begins to really like and love her as his own daughter. His life centres on the step-daughter whose presence but recently he could not endure. A great change has come over him now.

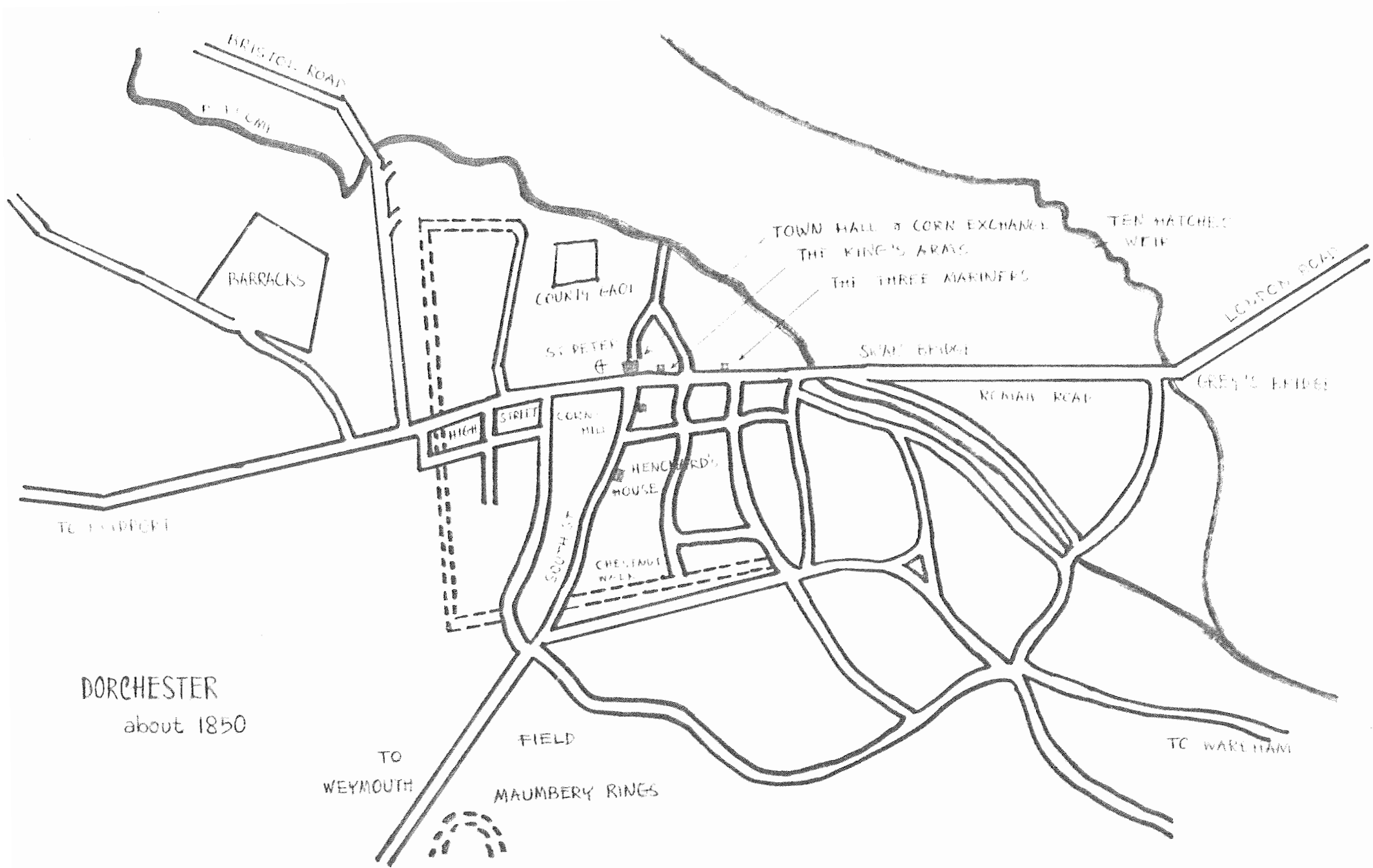
But as soon as he loves Elizabeth-Jane and regards her as his only possession and his only reason for living Newson comes to him asking about his wife and daughter. Henchard, feeling he might lose her if

he tells the truth, says that they are both dead.

Meanwhile, Donald makes a new approach towards Elizabeth-Jane. Again Henchard, instead of thinking that a union between his step-daughter and Donald is a thing to be desired for her good and his own, hates the very possibility because he does not want to lose Elizabeth-Jane's sympathy anymore.

Gradually Newson learns that Henchard has deceived him by telling him that his daughter has died. He comes back to Casterbridge. Henchard loses all his hope and decides to leave Casterbridge before Elizabeth-Jane learns the truth.

Elizabeth-Jane marries Donald Farfrae and joins her true father, Newson. So Donald now has got all Henchard's possessions; name, position, wealth and Elizabeth-Jane. While Michael Henchard, the former owner and the former Mayor of Casterbridge, dies in his poverty and loneliness caused by his own fault, or really his own character given/him by Nature.



DORCHESTER
about 1850

3. Tess of the d'Urbervilles

Jack Durbeyfield, a haggler, whose business mainly depends on Prince, his old horse, and his old little cart, is not a hard worker. His wife, Joan, is a simple-minded woman who has given birth to nine children, two of which died in their infancy. Together they form a poor family living in Marlott, a little village in the Wessex area.

One day, a parson informs Jack that he is actually descendant of the great ancient knightly family of the d'Urbervilles. After that everything becomes worse and worse. Jack, or now Sir John, does not think it proper for him to work anymore and his excited wife decides to make the best of it by seeking out their rich knightly kin. Unfortunately, there is a rich family of the d'Urberville in Trantridge. When Tess, the eldest daughter of Jack Durbeyfield, gets an accident on her journey to Casterbridge (her father cannot go there on account of his drunkenness) and Prince is killed, the whole family is crippled. Tess tries to get a job, ignoring her father's laziness, and only blaming herself, but cannot find any. She does not want to go to Trantridge 'to claim kin', but then, she has to, because her mother orders her and even provokes her. The situation of her family puts Tess in a corner, and off she goes to Trantridge.

This d'Urberville of Trantridge is not genuine and a complete stranger to them. Worst of all, Tess, an innocent girl of sixteen, is seduced by Alec d'Urberville, the wild son of the family whose bad reputation is well known around the district. Alec does not offer

a marriage, and the proud Tess hates him and does not want to beg any. Poor Tess is blamed by her mother, though Tess never seems to blame anyone else.

Tess has a baby, but she does not want to ask any aid from Alec, she does not even inform him. She does some field work in order to earn some money, ignoring her parents' indifference and the gossip about her. When the baby is dying, her father is exactly in the condition when 'his sense of the antique nobility of his family was highest, and his sensitiveness to the smudge which Tess had set upon that nobility most pronounced' (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 117) and he refuses to admit any priest into his house and puts the door-key in his pocket. Tess baptizes the baby herself with the name of Sorrow.

Then Tess goes to Talbothays and happily works there as a dairymaid. Gradually, she gets involved in a love-affair with Angel Clare. Angel is the youngest son of a famous Vicar. He has chosen his future career as a farmer and is learning farming in Talbothays dairy-farm. He loves the beautiful Tess and tries hard to make her to be his wife. Tess is struggling within herself. She loves him very much, but virginity is regarded as an important thing in a married life. She wants to confess to Angel, but both Angel's unawareness and her own fear to loose her lover delay the confession. Eventually she manages to write a letter to Angel. Just the night before the wedding day Tess discovers that Angel has never read the letter.

Angel is disappointed, and rejects her when

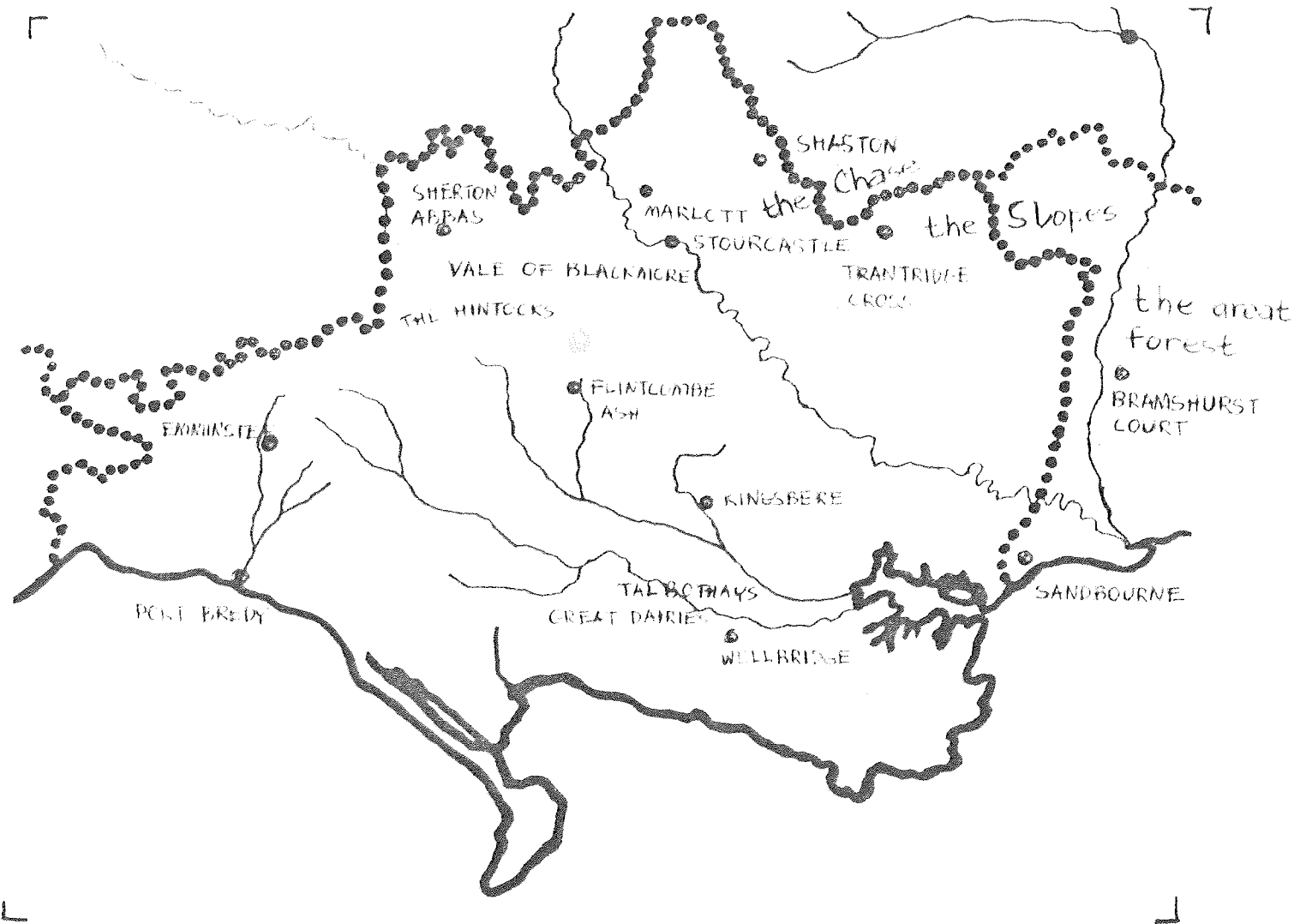
he learns of her past history on the first day of their marriage. He leaves her and goes to Brazil. Poor Tess runs home for the second time, though she actually cannot face her family anymore.

In order to earn money for her and her family, she goes to Flintcombe Ash to work there. This time her job is much heavier and rougher, and her master is not so friendly. He was formerly a Trantridge inhabitant and therefore knew about Tess' history.

Then Alec comes, now as an enthusiastic preacher. His conversation is due to old Vicar Clare's influence. But when he meets Tess, he leaves his sheeps and starts to chase Tess again. This time he genuinely offers marriage, his passion towards Tess being more in keeping with his genuine feeling. Now we quite often see him speaking quietly and behaving gently to her. However, Tess does not love him. She deeply loves Angel and still hopes to see him again.

The moment comes when Tess' father dies and the whole family has to leave the house. Tess is asked to come back to the family to help them. Homeless, tired and hopeless, she falls into Alec's hands eventually, who uses this great opportunity to get her by helping Tess' mother and the wretched children.

Angel appears too late to find Tess now with Alec d'Urberville. Tess' regret is beyond measure and she kills Alec in her great sorrow and vexation.



CHAPTER TWO

I. Comparison between the Female Characters

As women we certainly feel some relief reading Thomas Hardy's novels. In his hands, we do not find any dull, boring, second-class female figures, but active, complex, even intruding influences. He likes the conceit and playfulness of women; the variability, sometimes even the caprice, of feminine personality.

We have to appreciate his keen observation. We shall not find such women in a stylized high society or sophisticated court, but in a plain and homely way, among the country girls of southwest England. Therefore, again, we have to appreciate his love towards farmlands, animals, hills and simple country people who live among them.

In his books "Far From the Madding Crowd", "The Return of the Native" and "Tess of the d'Urbervilles" we have three main female characters, namely Bathsheba Everdene, Eustacia Vye, and Tess of the d'Urberville. They are very important for the development of the story, especially Tess in "Tess of the d'Urbervilles". Let us have their characteristics so that we can see clearer Thomas Hardy's impression about women.

1. Bathsheba Everdene

Bathsheba Everdene is the name of the heroine in "Far From the Madding Crowd". She is twenty years old. Her father and mother have passed away a long time ago. It seems that Bathsheba does not have any brother nor sister. So she is quite independent and free. Mrs. Hurst, her aunt, says to Gabriel that she

is 'too wild', and even Bathsheba herself realizes that she is too independent. She says to Gabriel:

" '..... I want somebody to tame me; I am too independent;"
 (Thomas Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, p. 34)

Though she is graceful, attractive and possesses a flexible temperament, she is hard and obstinate. Her self-reliance surprises her workmen. She declares that she is going to have no bailiff at all and manage everything by herself. She says:

"'Now mind, you have a mistress ins instead of a master. I don't yet know my powers or my talents in farming; but I shall do my best, and if you serve me well, so shall I serve you. Don't any unfair ones among you suppose that because I'm a woman I don't understand the difference between bad goings-on and good.'" (Ibid, p. 93)

She goes to Casterbridge cornmarket herself though she is the only woman among the farmers.

"It had required a little determination - for more than she had at first imagined But if she was to be the practical woman she had intended to show herself, business must be carried on, introductions or none, and she ultimately acquired confidence enough to speak and reply boldly to men merely known to her by hearsay." (Ibid, p. 102)

She is hard and she^{is} not afraid, so she gradually manages to act as a buying and selling farmer in perfect

Casterbridge manner though as a woman who still has some certain limitations she tells Liddy, her female servant, later:

"I've been through it, Liddy, and it is over. I shan't mind it again, for they will all have grown accustomed to seeing me there; but this morning it was as bad as being married-eyes everywhere!" (Thomas Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, p. 104)

Her attitude makes the farmer in Casterbridge market say:

"Yes, 'tis a pity she's so headstrong." (Ibid, p. 103)

and her workmen grumble:

"A headstrong maid, that's what she is—and won't listen to no advice at all. Pride and vanity have ruined many a cobbler's dog. Dear, dear, when I think o'it, I sorrows like a man in travel!" (Ibid, p. 119)

It is because she is still young, independent and has something of a tomboyish manner. We remember how she was riding on her horse;

"Springing to her accustomed perpendicular like a bowed sapling, and satisfying herself that nobody was in sight, she seated herself in the manner demanded by the saddle, though hardly expected of the woman, and trotted off in the direction of Tewnell Mill." (Ibid, p. 18)

She is also playful. Gabriel loses all his hope of marrying her when her aunt tells him that

she has many admirers, but Bathsheba runs after him and tells him that she does not have any lover at all. Gabriel's hope rises again and he thinks she will accept him as her husband. But she says:

"I never said I was going to marry you." (Thomas Hardy, Far From the Madding Crowd, p. 32)

despite all her hard effort running after him. When she says she likes the idea of marriage and Gabriel tries to make advances again, she tells him:

"Well, what I mean is that I shouldn't mind being a bride at a wedding, if I could be one without having a husband. But since a woman can't show off in that way by herself, I shan't marry - at least yet." (Ibid, p. 33)

Her conceit and playfulness are marked in the earlier meeting when she even does not tell Gabriel her name.

"Now find out my name," she said teasingly and withdrew." (Ibid, p. 25)

She makes such a fool of Gabriel that he finally says:

"Then I'll ask you no more." (Ibid, p. 36)

because

"No man likes to see his emotions the sport of a merry-go-round of skittishness." (Ibid, p. 36)

That she is not serious at all is proved when she meets him again at Weatherbury.

"Embarrassed she was not, and she remembered Gabriel's declaration of

love to her at Norcombe only to think she had nearly forgotten it." (Thomas Hardy, "Far From the Madding Crowd", p. 55)

At worst, her conceit and inconsiderateness are brought to ahead when she meets the reserved and serious Mr. Boldwood who has never got any experience with women. She sends him a valentine letter with "Marry me" on the seal only to pass her idle time and only because she is annoyed that he does not pay attention to her while others admire her so much. That also proves her playfulness and her too inconsiderate actions. Bathseba is a beautiful and attractive girl, but she is also a vain woman. Gabriel sees her for the first time when she is surveying herself attentively in a looking-glass. She does not do it to adjust her hat or her hair, but only to enjoy and admire her own beauty. She possesses too much pride in herself. But then, she is still a very young girl. We can also see when Gabriel encountered her suddenly on Norcombe Hill for the second time, while she thought there was no one around. Her first thought was about her face and her looks as soon as she realized that somebody else is there. Later, her workmen are gossiping.

"Yes, she's very vain. 'Tis said that every night at going to bed she looks in the glass to put on her nightcap properly!" (Ibid, p. 48)

It is also this vanity which makes her annoyed when farmer Boldwood does not pay any attention to her at all while others admire her so much.

She is diligent and a hard worker. Naturally she is kind-hearted and honest. She is attentive and responsible. She is worrying about the loss of Fanny Robin, her female servant, and orders people to carry out a careful search for her. Also, when she begins to realize the effect of her valentine letter upon Boldwood, she regrets the whole business.

"Being a woman with some good sense in reasoning on subjects wherein her heart was not involved, Bathsheba genuinely repented that a freak which had owed its existence as much to Liddy as to herself, should ever have been undertaken, to disturb the placidity of a man she respected too highly to deliberately tease."

(Thomas Hardy, Far From the Madding Crowd, p. 135)

Her good nature makes her feel that she has to apologize immediately. But she does not know Boldwood yet, at this time. If she had known his feeling and his infatuation better, she would have acted differently. So despite her playfulness she possesses a sense of responsibility. After that she takes the decision not to do such a foolish thing as to tease him anymore, but it is too late. She tries to apologize to him and tell him that she does not love him at all. But when it does not work and Boldwood asserts his love for her, her honesty and her sense of responsibility force her to accept him though she does not like to marry him at all.

"..... she had a strong feeling that, having been the one who began the game, she ought in honesty to accept the con-

sequences." (Thomas Hardy, "Far From the Madding Crowd, p. 149")

"..... that it would be ungenerous not to marry Boldwood." (Ibid, p. 149)

"She had been awe-struck at her past temerity, and was struggling to make amends without thinking whether the sin quite deserved the penalty she was schooling herself to pay." (Ibid, p. 181)

She is intelligent and businesslike. We remember how her workmen were amazed at such a small amount of extra money being paid as a result of her first managing. In fact, she is generous. But her caprices cause her pain and suffering. Her need of sensation and triumph reinforces her sorrow. She does not see any worthy value in a person like Gabriel, the poor simple ordinary man. But she sees something in Troy, his bright appearance, his flashy swagger, and she feels some high sensation and triumph in the idea of marrying him. Perhaps she loves Troy, but more likely she is only blinded by his bright and fascinating appearance. She respects Farmer Boldwood. But his reserved manner, his low motion and his infatuation make him distasteful to her. She does not love him at all. Maybe she loves Gabriel unconsciously, but she thinks he is too poor for her. She does not want to admit that she loves him though she confesses that she likes him.

"'A man wanted to once,' she said, in a highly experienced tone, and the image of Gabriel Oak, as the farmer, rose before her

'And you wouldn't have him?'

'He wasn't quite good enough for me.'

.....'And did you love him, miss?'
 'Oh, no. But I rather liked him.'
 (Thomas Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd*,
 p. 85)

However, she trusts Gabriel and values all his advice. She goes to him when she is worried about the village gossip on account of her relationship with Boldwood. She asks him for advice.

"At this period the single opinion in the parish on herself and her doings that she valued as sounder than her own was Gabriel Oak's." (Ibid, p. 151)

So, although she does not care about him and even sometimes treats him badly, she is always dependent on him to help her through her disasters, though not at all in a position of a weaker asking a stronger because her pride and conceit will not allow her to behave in such manner. In some way, Gabriel's actions always serve her right. In the very beginning, we can see how Gabriel puts up with her caprices.

"..... Gabriel looked at her with a little surprise and much admiration. 'That's the very thing I had been thinking myself!' he naively said. (She refuses him and even suggests a richer woman for Gabriel's wife to tease him.) Farmer Oak had one-and-a-half Christian characteristics too many to succeed with Bathsheba: his humility, and a superfluous moiety of honesty. Bathsheba was decidedly disconcerted.

'Well, then, why did you come and disturb me?' she said, almost angrily, if not quite, an enlarging red spot rising in each cheek.'" (Ibid, p. 35)

But Gabriel's pure love and unselfish devotion unconsciously bring her again and again to him. She engages him into a private conversation when she finds herself in doubt with Boldwood. Though Gabriel's words are hard for her, she goes to him again another time when she suddenly finds herself married to Troy and almost immediately feels that she did wrong. She pours out her heart again to him when she is in the most miserable stage of her marriage. She also goes to him when, for the second time, she is entangled with Boldwood.

So we see her at first as a young, independent, inexperienced girl who is very free in her carriage, a bit wild because nobody guides her, vain, conceited, possessing too much pride in herself, but good-natured and kind-hearted. At that period she still does not realize her exact position as a woman. She turns right and left, runs here and there. She does not care much about anything but herself. She is easygoing, playful and capricious.

But then, though the change does not come in one flash, we see her in the end in another different picture as a wiser and thoughtful woman. A woman who is stable and much more mature, patient and ready to face the facts of real life. She has learned through her pain and suffering to become a proper woman. Though she is more serious now, she does not become a dull woman. The need to be loved, which caused her past instability, is now fulfilled. She has learned that a bright, glamorous outside is not always bright inside. She has developed into a maturer and wiser woman. Her developing character is best realized by herself when she says to Gabriel:

"'..... Some rash acts of my past life have taught me that a watched woman must have very much circumspection to retain only a very little credit, and I do want and long to be discreet in this'" (Thomas Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, p. 408)

2. Eustacia Vye

The main woman character in "The Return of the Native" is Eustacia Vye. She is a young beautiful woman with dark eyes and dark hair. She is tall and straight. She has a lovely figure. She is ladylike in her movements. In short, she is a beautiful young woman with specific charms from an alien ancestor. She is the daughter of a Cornish bandmaster of a regiment in Budmouth. Actually she is from a good and educated family. But her parents have died and thus she lives with her grandfather in Egdon Heath.

She does not like Egdon Heath, even hates it. But she is forced to live there because she does not have anywhere else to go.

"'You hate the heath as much as ever, that I know.' 'I do,' she murmured deeply. 'Tis my cross, my shame, and will be my death!' (Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, p. 98)

"'I cannot endure the heath.' Eustacia said. (Ibid, p. 220)

"'I was not even aware ... (of the heath) I am aware that there are Boulevard in Paris.'" (Ibid, p. 220)

So she becomes a dreamer. Her isolated situation intensifies her fancies. Her thoughts are always concerning

living idly and prosperously in a big city as a rich lady surrounded by fine gentlemen and admirers.

"There was no middle distance in her perspective: romantic recollections of sunny afternoons on an esplanade, with military bands, officers, and gallants arounds, stood like gilded letters upon the dark tablet of surrounding Egdon. Seeing nothing of human life now, she imagined all the more of what she had seen." (Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, p. 78)

Because she does not have anything to keep her busy, she often wanders alone in the darkness of the heath. Her grandfather lets her do what she likes, in order to be free himself. Eustacia's manner and her reserve amaze the heath-folk so that they often regard her as a strange woman; some of them even believe that she is a witch. Johnny Nunsuch, the little boy who is afraid to go home alone in the darkness of the heath, considers the strange light on the heath less evil than facing Eustacia.

"Pausing when again safe from discovering her finally decided to face the pit phenomenon as the lesser evil." (*Ibid*, p. 84)

How people regard her is still further depicted in the incident of Clym's courtship towards her. Mrs. Yeobright, Clym's mother, quarrels with her son about his plan to become a schoolmaster and live on Egdon Heath. But when she learns that Clym is interested in Eustacia she is really angry. She is willing to let him stay and work as a schoolmaster, as long as he forgets about Eustacia.

On the other hand Eustacia looks down upon them

all. She thinks there is not anyone on the same level with her or higher than her on Egdon Heath. She is not kind to the heath-folk and she does not want to mix with them. Even Wildeve she thinks unworthy of herself.

"..... Damon, you are not worthy of me: I see it, and yet I love you."

(Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, p. 71)

Towards the Yeobrights, the only genteel people of the district except the Vyes, she does not want to be friendly either. She regards them as inferior. She says about Thomasin Yeobright,

"I will not be beaten down - by an inferior woman like her." (*Ibid*, p.106)

No wonder that she looks also down upon Diggory Venn, the reddleman, and despises him when the young man tries to advise her.

"What can a poor man like you offer me indeed?"

.....

'I am going indoors. I have nothing more to say. Don't your horses want feeding, or your reddlebags want mending, or don't you want to find buyers for your goods, that you stay idling here like this?'" (*Ibid*, p.108)

She is not lively, she is even gloomy, yet she is quite intelligent. Her selfishness is caused by her living too far from the world to feel the impact of public opinion. She is very strong too. We recall how she disguised herself as Charley, her own worker, so that she could take his place in order to go to the Yeobright's party. Though she despised the Yeobrights,

she regretted that she had never been friendly to them when she found herself interested in Clym Yeobright.

Both her love towards Wildeve and Clym is odd. She regards Wildeve not worthy of her. But she idealizes Wildeve for want of a better object. There is certainly only one circumstance which would drive him away from her. It is the presence of a 'greater' man. Wildeve himself has offered her several times to marry him and go abroad. Yet she always delays her consent and lingers on, though she does not like Egdon.

"There is a sort of beauty in the scenery, I know; but it is a jail to me. The man you mention does not save me from that feeling, though he lives here. I should have cared nothing for him had there been a better person near.'" (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 106)

This feeling is fatal for her. This and her pride make her choose death rather than flee the country with Wildeve in her greatest crisis.

"He's not great enough for me to give myself to - he does not suffice for my desire! If he had been a Saul or a Bonaparte.'" (Ibid, p. 421)

When a young and clever man is coming into that lonely heath from Paris, it is to her like a man coming from heaven. Before she sees Clym, she has already dreamt much about him.

"No event could have been more exciting. During the greater part of the afternoon she had been entrancing herself

by imagining the fascination which must attend a man come direct from beautiful Paris - laden with its atmosphere, familiar with its charms." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 136)

Thus she has fallen in love with a vision. She does not hesitate to do anything for this passion. She has the greatest contempt for murrers and mummery, yet, she decides to make a deal with Charley in order to get his place as a player in that traditional play which is performed at the Yeobright's. Her pride does not allow her to mix and be friendly with the common heath-folk, yet, she gives her hands to be held by Charley for a quarter of an hour in that deal. She regards Clym as a romantic and sweet vision, scarcely incarnate. She hopes that he will take her out from the lonely Egdon to the French capital - the centre and vortex of the fashionable world. Yet she is startled when she listens to Clym's proposal to marry her.

"'I must think,' she said. 'At present speak of Paris to me. Is there any place" (Ibid, p. 233)

Clym realizes this.

"..... he could not but percieve at moments that she loved him rather as a visitant from a gay world to which she rightly belonged than as a man with a purpose opposed to that recent past of his which so interested her." (Ibid, p. 236)

When Clym decides to stay forever in Egdon, she is very much disappointed. And when Clym is half-blind

and chooses turf-cutting as his work, she rebels and runs back home only to meet her downfall which leads her into her suicide.

As a character she does not develop at all. She is rebellious and wants to flee from her surroundings which which she does not like. Isolated by her surroundings, the barren Egdon Heath, and by her own feeling and imagination, she is completely blocked by Clym's idealization and thus becomes a helpless creature. We can only see her in one static picture; gloomy, unhappy, dreamy, cold, haughty, strong, idle, lonely and regarded as mysterious by other people.

3. Tess d'Urberville

The greatest heroine of "Tess of the d'Urbervilles" is of course Tess. Tess Durbeyfield is the eldest daughter of Jack Durbeyfield. She is about sixteen or seventeen when she is first presented by the author. Tess has a handsome face and a fine figure.

"..... not handsomer than some others, possibly - but her mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes added eloquence to colour and shape." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 12)

"Then one can see the oval face of a handsome young woman with deep dark eyes and long heavy clinging tresses, which seem to clasp in a beseeching way anything they fall against. The cheeks are paler, the teeth more regular, the red lips thinner than is usual in a country-bred girl." (Ibid, p. 112)

"..... with her flower-like mouth and

large tender eyes, neither black nor blue nor grey nor violet, rather all those shades together, and a hundred others, which could be seen if one looked into their irises - shade behind shade - tint beyond tint - around pupils that had no bottom;

(Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 114)

Her beauty and good character bring her to the attention of many male admirers, especially of Angel Clare and Alec d'Urberville, which ^{was} fortunately bring more harm than fortune to her. We recall when Angel Clare noticed her at first sight.

"He wished that he had asked her; he wished that he had inquired her name. She was so modest, so expressive, she had looked so soft in her thin white gown that he felt he had acted stupidly." (Ibid, p. 17)

Tess inherited her mother's good looks and her father's knightly grace.

"There still faintly beamed from the woman's features something of the freshness, and even the prettiness, of her youth; rendering it probable that the personal charms which Tess could boast of were in main part her mother's gift, and therefore unknighly, unhistorical." (Ibid, p. 20)

When we first encounter Tess, she is still very young, a girl with no experience.

"Tess Durbeyfield at this time of her life was a mere vessel of emotion untinged by experience." (Ibid, p.13)

Because her simple and easygoing mother has not guided her, she does not know how to deal with the opposite sex, she does not know what is right or wrong - though she may feel it vaguely by nature. She does not like Alec d'Urberville and she does not want to go to Trartridge to work there. Though this is partly because of her pride, it is also because she feels that there is something wrong with Alec's conduct. But she does not know that Alec will really do harm to her. When she frees herself from the crowd that despises her to let herself be carried away by Alec on his horse, her situation is best expressed by dark Car's mother, one of the female workers in the crowd.

"Out of the frying-pan into the fire."
 (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 84)

Actually, she is innocent and never intends to do wrong but it seems that life always leads her into trouble and disgrace. She is pure and very simple, but her environment makes her life complicated and tragic.

She is very responsible and helpful especially to her own family. She feels guilty in not helping her mother with the household work when she comes home from the dancing-club. She feels,

"..... a chill self-reproach that she had not returned sooner, to help her mother in these domesticities, instead of indulging herself out-of-doors." (Ibid., p. 19)

When Prince, the horse, is killed, she feels that she is to be blamed and must take the responsibility,

ignoring her father's indifference. Therefore she accept her mother's scheme to go to Trantridge to 'claim' kin' in order to get enough money to buy another horse, whilst her mother and the rest of the family hope much more than that.

She also feels responsible for her baby when it is dying, and the result is the sensational baptism scene. In order to earn some money, she bears all her shame and lowers her dignity to work at Trantridge, then in the field of Marlott when she leaves Trantridge, at Talbôthays as a dairymaid, and at last very hard at swede-grubbing and trimming at Flitcombe Ash farm. She works hard to earn money for her own living and also for her family's. Even when she is still very young, she is ready to help her parents and the six younger sisters and brothers.

" Tess became humanely beneficent towards the small ones, and to help them as much as possible she used, as soon as she left school, to lend a hand at haymaking or harvesting on neighbouring farms; or, by preference, at milking or butter-making processes, " (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 41-42)

She even gives the money which she has received from Angel to her family, though she is actually short at that time. There is a contrast between Tess and her father, the head of the family. Tess is a hard worker, diligent, responsible and always making an effort, while her father is an idler and thinks more about his dignity than about getting money for his wife and children. Tess is very much concerned with the poverty of her family and the future of her brothers and sisters

whom she loves so much.

We have a clear impression that Tess, besides being intelligent, diligent and hard working, is also passive and submissive. The most distinctive event is the seduction by Alec. Though it is clear that Alec has a bad reputation because of his conduct towards women and that he always takes every possible chance to have Tess, there is not one word of "raping" or even "seduction" written in this story. Tess' reaction to Alec in that circumstance is rather submission than forced surrender. Her 'mute obedience characteristic' is even clearly depicted by her response towards Angel's love. Towards her mother Tess is also passive, despite the former arguing and protests. Her mother wants Tess to look prettier by putting on her best clothes when she is going to see the d'Urbervilles at Trantridge. Though she does not want it, at last her passive obedience makes her accept her mother's will. To some extent it is her mother's will which presses Tess to decide everything contrary to her own feeling.

"Very well; I suppose you know best," replied Tess with calm abandonment. And to please her parent the girl put herself quite in Joan's hands, saying serenely - 'Do what you like with me, mother.'" (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 56)

Tess' dignity and pride are likely inherited from her aristocratic ancestors. She is angry when her friends laugh at her father's foolishness, riding home in a carriage and singing about his knightly ancestors.

"'Look here; I won't walk another inch with you, if you say any jokes about him.'" (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 13)

"Tess' pride would not allow her to turn her head again, to learn what her father's meaning was," (Ibid, p. 13)

It is also partly her own pride which makes her accept Angel's decision to leave her. Her pride prevents her from making a scene in front of Angel in order to keep him from going, though she loves him passionately. Her pride also prevents her from asking for a contribution from Angel's parents in her great need. She would rather squeeze herself to work hard at Flitcombe Ash with a most unpleasant master who takes revenge on her because of Angel's treatment of him before. Instead of going to Angel's parents, Tess even gives herself up to Alec who chases her all the time, in order to save her homeless mother and younger brothers and sisters. Angel does not realize this until it is too late. Then he learns that Tess has never asked any help from his parents, though she ha^s a right to do that.

" and then for the first time it occurred to Angel that her pride had stood in her way, and that she had suffered privation." (Ibid, p. 473)

Tess' appearance is described as having the quality of this dignity. She is a spouseless mother with a nameless child and when she comes home in her native village, she is ashamed and feels humiliated, but she is bravely working in the field together with other people.

"This was why she had borne herself with dignity, and had looked people calmly in the face at times, even when holding the baby in her arms." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p.115)

Also, we have a very impressive description of the baptism scene.

"Her figure looked singularly tall and imposing as she stood in her long white nightgown, a thick cable of twisted dark hair hanging straight down her back to her waist. The kindly dimness of the weak candle abstracted from her form and features the little blemishes which sunlight might have revealed - the stubble scratches upon her wrist, and the weariness of her eyes - her high enthusiasm having a transfiguring effect upon the face which had been her undoing, showing it as a thing of immaculate beauty, with a touch of dignity which was almost regal." (Ibid, p. 119)

It is also her exceptional appearance which makes the Vicar say "yes" to Tess' query on account of the validity of the baptism of her baby.

"Yet the dignity of the girl, the strange tenderness in her voice, combined to affect his nobler impulses - or rather those that he had left in him after ten years of endeavour to graft technical belief on actual scepticism!" (Ibid, p. 121)

Tess is often dubious and perplexed because of her ignorance and her simplicity. But then she also has a strong character. She is brave and decisive. The event of the baptism of her baby and the erection of a

little cross at the head of the grave of her baby show her brave and her strong will. Though she is still very young her strong character is so influential that,

"hardly was a reproachful flash from Tess's dark eyes needed to make her father and mother rise from their seats, hastily finish their ale, and descend the stair behind her"

(Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p.30)

When she leaves Alec to stay in her parents' house, she is not afraid of working in public, suckling her baby, while her disgrace is rumoured everywhere. She bravely avoids and refuses Angel's proposal. She actually does not want to marry him without her confession first, and she is ready to tell him everything courageously with the consequence that Angel will despise and leave her. But it is Angel who unconsciously prevents her from telling her painful history at crucial points so that she is always postponing her intention.

Though Tess is gentle and soft, her strong emotion and tendency to violent and hasty unconsidered action gradually mark her manner clearer. We recall her reactions towards Alec's chasing her. Her face is fiery with anger and indignation and she cries with vexation at Alec who is trying to kiss her on the way to Trantridge. It is even more and more emphasized when she is on the way to leave Trantridge for Marlott and on the events encountering Alec afterwards.

"... she cried, turning impetuously

upon him, her eyes flashing as the latest spirit awoke in her. 'My God! I could knock you out of the gig!'" (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 97)

" she gave him a little push from her. In his ticklish position he nearly lost his balance" (Ibid, p. 86)

" and without the slightest warning she passionately swung the glove by the gauntlet directly in his face." (Ibid, p. 422)

"With stormy eyes she pulled the stay-bar quickly, and, in doing so, caught his arm between the casement and the stone mullion." (Ibid, p. 454)

It is a curious matter how she kills the wounded birds.

" and to this end with her own hands she broke the necks of as she could find." (Ibid, p. 355)

Though she does it "with the impulse of a soul who could feel for kindred sufferers as much as for herself", and thinks that death will end the torture, we cannot say that it is proper for her to do it. Truly, she has already seen too much blood in her life, beginning with the killing of Prince, her father's horse. She witnesses the dreadful event.

"The pointed shaft of the cart had entered the breast of the unhappy Prince like a sword, and from the wound his life's blood was spouting in a stream and falling with a hiss into the road."

In her despair Tess sprang forward and put her hand upon the hole, with the only result that she became splashed from face to skirt with the crimson drops." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 35)

"The huge pool of blood in front of her was already assuming the iridescence of coagulation," (Ibid, p. 36)

She feels that she is the one who has killed the horse.

"Nobody blamed Tess as she blamed herself" (Ibid, p. 37)

So, she used to seeing much blood, and even to regard herself as a murderer from the first. Those dreadful events, and her tendency to violent and unconsidered actions at last lead her into murdering Alec in her great vexation and despair.

As a character, she has unfortunately developed this tendency to violent actions on account of the pressure of her environment.

Tess is a very lonely woman. Again and again during her life, she is left alone in her most crucial moments, with no sympathy from her parents and her lover.

First of all, as the eldest daughter, she is helplessly left alone by her own father to get money for the whole family. The idle father even puts all his burdens and responsibility on the young Tess. Then, in her wanderings, Tess falls in the deep darkness of Alec's trap and is left alone by him with no marriage. Her mother even blames her, not realizing that it is all entirely her own scheme. We take a great pity on Tess and feel angry with her stupid frivolous mother who

does not comfort her or guide her but even blames her.

"'O mother, my mother!' cried the agonized girl, turning passionately upon her parent as if her poor heart would break. "How could I be expected to know? I was a child when I left this house four months ago. Why didn't you tell me there was danger in men-folk? Why didn't you warn me?"

(Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 104)

She feels how lonely she is now, left by her parents and her admiring friends.

"And the despondency of the next morning's dawn, when it was no longer Sunday, but Monday; and no best clothes; and the laughing visitors were gone, and she awoke alone in her old bed, the innocent younger children breathing softly around her. In place of the excitement of her return, and the interest it had inspired, she saw before her a long and stony highway which she had to tread, without aid, and with little sympathy." (Ibid, p. 106)

"She was not an existence, and experience, a passion, a structure of sensations, to anybody but herself. To all humankind besides Tess was only a passing thought. Even to friends she was no more than a passing thought. If she made herself miserable the livelong night and day it was only this much to them - 'Ah, she makes herself unhappy. 'If she tried to be cheerful, to dismiss all care, to take pleasure in the daylight, the flowers, the baby,

she could only be this idea to them -
 'Ah, she bears it very well.' Moreover,
 alone in a desert island would she
 have been wretched at what had happened
 to her?!" (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the
d'Urbervilles, p. 115)

When her baby is dying, her father refuses to receive any person who could comfort her, and locks the door putting the key in his pocket. Her mother keeps silent and does not come to help her, and the whole family goes to bed. Tess is alone, a young mother lamenting her dying baby, and her sorrow is emphasized by the fact that her baby will die without baptism and legitimacy. But nobody else cares. They all go to bed leaving her alone, with her dreadful fear of the fate of her baby's soul. When her baby dies, she is alone again. She goes away from her family in order to annihilate the past and to save the younger children because she thinks, with her present condition, it is not good for them to live together. Her sisters and brothers seem to be indifferent to her departure.

"In a few days the children would engaged in their games as merrily as ever without the sense of any gap left by her departure." (Ibid, p. 131)

She reaches Talbothays to find Angel Clare there. Unfortunately, she cannot really enjoy her great happy moments there. She is always struggling furiously alone with herself. When she is in great doubt whether to confess her past history to Angel or not, she tries to write to her mother to gain strength. But her mother does not see life as Tess sees it.

"That haunting episode of bygone days was to her mother but a passing accident." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 246)

Again she leaves her daughter when the poor girl really needs her supports and she does not even bother to answer her daughter's second letter.

Worst of all, Tess gradually puts herself entirely into Angel's hands and regards him as the only protector, the only god. Therefore, when Angel rejects her and leaves her after he learned her past history, she is despairing tired and lonely. She is homeless again and has to go back to her parents who imagine her to be far away already on a luxurious wedding-tour with her rich husband.

" while here she was, friendless, creeping up to the old door quite by herself, with no better place to go to in the world." (Ibid, p. 326)

And there seems to be no place left for her now even at home. Her old bed is used for her growing brothers and sisters. She is not the happy bride with big boxes and various trunks, she is a wretched woman with no money, no sympathy, lonelier and worse than she was before. She has nobody to take care of her. She has to live alone without guidance, without protector, without provider. She is left by people.

" we see her a lonely woman with a basket and a bundle in her own portage" (Ibid, p. 347)

"The wall seemed to be the only friend she had." (Ibid, 359)

".....her loneliness was excessive
....." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the
d'Urbervilles, p. 359)

Then she meets Alec again. By that time she is so sad and lonely, that she thinks Angel will not come back to her anymore, and she eventually accepts Alec's proposal to be his wife in order to save her family. She is forced to accept Alec by her family's condition and also by Alec's provocation. She does not love him. That is the reason why she is disappointed when she learns that Angel has come back and still loves her and regrets that he has left her. And when she is unable to resist Alec, she kills him in her great sorrow and vexation.

Thus we have a picture of her as a lonely, beautiful but simple country girl; proud though not vain; responsible, helpful, hard-working, diligent and brave; soft and gentle but possessing strong emotion and a tendency to violent action. Her unfortunate situation and environment bring a development into her character, but it is in the bad direction, her tendency to violent action which leads her into murder.

II. Agreements and Differences

Comparing these three characters we will find some agreements and differences between them.

First of all the three of them are young, lovely and attractive. They possess some charms and are admired by men.

Both Bathsheba and Eustacia are orphans, and do not seem to possess any brother or sister. However, they come from good and respectable families. Bathsheba who often wandered alone, comes to Norcombe Hill to help her aunt. Then she inherits her uncle's wealth and thus becomes a rich farmer at Weatherbury. Eustacia lives with her grandfather on Egdon Heath. She is free to wander out alone. She seems to live from her grandfather's savings. Though she lives fairly well, she does not own her own money and therefore she is not free enough to leave Egdon Heath.

As for Tess, she comes from a poor, simple, uneducated family. They are so poor that Tess has to work so hard to earn money for her poor living and to help her family. Tess' father is an idler. He is not a responsible father. Tess' mother is a superficial woman and is not a very good mother either. Tess is the eldest daughter of the family consisting of eight children. So, if Bathsheba and Eustacia do not have any problem concerning money, Tess has to exert herself to get some money for her living. There is one more unfortunate thing about Tess' family: its knightly ancestors. Because of this Tess is forced by her family along the way that leads to disaster.

Further, the three of them possess dignity in

keeping with their ladylike manner and also a pride consistent with their feminine way of life. Bathsheba is proud, vain and conceited. She is proud that she is a young beautiful woman and mistress of a considerable farm. She is vain and conceited in her action and speech because of her beauty. Tess tries to defend her father's good name. Her father has acted so foolishly after he learned about his knightly ancestors that Tess' friends laugh at him. Tess is angry with them. Her pride can further be seen when she does not want to go to her parents-in-law while her husband is away from her. She even possesses a dignified appearance which marks her different from the other country-girls, and which is inherited from her knightly ancestors. But she is not conceited. She is simple and modest compared with Bathsheba.

On the other hand, Eustacia is so proud of herself that she regards others much lower in level.

Tess can see her world as it is. She realizes very well that she is poor, so she works very hard. She does not even believe that better things come without work though she knows that her family descend from knightly ancestors.

If Tess is a realist, idealizing nothing, Eustacia is quite the opposite. She is a dreamer who imagines an unreal, romantic, idle, rich and bright world. Therefore she marries a man of her own vision and eventually becomes the victim of her own vision.

Bathsheba, although she works really hard, has her fancies too. She chooses a bright, glamorous husband. She goes to Casterbridge market and acts as a queen-farmer there. When her fancies come to nothing

and even lead her to trouble and difficulties, she begins to realize the real world and accepts it in the end. So she possesses both Tess' and Eustacia's characteristics.

If Bathsheba is described as an orphan who often wanders alone but does not feel lonely because she is independent, free in carriage, lively, fresh and cheerful, Eustacia and Tess are very lonely women. Eustacia is lonely because of her haughtiness and her isolated world created by her own imaginations. Though she seems to do not care much about her loneless, she is gloomy throughout her life. Tess often feels very lonely and much concerned with her loneliness. Her parents, family, friends and lover leave her alone in her trouble, even the priest is not in her side because of her disgrace, though he takes pity on her. These quotations mark their differences:

"The handsome girl waited for some time idly in her place, and the only sound heard in the stillness was the hopping of the canary up and down the perches of its prison. a small swing looking-glass was disclosed, in which she preceeded to survey herself attentively. She parted her lips and smiled." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 4)

"There was a bright air and manner about her now, by which she seemed to imply that the desirability of her existence could not be questioned;" (Ibid, p. 19)

"When the whole Egdon concourses had left the site of the bonfire to its accustomed loneliness, a closely wrapped

female figure approached the barrow from that quarter of the heath in which the little fire lay. Had the reddleman been watching he might have recognized her as the woman who has first stood there singularly, and vanished at the approach of strangers Her reason for standing so dead still as the pivot of this circle of heath country was just as obscure. Her extraordinary fixity, her conspicuous loneliness, her heedlessness of night, betokened among other things an utter absence of fear." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, pp. 59 - 60)

"And the despondency of the nextmorning's dawn, when it was no longer Sunday, but Monday; and no best clothes; and the laughing visitors were gone, and she awoke alone in her old bed, the innocent younger children breathing softly around her. In place of the excitement of her return, and the interest it had inspired, she saw before her a long and stony highway which she had to read, without aid, and with little sympathy. Her depression was then terrible, and she could have hidden herself in a tomb." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 106)

Bathsheba as a lively girl has a flexible character. She can deal with different types of person though her fresh, brave and attractive manners. She can get along well with other farmers. She can work well with her own workmen and at the same time place herself above them in her position as a mistress. Tess is also flexible though she does not get any chance to meet^m any people. She can work well with her fellow-

workers and places herself in her position as a workmaid. But Eustacia is different. She is very cold and reserved. She places herself and stands alone coldly in her own isolated, unreal world. She looks down upon others. She does not care anything about other people's feelings.

Although Bathsheba is graceful and ladylike in her manner, she is tomboyish. Gabriel is amazed when he witnessed how wildly she rode on her horse. Her workmen and other farmers are also surprised with all her unexpected moves. Eustacia and Tess are also ladylike and graceful. But Eustacia is cold and quick-tempered and not very kind while Tess is soft, tender and gentle. Their different characters are clearly described in the following quotations:

"The girl, who wore no riding-habit, looked around for a moment, as if to assure herself that all humanity was out of view, then dexterously dropped backwards, flat upon the pony's back, her head over its tail, her feet against its shoulders, and her eyes to the sky. The rapidity of her glide into this position was that of a kingfisher - its noiselessness that of a hawk."
(Thomas Hardy, Far from the Medding Crowd, pp. 17 - 18)

"'Now, before I begin, men,' said Bathsheba, 'I have two matters to speak of. The first is that the bailiff is dismissed for thieving, and that I have formed a resolution to have no bailiff at all, but to manage everything with my own head and hands.' The men breathed an audible breath of amazement." (Ibid, p. 87)

"Among these heavy yeomen a feminine figure glided, the single one of her sex that the room contained. It had required a little determination - far more than she had at first imagined to take up a position here, for at her first entry the lumbering dialogues had ceased, nearly every face had been turned towards her, and those that were already turned rigidly fixed there." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 102)

As to Eustacia

"Eustacia was reserved, and lived very much to herself. Except the daughter of one of the cotters, who was their servant, and a lad who worked in the garden and stable, scarcely any one but themselves ever entered the house. They were the only genteel people of the district except the Yeobrights, and though far from rich, they did not feel that necessity for preserving a friendly face towards every man, bird, and beast which influenced their poorer neighbours." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 101)

"That she was tall and straight in build, that she was ladylike in her movements, was all that could be learnt of her just now," (Ibid, p. 59)

"Assuming that the soul of men and women were visible essence, you could fancy the colour of Eustacia's soul to be flame-like." (Ibid, p. 76)

"A true Tartarean dignity sat upon her brow, and not factitiously or with

marks of constraint, for it had grown in her with years." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 77)

We recall how she accepted her mother-in-law for the first time.

"When Mrs. Yeobright approached, Eustacia surveyed her with the calm stare of a stranger." (Ibid, 287)

As to Tess

"She was so modest, so expressive, she had looked so soft in her thin white gown that he had acted stupidly." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 17)

"All the men, and some of the women, when milking, dug their foreheads into the cows and gazed into the pail. But a few - mainly the younger ones - rested their heads sideways. This was Tess Durbeyfield's habit, her temple pressing the milcher's flank, her eyes fixed on the far end of the weadow with the quiet of one lost in meditation." (Ibid, p.191)

Both Bathsheba and Tess are attentive, responsible and helpful. Though Bathsheba is thrifty, businesslike and a bit egoistic, she is helpful and generous in general. She orders people to bring Fanny's body into her house and to arrange its burial properly. Tess is also helpful especially to her own family. Although she does not get much money herself, she is not an egoist. Eustacia is different. She does not include others into all her movements and thoughts. She is not attentive. But the three of them are intelligent and are regarded somewhat superior than the other common country-girls. Both

Bathsheba's and Eustacia's aim is to be superior. They hope to get better husbands. Eustacia also wishes to move to a bright, luxurious world. But Tess is much concerned with her poverty and tragic life. She is ^{Simple} more _{and more} simple and ignorant. If she is soft and submissive, Bathsheba and Eustacia are hard and obstinate. Eustacia even cannot control herself sometimes and utters sharp words without thinking of others' feelings. On account of this quick tempered manner, she despises Diggory Venn and exchanges sharp words with her mother-in-law. She is also an idler, contrary to Tess and Bathsheba who are diligent and hardworking.

If Eustacia is gloomy, serious, stern and Tess is also solemn and sad, Bathsheba is often playful, capricious and not very serious. Both Eustacia and Tess feel isolated, while Bathsheba is free and open. She can trust other people, too. She talks privately to Liddy, her female servant and asks Gabriel for advice. Tess is a bit reserved because she often stays alone. Eustacia is completely reserved and mysterious because she does not mix with other people at all. She hates her surroundings and is not kind to others even she looks down upon them. Though Tess and Bathsheba often have to face troubles and disappointments, they do not hate their surroundings and are able to work well enough on their farmland and country-life. They are also kind towards people of lower level.

Though they are often lonely, their life seems to be full of adventures and incidents. Eustacia is engaged with spying, secret meetings, and disguise. Tess is conceited with seduction and the sensational _{involved}

baptism of her baby.

Bathsheba is said not to have much experience in life and only becomes mature after facing troubles and difficulties. Tess is innocent and simple. But Eustacia's conduct does not show that she is unexperienced - we even feel a bit uneasy when we find that she has a secret lover and arranges secret meetings with Wildeve. So her character is not very agreeable compared with the fair, honest Bathsheba and the simple, innocent Tess.

Though Bathsheba is strong-headed and a bit wild, she has nothing of violence in her. Eustacia is mysterious, very cold and also strong-headed, but nothing of violence either. The soft, gentle Tess is unique in this case. She has a tendency to violent actions, and, through her cruel surroundings, her bitter situation and her great disappointment, she is led into murder.

Bathsheba begins to learn how to love a man through her sufferings. As a character she develops. Gabriel leads her to a proper life. Bathsheba realizes the facts of life and accepts them wisely in the end. But Eustacia's and Tess' men are disastrous for them. Clym and Wildeve bring Eustacia to her doom. Clym's high idealization closes her up and Wildeve's inferiority disappoints her. Angel Clare and Alec d'Urberville are also disastrous. If Angel Clare causes Tess' disaster through his narrow-mindedness, Alec does this through his wild flirtation and then through his crazy infatuation.

Eustacia remains as she is. As a character she does not develop at all, though through Clym people become more familiar with her and do not regard her as mysterious as she was before.

CHAPTER THREE

I. Comparison between the Male Characters

As we have already realized that we are brought to farms and country-life, we find Thomas Hardy's male characters mostly as farmers, hay-traders, shepherds and people with similar occupations.

We present here Gabriel Oak and Sergeant Troy from "Far from the Madding Crowd", Clym Yeobright, Diggory Venn and Damon Wildeve from "The Return of the Native"; Michael Henchard from "The Mayor of Casterbridge" and Alec d'Urberville from "Tess of the d'Urbervilles".

1. Gabriel Oak

Gabriel Oak is the name of the main male character in "Far from the Madding Crowd". He is an ordinary man. But he is a strong man. His patience and endurance are remarkable. It seems that he never tries to avoid or to fight against the steady flow of life, the strange tricks of destiny and the natural forces, the revolving natural order, and only firmly waits until he wins in the end. All these things make him an interesting figure in this novel.

The whole first chapter of the novel is about him only. So, the author gives us a hint that he is the main character and the most interesting character in that book.

Then we find him as a lover who is not taken seriously and even refused by a woman. Lately, we see him as the man who saves his mistress' wealth three times.

In the end, all his rivals have gone and he wins his love forever.

He is a clever and skilled land-worker. His honesty and his goodness make everyone in this novel trust him and never suspect him of hostile intentions. Bathsheba Everdene.- although she does not care for him, always trusts him and seeks his advice and depends on him in her great difficulties. Farmer Boldwood also goes to him to get information and even to ask him for advice, and then promotes him to his manager and his partner who receives some share of the profits. Troy never suspects him either and poor Fanny sends a confidential letter to him. All village workers admire and respect him.

He is a bachelor of twenty-eight. His face is neither remarkable nor handsome. The village workers say that he is goodlooking by nature. But we have his description here:

"When Farmer Oak smiled, the corners of his mouth spread till they were within an unimportant distance of his ears, his eyes were reduced to chinks, and diverging wrinkles appeared round them, extending upon his countenance like the rays in a rudimentary sketch of the rising sun." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 1)

Bathsheba only carelessly glances at him and orders her driver to drive on when Gabriel pays twopence for her. She seems to be more easily attracted by splendour and is not interested at all in Gabriel's features and slow motion, though he is powerfully energetic and clever.

"Oak's motions, though they had a quiet energy, were slow, and their deliberateness accorded well with his occupations." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 1)

Although he is "just an ordinary sort of man" (Ibid, p. 11), he possesses some superiority among the villagers.

"..... an athletic young fellow of somewhat superior appearance to the rest - in fact, his superiority was marked enough to lead several ruddy peasants standing by to speak to him inquiringly, as to a farmer, and to use 'Sir' as a finishing word." (Ibid, p. 43)

This superiority makes it difficult to him to find a job. He possesses good knowledge in farming. He can tell the time by examining the sky.

"..... he could do or think a thing with as mercurial a dash as can the men of towns who are more to the manner born, his special power, morally, physically, and mentally was static, owing little or nothing to momentum as a rule." (Ibid, p. 11)

We see Gabriel as the man who saves a burning rick-yard, cures the poisoned sheep and rescues the almost ruined crops. He is a devoted and clever farm-worker.

He is quiet, modest and hard-working. He does not lose his hope at all when he realizes he has gone bankrupt. Without doubt or shame he turns to find a job even if it is only as a shepherd. He is a tough person.

His patient devotion and his unfailing loyalty

towards Bathsheba and his work are surprising, as Bathsheba treats him badly. As a strong character, he is not easily shaken or upset. His name indicates his character. Oak is the name of a tree with hard, tough wood used for many purposes. Gabriel is the angel sent to Mary to tell her of the coming Christ. Gabriel Oak is a very tough man and shows remarkable power of endurance. And he is very firm. When he says:

"'I'll make her my wife, or upon my soul I shall be good for nothing!'"
(Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 27)

we know that he will be able to obtain what he wishes.

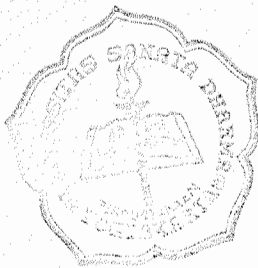
2. Sergeant Troy/Francis Troy

Sergeant Troy is another male character in "Far from the Madding Crowd". He is a bright handsome soldier. Unexperienced girls like Fanny Robin and Bathsheba are easily entrapped by his flatteries. His appearance is resplendent.

"And Troy's deformities lay deep down from a woman's vision, whilst his embellishments were upon the very surface;" (Ibid, p. 215)

He leads a vicious life. The first introduction of him in this novel in Chapter XI describes what he thinks about marriage.

"' And Frank, when will it be?'
'What?'
'That you promised.'
'I don't quite recollect.'
'O you do! Don't speak like that. It



weighs me to the earth. It makes me say what ought to be said first by you.'

'Never mind - say it.'

'O, must I? - it is, when shall we be married, Frank?'

....." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 99)

He does not care anything about marriage, but as soon as Fanny reminds him of his promise, he says 'okay'. This shows that he does not think marriage is important and he does not respect it. There is low laughter heard from Troy's barrack after Fanny leaves Troy. Maybe it comes from Troy's other woman or maybe from his friends. But this indicates that Troy's words are funny for his friends. We are not surprised when we learn later that he has lightly canceled the ceremony. He is also a very cruel man. He does not care at all that he will wound Fanny's heart by doing so. He just leaves her and courts Bathsheba almost immediately afterwards. His manner is well described in this sentence:

" for instance, he could speak of love and think of dinners, call on the husband to look at the wife"
(Ibid, p. 192)

His cruelty towards Boldwood tortures the poor man deeply. He teases Boldwood by not admitting that he has married Bathsheba and mocks him afterwards.

He treats Bathsheba badly after marriage. He spends her money on gambling, and leaves her when he finds out what has happened to Fanny and her baby. Then we see how he treats his horse.

"Though on foot, he held the reins and

whip, and occasionally aimed light cuts at the horse's ear with the end of the lash, as a recreation." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 297)

It is also his cruel manner that makes him decide to reappear again in the middle of the Christmas party, which is also an engagement party, held by Boldwood in his house in order to shock the poor man. But this also leads his own destruction because Boldwood cannot control himself in his greatest disappointment and kills him.

3. Diggory Venn

Diggory Venn is one of the male character in "The Return of the Native". Compared with other lovers in this novel, he is the most uncanny one.

He is handsome and young and he loves Thomasin Yeobright, the second main female character who is the cousin of Clym Yeobright. But Thomasin refuses him because her aunt, Mrs. Yeobright, would not agree to it as he^s only the son of a small dairy-farmer. Also Thomasin does not love him, though she does not dislike him either.

Venn has shifted his position even further from hers since then by adopting the red-dye trade. Little children and superstitious people are often startled to see him and some think they have seen a ghost when they encounter him. The colour of his van is red. So are the colour of his bags, his clothes, his boots, his face and his hands. He is completely red because the colour of the red-dye has permeated him and all of his equipment.

He is a solitary figure whose acts are as mysterious as the nature of the Heath itself. But he is a true lover, almost too unnatural to be true.

"To be in Thomasin's heath, and near her, yet unseen, was the one-evil-lamb of pleasure left to him." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p.93)

"..... and the reddleman, still loving her well, was excited by this accidental service to her at a critical juncture to vow an active devotion to her cause, instead of, as hitherto, sighing holding aloof." (Ibid, p. 92 - 93)

When he realizes there is no hope for himself, he only thinks of Thomasin's happiness. He tries with all his heart to prevent Eustacia from intruding with the attachment of Wildeve and Thomasin, and thus make Thomasin marry Wildeve according to Thomasin's wishes.

Then he also prevents Wildeve from seeing Eustacia again and he goes to Mrs. Yeobright to dissuade her from making a reconciliation with Clym and Eustacia, as he thinks it will make Eustacia happier and cause her not to see Wildeve who often leaves Thomasin alone at home to meet her.

His good intention, his hard attempts, his endurance and perseverance are paid. He possesses Thomasin in the end and they live happily as husband and wife.

4. Damon Wildeve

He is the most unfavourable and undesirable character in "The Return of the Native". He is lady-

killer and not a faithful husband.

He does not care much about the wedding procedure which makes the ceremony fail and puts Thomasin in an awkward position. Then he trifles with Eustacia and asks her to go abroad with him. He marries Thomasin eventually only because Eustacia is attracted to another man. Though she admits that Thomasin is a good woman and a good wife, he is not faithful to her. He betrays her by seeing Eustacia again and again. He is not easily satisfied.

"To be yearning for the difficult, to be weary of that offered; to care for the remote, to dislike the near; it was Wildeve's nature always." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p.254)

The heath-workers do not sympathize with his conduct.

"'And I shouldn't have cared about the man, though some may say he's good looking'

'To give him his due he 's clever, learned fellow in his way - a'most as clever as Clym Yecobright used to be. He was brought up to better things than keeping the Quiet Woman. An engineer - that's what the man was, as we know; but he threw away his chance, and so 'a took a public house to live. His learning was no use to him at all.'" (Ibid, p. 24)

It seems that he does not love Eustacia truly. When Eustacia asks him whether he loves her or not, he says that he loves her, and yet he does not love her. When he learns from Doggery Venn that Eustacia has deserted him, he is not sad or angry, but laughs and says,

"Ha, ha! I suppose I deserve it, considering how I have played with them both, " (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 166)

So, it is a bit odd when we learn later how he gives his life in order to try to save Eustacia. It is as if the situation of the chaos on the nature of Egdon Heath at that night had charmed him to leap into the pond to find his death, and thus to set free Thomasin.

5. Clym Yeobright

Clym Yeobright is the main hero in "The Return of the Native".

"He's an enthusiast about ideas, and careless about outward things." (Ibid, p. 334)

This is Eustacia's judgement towards her puritanical husband, Clym. Clym's mother, Mrs. Yeobright, comments on her son's scheme,

", And your scheme is merely a castle in the air built on purpose to justify this folly which has seized you, and to solve your conscience on the irrational situation you are in." (Ibid, p. 227)

He is young and clever. He has spent his life in Paris as a gentleman with some wealth. He is handsome and finely built. Yet, he is fed up with his bright, gentle life in the big city. He loves his native place, the lonely barren Egdon Heath. And he resolves to stay there forever and help his folk by building a night school and teaching them as a school-master. Towards

the heath his feeling is exactly the contrast of Eustacia's.

"Take all the varying hates felt by Eustacia towards the heath and translate them into loves, and you have the heart of Clym." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 205)

Clym loves Egdon Heath and its folk. He is an idealist. He has a conviction that the want of most men is knowledge of a sort which brings wisdom to them. He loves Eustacia well enough, but still not enough to change his own plan and ideal.

He is obstinate. And this obstinacy disappoints his mother and breaks Eustacia's heart. Yet he remains obstinate. Only when his mother died and his wife commits suicide, his feeling of guilt blames him forever. He feels that he is the great cause of these misery of these two women he loved so much and that he has driven them to their deaths. After that he leads a lonely life as a preacher with his memories of his mother and his wife, in Egdon Heath. The first words of his preaching are as follows:

"And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand, then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; I pray thee say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother; for I will not say thee nay." (Ibid, p. 485)

6. Alec d'Urberville

Alec d'Urberville is one of the male characters

in "Tess of the d'Urbervilles". He is not a real d'Urberville. His family has bought this noble family name.

Alec is a rich gentleman who has a bad reputation. His greatest sin is his sexual exploit and his harsh mastery of Tess Durbeyfield. But can we blame him as the most wicked Devil, the greatest enemy of goodness? Surely he is the first person who leads Tess into her disaster. He chases her, he tempts her, he cheats her, he corners her and he traps her into his terrible web. However, we must remember that ^{he} gradually loves her so passionately that he uses every opportunity to make her his legal wife. This happens after he becomes, unexpectedly, an enthusiastic preacher. This conversion is due to old Vicar Clare's influence. When he meets Tess again, he leaves his preaching. He chases her, he provokes her by telling her again and again that Angel is not a good and responsible husband. But he also saves Tess' family and provides money for them. He tries to help Tess from her difficulties.

"I did not come to reproach you for my deeds. I came, Tess, to say that I don't like you to be working like this, and I have come on purpose for you. You say you have a husband who is not I. Well, perhaps you have; but I've never seen him, and you've not told me his name; altogether he seems rather a mythological personage. However, even if you have one, I think I am nearer to you than he is. I, at any rate, try to help you out of trouble, but he does not, bless his invisible face! The words of the steen prophet Hosea that I used

to read come back to me. Don't you know them, Tess? - "And she shall follow after her lover, but she shall not overtake him; and she shall seek him, but shall not find him; then shall she say, I will go & return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now!" (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 421 - 422)

Alec's words, in some way, are quite true.

We think that we cannot label him as the greatest villain, the most wicked Devil in this novel. If there had been no Angel, Tess would have been saved and have led a good prosperous life with Alec though she did not love him. Or, if Angel had forgiven her as she forgave him and had not left her alone in the cruel darkness and in the hands of Alec, she would have made a good happy wife for him.

Alec is a good angel to the family of Durbeyfield. He always helps them financially in their critical moments, though not without an intention to make Tess feel indebted.

Judging those things, we can say that Alec's sin is no greater than Angel's irresponsibility and negligence through his incredible conventionality and cruel hard narrow religious belief and morality towards Tess.

So, Alec as a character does not develop. By the influence of Vicar Clare, he becomes a preacher. He leads a good life. He becomes a true Christian. It seems there is an internal conflict when he meets Tess again. He seduced her in the past time when he was

still a man with a bad character, that is to say, a flirt, till Tess gave birth to an illegal child from him. Now, when he has been introduced to a Christian life, he tries to make sort of amends towards Tess by offering marriage. This is incredible. In fact, Tess does not love him or hate him. She simply ignores him and her bitter experience with him. She simply wants to erase him and his shadow. But Alec chases her and corners her again, this time because of his need to make amends and also maybe of his forthcoming pure love to Tess. From this fact, we can say that Alec is a very egoistic person. He only thinks of his own pleasure when he seduced Tess. He also only thinks of his need to make amends and to love when he forces Tess into a marriage with him.

This egoism results in his being killed by the desperate Tess.

7. Michael Henchard

Michael Henchard is the hero of "The Mayor of Casterbridge" who compels our interest most. Like ordinary people, he has both nobility and weakness in his character. These nobility and weakness make him an interesting tragic hero in this novel.

First of all, we admire his sense of justice, even if by maintaining it he will suffer from it. We recall his fair fight against Donald Farfrae; his brave admission of the Parvity-Woman's treason in front of the public in the Court; his good intention to try to get Farfrae home just before the death of Lucetta, Henchard's old mistress and Farfrae's wife; his inability to take revenge on Farfrae and Lucetta

though he has chances for that;(he even returns Lucetta's deadly love letters to her); then, his repentance and determination to make full restitution to his wife Susan, and his charity to Able Whittle's mother. Able Whittle is a very poor and lazy man who works in Henchard's farm.

Another good aspect is Henchard's strong will which has made him keep his oath for twenty-one years and gain his remarkable rise both in status and prosperity.

However, we do not sympathize both his temper and snobbishness. His harsh treatment of his workman, Whittle; his anger at Farfrae's success and popularity - they are examples of his recurrent fits of temper. His snobbishness and status craving make Elizabeth-Jane suffer very much so that she wisely leaves him. Even, when he is still a hay-trusser, he is worrying about his good reputation.

"Did I tell my name to anybody last night, or didn't I tell my name?"

(Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life & Death of The Mayor of Casterbridge, London, 1963, p. 17)

He is also an egoistic man. He considers his passive suffering wife as the main cause of his frustration, and, thus, gets rid of her by selling her in his drunkenness. He does not realize his own recklessness. As soon as he recovers the next morning, he is first of all worried whether he has mentioned his name in front of the public and then blames Susan for her simplicity and ignorance. Again, in the event at the Ring at Casterbridge when he makes his reunion with

his wife, he thinks above all of his status and reputation, his egoism above his good intention towards his own family.

On the other hand, he wins our sympathy because of his longing for affection and friendship. His like of Farfrae, and later, his dependence upon Elizabeth-Jane brings him to his tragic end. He is the kind of person who needs sympathy, dependency and love from the persons he likes and he will not stand any isolation from them. This and his changing moods ruin his own life most.

In spite of his uneducated upbringing, he is really a commercial man which colours the whole of his actions. He sells his wife for five guineas, then he needs to buy her again by sending the same amount of money through Elizabeth-Jane. He is also thinking of Lucetta's wealth when he proposes to marry her. If we look at the whole picture of his life, we can say that in his frustration he has sold his family and his love for his own ambition. At last he dies because of her desperate trying to regain the last lost affection which in fact can be given by Elizabeth-Jane.

'His heart was so exacerbated at parting from the girl that he could not face an inn, or even a household of the most humble kind; and entering a field he lay down under a wheatrick, feeling no want of food.' Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life & Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, p. 400)

'Although everything he brought necessitated carriage at his own back, he had secreted among his tools a few of

Elizabeth-Jane's cast-off belongings in the shape of gloves, shoes, a scrap of her handwriting, and the like; and in his pocket he carried a curl of her hair.' (Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life & Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, p. 400)

As a character, he is unique and interesting. When he is stripped of everything he possessed before, his title, admiration, wealth and affection, and he is a lonely man in complete isolation, he accepts his nothingness and self-alienation as penance. During this self-alienation, as a character, he develops. He realizes his past destructive ambition and sentiment and he is sorry for all these. He has tried to replace ambition with love. He has lost his astute manager Farfrae and his simple wife Susan. Now he has left the only possible person whom he loves and who could love him, Elizabeth-Jane.

When he hears that Elizabeth-Jane would marry Donald Farfrae, he begins to doubt. His affection towards his step-daughter has kept him unable to wander far from Casterbridge in his isolation.

'The remembrance would continually revive in him now that it was not Elizabeth and Farfrae who had driven him away from them, but his own haughty sense that his presence was no longer desired.' (Ibid, p. 404)

'To make one more attempt to be near her: to go back; to see her, to plead his cause before her, to ask forgiveness for his proud, to endeavour strenuously to hold his own in her love; it was worth the risk of repulse,

ay, of life itself.' (Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life & Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, p. 404)

He resolves to a determination to go to the wedding to see Elizabeth-Jane. He understands the risk: his own life.

Now, he is not egoistic and thinks of other's happiness.

'He only hoped that Elizabeth-Jane had obtained a better home than had been hers at the former time.' (Ibid, p. 407)

But the presence of Newson, Elizabeth-Jane's father, in that wedding ruins his hope. He immediately feels that he is not wanted and that he is already supplanted.

'It was Newson's, who had indeed come and supplanted him. Henchard pushed to the door, and for some seconds made no other movement.' He rose to his feet, and stood like a dark ruin, obscured by 'the shade from his own soul upthrown.'
(Ibid, p. 410)

In his desperation, he tries to regain his position in the heart of his step-daughter.

'What; Elizabeth?' he cried, as he seized her hand. 'What do you say? - Mr. Henchard? Don't, don't scourge me like that! Call me worthless old Henchard - anything - but don't 'ee be so cold as this! O my maid - I see you have another - a real father in my place. Then you know all; but don't give all your thought to him! Do ye save a little room for me!'
(Ibid, p. 410)

Then, his unselfishness makes him say:

'Don't ye distress yourself on my account,' he said, with proud superiority. 'I would not wish it - at such a time, too, as this. I have done wrong in coming to 'ee - I see my error. But it is only for once, so forgive it. I'll never trouble 'ee again, Elizabeth-Jane - no, not to my dying day! Good-night. Good-bye!'
(Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life & Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, p. 411)

His self-destruction kills him afterwards, but he has been changed. He has reached the stage of unselfishness and unselfish love.

II. Agreements and Differences

Except in 'The Mayor of Casterbridge', Hardy's male characters usually play a secondary part. But they are very important for the development of the story. They circle around the lives of the heroines. Some are saviors of the heroines, some are villains. Yet a character like Michael Henchard in 'The Mayor of Casterbridge' is different. He seems to tower above and stand alone and is presented to having inner conflicts in himself.

Based on this view, we can easily find agreements in the characteristics of Gabriel Oak of 'Far from the Madding Crowd' and Diggory Venn from 'The Return of the Native'. They are saviors who bring the rise and better life of the heroines. While Sergeant Troy in 'Far from the Madding Crowd' and Damon Wildeve from 'The Return of the Native' are the villains who cause harm to the heroines. We find Clym Yeobright, Alec of the d'Urberville and Michael Henchard in a unique place. They are not really villains, but described as men of contradictions and inner conflicts which cause harm to others and to themselves.

Both the saviors and the villains are described to having fine figures and handsome faces. Usually, the saviors are more simple in appearance. But all major characters in Hardy's novels are always good-looking. Only the low workers who forms the background figures are said to possess funny or bad features.

Both Gabriel Oak and Diggory Venn are modest gentlemen and lovers whose position is somewhat lower than the heroines. Gabriel, who was once a small farmer,

looses all his sheep and becomes a shepherd for Bathsheba's Everdene's farm. Diggory Venn is a son of a small dairy-farmer who even shifts his position to a particular lower occupation; a reddleman. They are both clever and hard-working. Gabriel is admired and respected by other people especially by the village-workers while Diggory Venn is regarded as mysterious as he seldom makes normal contact with other people. If Gabriel is quiet and slow but massive, Diggory possesses quick light motion. We remember how he tricks Damon Wildeve in order to prevent him from meeting Eustacia. If Gabriel walks slowly but powerfully ahead, Diggory suddenly appears and then disappears. Gabriel is also too honest and just to trick someone else. However, both of them are kind-hearted and helpful towards others. They are also devoted lovers and devoted farm-workers. Their patience and endurance are remarkable. Gabriel is strong, steady and very tough. He seems just to stand there with his powerful feet and wait, and believe that he will be able to fulfil all his wishes. Diggory is a bit different. Though he is also mentally strong, he is more playing hide and seek. Both are not easily shaken or upset, and eventually meet their happy moment with their lovers.

Francis Troy and Damon Wildeve are placed in different position and role. Unlike the honest Gabriel and the kind Diggory, both Troy and Wildeve are flirts and unfaithful husbands. Troy is even described to be cruel and destructive. We remember how badly he treats Boldwood, as bad as he treats his horses. However, Troy and Wildeve, like Gabriel, are clever and superior

among other people in their villages. People do not know much about Diggory as he does not mix with others very often.

Troy is showy, bright and resplendent while Wildeve is more modest. Both of them are not so steady. Troy seems to love Fanny Robin, but he plays with other women and then marries Bathsheba Everdene. Wildeve seems to love Eustacia Vye, but he marries Thomasin Yeobright and then makes secret meetings with Eustacia as the wife of Clym Yeobright. They do not practice their *proper* skill either. Troy is a clever student who masters several languages, but he turns to be a soldier, while Wildeve, who is an engineer, works as an inn-keeper.

'He's a doctor's son by name, which is a great deal; and he's an earl's son by nature And he was brought up so well, and sent to Casterbridge Grammar School for years and years. Learnt all languages while he was there; and it was said he got on so far that he could take down Chinese in shorthand; but that I don't answer for, as it was only reported. However, he wasted his gifted lot, and listed a soldier; but even then he rose to be a sergeant without trying at all' (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 188)

'"To give him his due he's a clever, learned fellow in his way - a'most as clever as Clym Yeobright used to be. He was brought up to better things than keeping the Quiet Woman. An engineer - that's what the man was, as we know; but he threw away his

chance, and so 'a took a public- house to live. His learning was no use to him at all.'" (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 24)

So, their fault is their instability.

Although Clym Yeobright, Alec d'Urberville and Michael Henchard are as destructive as Troy and Wildeve, towards themselves and others, they are different in the sense that their purpose is not destruction and that they in the end realize their destructiveness and make attempts to reconciliation, though, they are too late.

Like Troy and Wildeve, the three of them are not steady. The change of course of Clym's occupation marks this instability. He is not forced by outer circumstances like Gabriel who loses his wealth in bad weather, but his idealization decides the change. Alec d'Urberville is a flirt. Men like him usually do not possess any self-confidence and their character is not firmly fixed. Michael Henchard's bad temper and changing moods indicate the same character. ^{HIS} ~~There~~ is in contrast with Gabriel's and Diggory's who are steady and tough.

Both Clym and Michael, like Gabriel, love nature and the country farms and its people. They accord well with their native surroundings. Alec, who is more busy with his flirtation, does not care much about his native land and later we find him taking Tess to live in a town, Sandbourne.

Clym is very obstinate. His obstinacy ruins his mother, his wife and his own life. We may say that he is an egoistic idealist.

Michael's enthusiastic ambition makes him frus-

trated and he sells his own wife in his drunkenness. This is the seed of his later downfall. We may also say that he is an egoistic status-crafter.

Alec is an egoist because he only cares for his own pleasure. He is therefore described in the same way as Francis Troy; merry and full of fun. He is different from Troy and Wildeve in the sense that he is totally changed later. Through Vicar Clare's influence, he learns Christian moral and life. His mood is more solemn afterwards, like Clym and Michael who are gloomy and stern.

The three of them, unlike Troy and Wildeve, eventually feel guilty of their past conduct. They all try to make amends. Clym's feeling of guilt makes him decide to live alone as a preacher. Alec's feeling of guilt leads to disaster, though it is not all his own fault. Angel's instability and negligence are also causes of the disaster. Michael's guilty feeling leads him to his self-alienation and then to his death.

As characters Troy and Wildeve do not develop at all. They remain as they are. The steady Oak becomes more mature. His philosophy of life is confirmed rather than changed. Diggory eventually leaves his redde and leads a normal way of life as a farmer and mixes with other people in social life. Clym, Alec and Michael also develop. Through the sufferings of people they love, they realize how bad they have been. They try to make amends and reconciliation, though they are not always successful.

CHAPTER FOUR

I. The Setting of Hardy's works: The Wessex World

Comparing the settings of place we find a specific location that is created by Thomas Hardy: the Wessex world. All Hardy's novels take place in some area or towns or villages in a certain region which he calls Wessex. Wessex is the ancient name for an area which covers the south western region of England. In his novels, Hardy's Wessex especially centres in South-Wessex, which is really the country of Dorsetshire. In the Preface to "Far from the Madding Crowd", Thomas Hardy says:

"In reprinting this story for a new edition I am reminded that it was in the chapters of "Far from the Madding Crowd", as they appeared month by month in a popular magazine, that I first ventured to adopt the word "Wessex" from the pages of early English history, and give it a fictitious significance as the existing name of the district once included in that extinct kingdom. The series of novels I projected being mainly of the kind called local, they seemed to require a territorial definition of some sort to lend their unity to their scene. Finding that the area of a single county did not afford a canvas large enough for this purpose, and that there were objections to an invented name, I disinterred the old one."(Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. v)

It is clear that the name of Wessex was successfully revived by Thomas Hardy and became popular with the

public. Many readers became so concerned in matching and relating the imaginative names of these places in the novels with the real ones, that they sent letters to Hardy asking for the proper and exact setting of place:

"The region designed was known but vaguely and I was often asked by educated people where it lay. However, the press and the public were kind enough to welcome the fanciful plan, and willingly joined me in the anachronism of imagining a Wessex population living under Queen Victoria; --a modern Wessex of railways, the penny post, mowing and reaping machines, union workhouses, lucifer matches, labourers who could read and write, and National school children. But I believe I am correct in stating that, until the existence of this contemporaneous Wessex in place of the usual counties was announced in the present story, in 1874, it had never been heard of in fiction and current speech, if at all, and that the expression, 'a W Wessex peasant', or 'a Wessex custom', would theretofore have been taken to refer to nothing later in date than the Norman Conquest." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, pp. v-vi)

But this ancient name from before the Norman Conquest was revived by Hardy's novels. This is a proof how novels can influence the readers and the public. People consciously or unconsciously adopted the name and used it for modern situations. Hardy also noted this in his Preface:

"I did not anticipate that this application of the word to modern story would extend outside the chapters of these particular chronicles. But it was soon taken up elsewhere, the first to adopt it being the now defunct 'Examiner', which, in the impression bearing date July 15, 1876, entitled one of its articles 'The Wessex Labourer,' the article turning out to be no dissertation on farming during the Heptarchy, but on the modern peasant of the south-west counties." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p.vi)

The truth is that Hardy is describing his own native land and country with its history and traditions but he also retains his own creative imagination so that this descriptions of the Wessex world are 'partly real, partly dream-country', Dorsetshire is the very heart of Thomas Hardy's Wessex, and most of Hardy's life was actually spent in it. He was born at Higher Bockhampton, which is called 'Mellstock' in his novel 'Under the Green wood tree', on June 2, 1840. It is situated in South Wessex. If we trace the names of the places in his novels we can see that South Wessex represents the county of Dorsetshire. In 1872 Hardy was employed as architect in the restoration of the church in St. Juliot, and he fell in love with the rector's sister, whom he married 2 years later. St. Juliot is 'Endelstow' in 'A Pair of Blue Eyes' and it is in Lower Wessex or actually in the county of Cornwall. Between 1876 - 1878 Hardy lived in Sturminster Newton, about 12 miles south-west of Shaftesbury in Dorset. The names are 'Stourcastle' and 'Shaston' in 'Tess of the d'Urber-

viles'. Then he lived at Wimborne, or 'Warborne' in 'Two of a Tower', during the years 1881 - 1883. He settled in 1885 in a house of his own design, called Max Gate, on the Wareham ('Anglebury' in 'The Return of the Native') road just outside Dorchester or 'Casterbridge' in 'The Mayor of Casterbridge'. All names mentioned later are situated in Dorset, or 'South-Wessex' in the novels.

In doing this section I have consulted some guide to literary topography by John Freeman and taken information from "One Rare Fair Woman" and from the development of the stories.

<u>Hardy's Name</u>	<u>Real Name</u>
1. South Wessex	1. Dorsetshire (Dorset)
2. Mid Wessex	2. Wiltshire and part of Berkshire
3. North Wessex	3. Gloucester
4. Upper Wessex	4. Hampshire
5. Outer Wessex	5. Somerset and part of Devon
6. Off Wessex	6. Part of Devonshire and Cornwall
7. Mellstock (in Under the Greenwood Tree)	7. Higher Bockhampton (where he was born)
8. Endelstow (in a Fair of Blue Eyes)	8. St. Juliot (where Hardy met his future wife)
9. Stourcastle (In Tess of d'Urberville)	9. Sturminster Newton (where he lived in 1876 - 1878)
10. Shaston (in Tess of d'Urberville)	10. Shaftesbury
11. Warborne (in Two on a Tower)	11. Wimborne (where Hardy lived in 1881 - 1883)
12. Anglebury (in The Return of the Native)	12. Wareham
13. Casterbridge (in The	13. Dorchester (where Hardy

Mayor of Casterbridge) - lived in Max Gate, his own house, till his death.)

Now, if we come back to his novels 'Far from the Madding Crowd', 'The Return of the Native' and 'The Mayor of Casterbridge', they are all staged in the immediate Dorchester area.

In 'Far from the Madding Crowd', the hero, Gabriel Oak lives as a small farmer in Norcombe Hill which is described not far from Toller-Down, when he lost all his sheep and wealth, he works as a chepherd for Bathsheba's farm in Weatherbury Farm near Weatherbury. There is an explanation that Weatherbury is also called Lower Longpuddle and is twenty miles of Norcombe Hill. Before Gabriel worked in Bathsheba's farm, he tried to get a job in Casterbridge which is six miles of Weatherbury. Later, Bathsheba Everdene, the heroine, often visited the Casterbridge market to act as a farmer, trading her wool and grain, and probably honey. We can also find the following place names mentioned and described in the novel; Shottsford which is ten miles of Weatherbury, Yalbury Wood or Hill which is situated between Casterbridge and Weatherbury, Melchester, Bath and Greenhill which is near Kingsbere.

<u>Hardy's Name</u>	<u>Real Name</u>
1. Norcombe Hill	1. A hill in the west part of Dorset
2. Toller-Down	2. A village in the west part of Dorset,
3. Weatherbury or Lower Longpuddle (twenty miles of Norcombe Hill)	3. Puddletown 11)

11) Evelyn Hardy and F.B. Pinion, One Rare Fair Woman -

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 4. Casterbridge (six miles of Weatherbury) | 4. Dorchester |
| 5. Weatherbury Farm and House | 5. Waterston Manor |
| 6. Shottsford (ten miles of Weatherbury) | 6. --- |
| 7. Yalbury Wood | 7. Yellowham Wood |
| 8. Melchester | 8. Salisbury |
| 9. Bath | 9. Bath |

Egdon Heath, A description of it marks the opening of 'The Return of the Native', and throughout the novel it is like a great brooding presence. It is remarkably impressive. And we find also the Rainbarrow which is in the centre of the Egdon Heath. Then we have the story of the put off wedding of Wildeve and Thomasin Yeobright at Angelbury. The reason is that the procedure could be made valid only ^{at} Budmouth. But the whole narration is all staged in the area of Egdon Heath. Wildeve lives as an innkeeper at Quiet Woman Inn in the eastern part of Egdon Heath. The Yeobrights own a lovely cottage which is called Blooms-End in the western part of Egdon, while Eustacia Vye and her grandfather live in Mistover Knap somewhere in the middle north of Egdon. When Mrs. Yeobright refuses the marriage of her son, Clym, with Eustacia, Clym takes his wife to live at Alderworth which is situated somewhere in the eastern part of the heath. A certain spot called Rainbarrow becomes a dumb witness of the dramatic end of Eustacia Vye and Damon Wildeve.

Hardy's Name

Real Name

1. Egdon Heath

1. The heathlands stretching

from Dorchester to Bourne-
mouth

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2. Rainbarrow (placed by Hardy in the middle of the heath for artistic purposes) | 2. Actually a hill which is on the edge of the western heaths ¹²⁾ |
| 3. Anglebury | 3. Wareham |
| 4. Budmouth | 4. Weymouth |
| 5. "The Quiet Woman" Inn | 5. "The Traveller's Rest" ¹³⁾ |

The selling of wife in 'The Mayor of Casterbridge' happens in a fair at Weydon-Priors, in Upper Wessex. Captain Newson, the buyer, takes the sold wife, Susan Henchard and the baby Elizabeth-Jane Henchard to Canada and then returns to England where they stay at Falmouth. Then the rest of the scenes takes place at Casterbridge and in Casterbridge. We find the names of King's Arms, the chief hotel in Casterbridge where Susan sees her husband again, as a Mayor of the town, and The Three Mariners, also a big hotel where Susan and her daughter and also Donald Farfrae stay for some nights before meeting Michael Henchard. The reunion of Henchard and his wife takes place at the Ring at Casterbridge. Then there are descriptions of The Market House, St. Peter's churchyard, High Street, May-Dun, Durnover road, High-Place Hall, Corn Street and Melchester road, of north Egdon Heath, the area where Henchard dies.

<u>Hardy's Name</u>	<u>Real Name</u>
1. Weydon-Priors, in Upper Wessex	1. Weyhill, in Hampshire
2. Falmouth	2. Same

12) John Freeman, Literature & Locality, p. 105

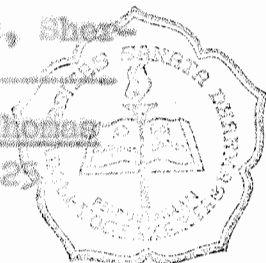
13) Evelyn Hardy and F.E. Pinion, Op. Cit., p. 71

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 3. Casterbridge | 3. Dorchester |
| 4. King's Arms | 4. The chief hotel in Dorchester, probably bears the same name |
| 5. The Three Mariners | 5. The Three Mariners |
| 6. The Ring at Casterbridge | 6. Maumbury Rings |
| 7. The Market House | 7. The Market House |
| 8. St. Peter's churchyard | 8. St. Peter's churchyard |
| 9. High Street | 9. High Street |
| 10. May-Dun | 10. Maiden Castle, in the south west of Dorchester |
| 11. High-Place Hall | 11. High-Place Hall, but the original does not overlook the main market centre ¹⁴⁾ |
| 12. Durnover road | 12. Fordington Road |
| 13. Corn Street | 13. Corn Street |
| 14. Melchester road | 14. Salisbury road in the northern part of Dorchester |

'Tess of the d'Urbervilles' is a bit different. It is set partly in the Vale of Blackmoor, though the Talbothays scenes in this novel take place in the Frome Valley, near Dorchester, and on the edge of Fuddletown (Weatherbury).

The Durbeyfields, who are the true last generations of the ancient knightly family of the d'Urberville, live in the little village of Marlot in the adjoining Vale of Blackmore. Parson Tringham mentions the names of Kingsbere, Sherton Abbas and Wellbridge as the location of the old mansions and estates of the ancient d'Urberville which represent Bere Regis, Sher-

14) F.B. Pinion, The Mayor of Casterbridge by Thomas Hardy, Macmillan Education London, 1975, p.29



borne and Wollbridge Manor where the old mansions of the real ancient knightly family in England named the Turberville are situated.¹⁵⁾

We also find the names of Stourcastle and Shaston which are near Marlott. Alec d'Urberville's house is at Trantridge, near The Chase or Chaseborough, The Slopes and also Kingsbere.

After her baby dies, Tess goes to work as a dairymaid at Talbothays Dairyfarm on the western edge of Egdon Heath, where she meets Angel Clare. The Clares live at Emminster which is located in the western part of South Wessex.

There is a scene in the Frome River where Angel takes Tess and the other girls crossing the river to go to Mellstock church on a Sunday morning. Angel then takes his wife Tess to stay in Wellbridge Manor, the ancient manor house of the d'Urberville, after their wedding. In this house Tess has seen the horrid pictures of her own ancient ancestors for the first time. In the same house she confesses all her past life to Angel. Angel is so frustrated that in his dream in the night he carries Tess unconsciously across Frome River back and forth, and then lays Tess in the empty stone coffin of the abbot in the Abbey near the house.

Angel runs away to Brazil and Tess, after staying sometime in Marlott, works very hard at Flintcombe-Ash which is located near Port-Bredy where she is found again by Alec. Alec chases her and offers a marriage. At last, Tess, in despair, consent to his will at d'Urberville Aisle near Greenhill, Kingsbere. Alec

15) Evelyn Hardy & F.B. Finion, Op. Cit., p. 24

takes her to Sandbourne where Tess meets Angel again and she then kills Alec. The sad couple of lovers, Tess and Angel, have wandered around for their short reunion through Branshurst Court in the Great Forest before they stop at the ruins of the ancient temples at Stonehenge. Tess is caught by the police here. She is then taken to Wintonchester where she ends her tragic life.

<u>Hardy's Name</u>	<u>Real Name</u>
1. Vale of Blakemore/Blackmoor	1. Vale of Blackmoor
2. Marlott, somewhere in the area of Vale of Blakemore near Shaston	2. In the area of the Vale of Blackmoor
3. Old mansions of the ancient d'Urberville: at Kingsbere, Sherton (Abbas) and Wellbridge	3. old mansions of the ancient Turberville: Bere Regis, Sherborne and Woolbridge Manor, five miles of west Wareham
- Kingsbere contains tombs of d'Urberville	- Bere Regis contains tombs of Turberville
- Wellbridge is the ancient manor house of d'Urberville	- Woolbridge Manor was formerly the manor house of the Turberville family 16)
4. Shaston	4. Shaftesbury
5. Stourcastle	5. Sturminster Newton, twelve miles southwest of Shaftesbury
6. The Chase (Chaseborough), near Kingsbere and Trantridge	6. Near Bere Regis - no real name can be traced
7. Trantridge	7. near Bere Regis - no real name can be traced

16) John Freeman, Op.Cit., p. 166

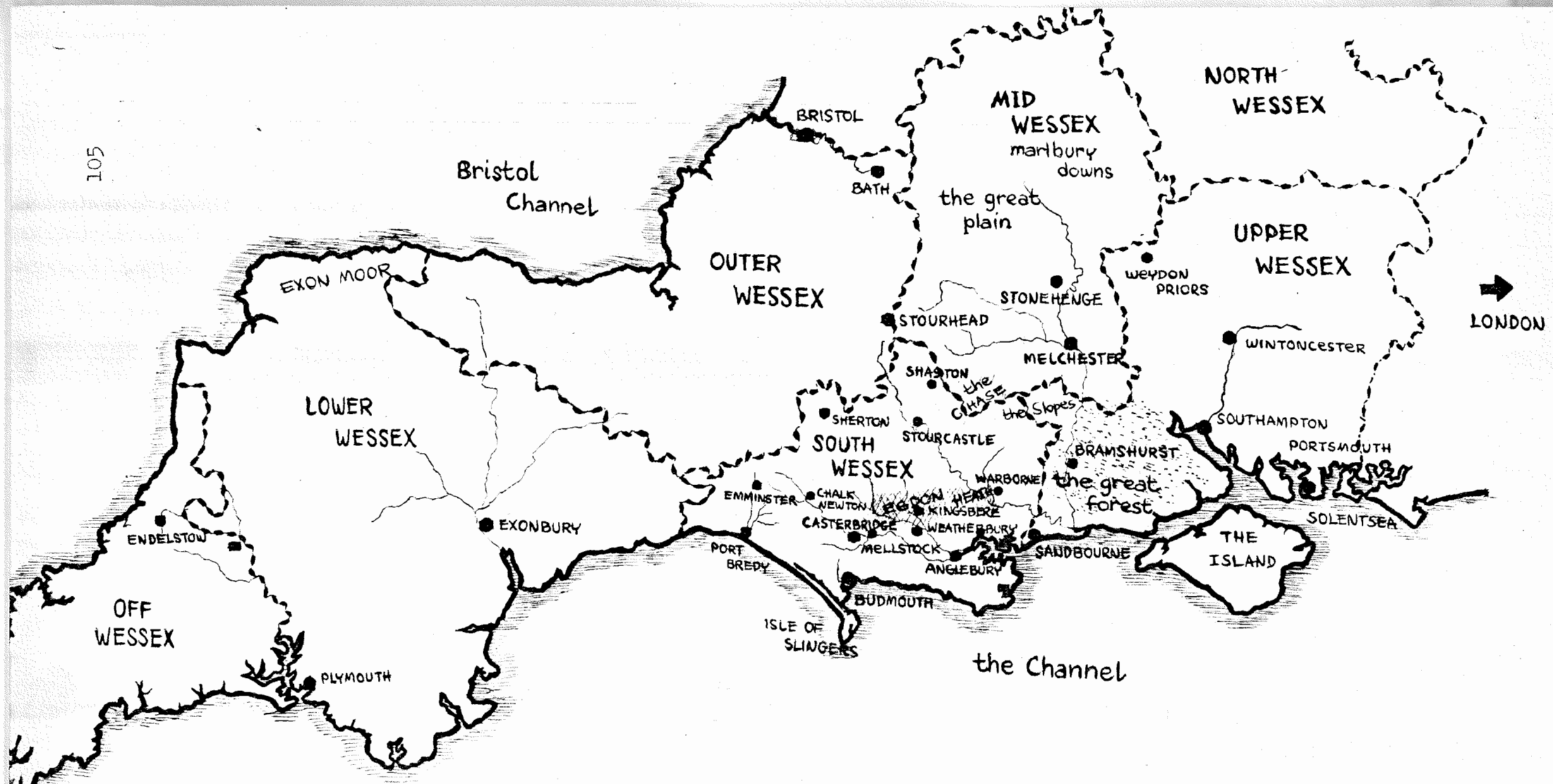
<u>Hardy's Name</u>	<u>Real Name</u>
8. The Slopes	8. near Bere Regis - no real name can be traced
9. Emminster	9. western part of Dorchester, n.r.n.c.b.t.*)
10. Talbothays dairy farm	10. on the edge of Puddletown, n.r.n.c.b.t.
11. Mellstock	11. Stinsford (Bockhampton)
12. Froom Vale	12. Frome Vale
13. Kingsbere	13. Bere Regis
14. Sherton Abbas	14. Sherborne
15. Wellbridge	15. Woolbridge
16. The Abbey	16. The ruins of Bindon Abbey, near Woolbridge
17. Port-Bredy	17. Bridport
18. Flintcombe	18. near Bridport
19. d'Urberville Aisle/ Mansion, near Kingsbere	19. near Bere Regis
20. Sandbourbe	20. Bournemouth
21. Bramshurst	21. in the New Forest
22. Stonehenge	22. north-west of Salisbury
23. Wintoncester	23. Wintoncester

Some foreign places like California in 'Far from the Madding Crowd', Paris in 'The Return of the Native', Canada in 'The Mayor of Casterbridge' and Brazil in 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles' bear their real names in these novels.

We can see how accurate and intimate Hardy describes his Wessex world. In fact, he is describing a region which he knew well and whose history and traditions were a major part of his knowledge, the rest being his own creative autonomy and imagination.

*J NO REAL NAME CAN BE TRACED.

These partly real, partly imagination settings of Wessex, and the conviction that the life of obscure country people could provide a sufficiently interesting subject, ensured his success in creating the "real" Wessex World and in building his story in his novels.



**MAP OF THE "WESSEX"
OF THOMAS HARDY'S MAJOR NOVELS**



BRISTOL CHANNEL

GLOUCESTER

WILTSHIRE

BERKSHIRE

SOMERSET

HAMPSHIRE

DEVONSHIRE

DORSET

CORNWALL

ENGLISH CHANNEL

EXMOOR NAT. PARK

new forest

ISLE OF WIGHT

BRISTOL

BATH

AVON

STONEHENGE

WEYHILL

STOURTON

WINCHESTER

SALISBURY

SHAFTESBURY

SOUTHAMPTON

PORTSMOUTH

SHERBORNE

STURMINSTER
NEWTON

BREAMORE

ST. JULIOT

EXETER

BRIDPORT

MAIDEN

DORCHESTER

CASTLE

HIGHER
BOCKHAMPTON

WATERSTON

WAREHAM

BOURNEMOUTH

WIMBORNE

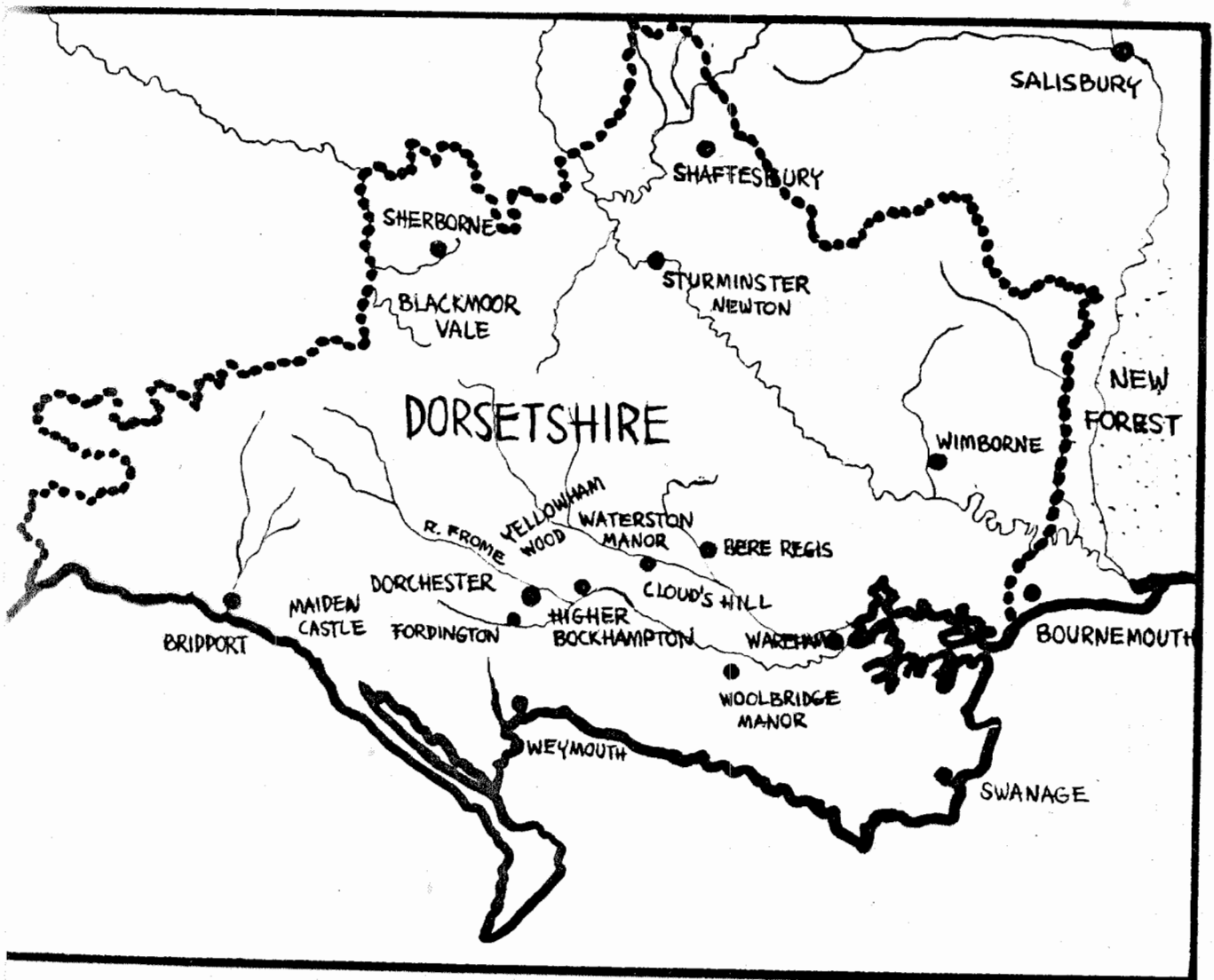
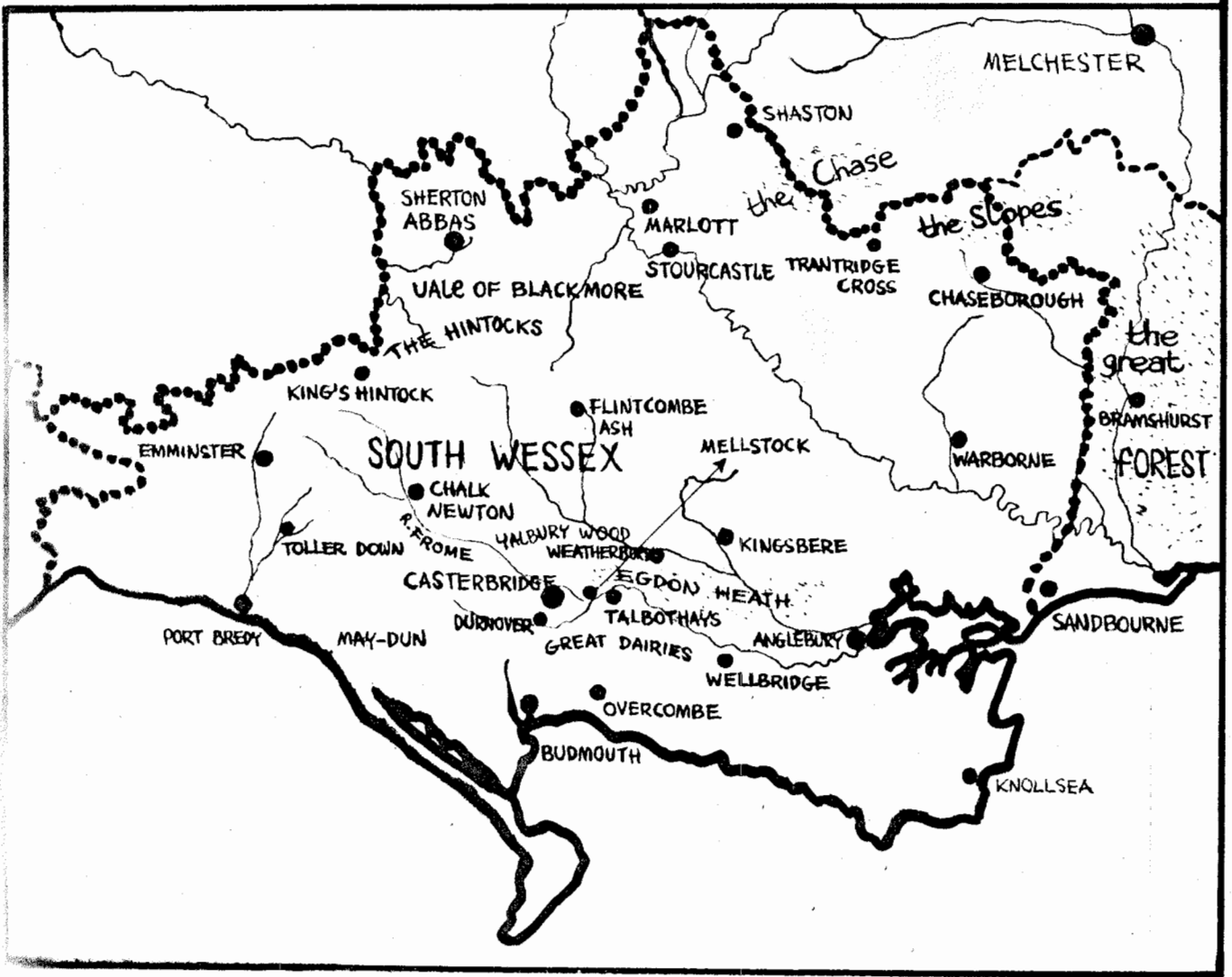
BERE REGIS

CLOUD'S HILL

MANOR

PLYMOUTH

LO



III. Nature: The Important Protagonist

We may say that Thomas Hardy is a nature novelist because nature plays an important role in his novels though he does not mainly write about nature itself. His observation of nature is detailed. But he does not excessively praise it. Only, nature seems to live, to breathe and to speak in Hardy's novels. Its presence is not only for decorated background for the story. In all Wessex novels, nature figures as an autonomous being. We see that it really lives:

"The dry leaves in the ditch simmered and boiled in the same breezes, a tongue of air occasionally ferreting out a few, and sending them spinning across the grass." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 8)

"The thin grasses, more or less coating the hill, were touched by the wind in breezes of differing powers, and almost of differing natures - one rubbing the blades heavily, another raking them piercingly, another brushing them like a soft broom." (Ibid, p. 9)

"The sky was clear - remarkably clear - and the twinkling of all the stars seemed to be but throbs of one body, timed by a common pulse." (Ibid, pp. 9)

The use of those verbs humanize nature. We can almost find this on every page of the Wessex novels. But the most important roles of the presence of this humanized nature in Hardy's novels are: to reflect and show the feeling or mood of the characters; to give a kind of prediction of the coming incidents or actions or for-

tunes, good or bad; and to pass judgment on the characters' deeds.

In "Far from the Madding Crowd" for example, Francis Troy's cooler love and indifference towards Fanny Robin are shown and even emphasized by the cold winter and the dark, gloomy, snowy night.

"It was a night when sorrow may come to the brightest without causing any great sense of incongruity: when, with impressible persons, love becomes solititousness, hope sinks to misgiving, and faith to hope:"
(Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, 95)

"Winter, in coming to the country hereabout, advanced in well-marked stages, wherein might have been successively observed the retreat of the snakes, the transformation of the ferns, the filling of the pools, a rising of fogs, the embrowning by frost, the collapse of the fungi, and an obliteration by snow. This climax of the series had been reached to-night" (Ibid, pp. 95-96)

"From this chaotic skyful of crowding flakes the mead and moor momentarily received additional clothing, only to appear momentarily more naked thereby. The vast arch of cloud above was strangely low, and formed as it were the roof of a large dark cavern, gradually sinking in upon its floor; for the instinctive thought was that the snow lining the heavens and that encrusting the earth would soon unite into one mass without any intervening

stratum of air at all. If anything could be darker than the sky, it was the wall, and if anything could be gloomier than the wall it was the river beneath." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 96)

It is also in the darkest night, with great storm and wind that nearly sweep over all Bathsheba's grain and stock, that Bathsheba realizes for the first time that her marriage with Troy is a curse for her. Her great anxiety and distressed feeling are reflected by the troubled weather, dark night and deadly storm.

" It was the first move of the approaching storm. The second peal was noisy, with comparatively little visible lightning The lightning now was the colour of silver Rumbles became rattles A poplar in the immediate foreground was like an ink stroke on burnished tin. Then the picture vanished, leaving the darkness so intense " (Ibid, 284)

" It was a stupefying blast, harsh and pitiless, " (Ibid, pp. 287-288)

In "The Return of the Native", the dark, empty, barren Egdon Heath is well in accordance with the loneliness of Eustacia Vye, the beautiful but proud heroin in this novel.

"When the whole Egdon concourse had left the site of the bonfire to its accustomed loneliness, a closely wrapped female figure approached the barrow " (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 59)

"There she stood still, around her stretching the vast night atmosphere, whose incomplete darkness in comparison with the total darkness of the heath below it might have represented a venial beside a mortal sin." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p.59)

"It rose from the semi-globular mound like a spike from a helmet. The first instinct of an imaginative stranger might have been to suppose it the person of one of the Celts who built the barrow, so far had all of modern date withdrawn from the scene. It seemed a sort of last man among them, musing for a moment before dropping into eternal night with the rest of his race." (Ibid, p. 13)

"There the form stood, motionless as the hill beneath. Above the plain rose the hill, above the hill rose the barrow, and above the barrow rose the figure. Above the figure was nothing that could be mapped elsewhere than on a celestial globe." (Ibid, 13)

Again, we find that the darkness, the storm, great wind and heavy rain reflect the struggle, the distressed trouble, the hopelessness of Eustacia Vye, when she has to choose between a disgraceful running away with the inferior Wildeve who is also the husband of another wife, and death.

"The moon and stars were closed up by cloud and rain to the degree of extinction. It was a night which led the traveller's thoughts instinctively to dwell on nocturnal scenes of disaster in the chronicles of the world, on all

that is terrible and dark in history and legend - the last plague of Egypt, the destruction of Smmacherib's host, the agony in Gethshemane." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p.421)

"Never was harmony more perfect than that between of her mind and the chaos of the world without." (Ibid, p. 421)

"On higher ground, where the wind was brisk and sustained, the rain flew in a level flight without sensible descent, so that it was beyond all power to imagine the remoteness of the point at which it left the bosoms of the clouds." (Ibid, p. 432)

"Anyone who had stood by now would have pitied her not so much on account of her exposure to weather, and isolation from all of humanity except that other form of misery which was denoted by the slightly rocking movement that her feelings imparted to her person. Extreme unhappiness weighed visibly upon her. Between the drippings of the rain from her umbrella to her mantle, from her mantle to the heather, from the heather to the earth, very similar sounds could be heard coming from her lips; and the tearfulness of the outer scene was repeated upon her face." (Ibid, p. 421)

In "The Mayor of Casterbridge", the stale relationship between Michael Henchard and Susan, his wife, is reflected by the roadway and the song of the bird.

"No other than such relationship would have accounted for the atmosphere of stale familiarity which the trio carried along with them like a nimbus as they

moved down the road. The wife mostly kept her eyes fixed ahead, though with little interest - the scene for that matter being one that might have been matched at almost any spot in any county in England at this time of the year; a road neither straight nor crooked, neither level nor hilly, bordered by hedges, trees, and other vegetation, which had entered the blackened-green stage of colour that the doomed leaves pass through on their way to dingy, and yellow, and red; and this, with the aforesaid total absence of conversation, allowed every extraneous sound to be heard. For a long time there was none, beyond the voice of a weak bird singing a trite old evening song that might doubtless, have been heard on the hall at the same hour, and with the self-same trills, quavers, and breves, at any sunset of that season for centuries untold." (Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, p. 35)

On other occasion, Henchard's feelings are reflected in this scene:

"Here were ruins of a Franciscan priory, and a mill attached to the same, the water of which roared down a back-hatch like the voice of desolation. Above the cliff, and behind the river rose a pile of buildings, and in the front of the pile a square mass cut into the sky. It was like a pedestal lacking its statue. This missing feature, without which the design remained incomplete, was, in truth, the corpse of a man; for the square mass formed the base of the gallows, the extensive buildings at the back being

the county gaol. In the meadow where Henchard now walked the mob were wont to gather whenever an execution took place, and there to the tune of the roaring weir they stood and watched the spectacle. The exaggeration which darkness imparted to the glooms of this region impressed Henchard more than he had expected. The lugubrious harmony of the spot with his domestic situation was too perfect for him, impatient of effects, scenes, and adumbrations." (Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, pp. 179 - 180)

The scene expresses and accentuates Henchard's feelings when finding the truth that Elizabeth Jane, in whom he has put so much hope, is not his daughter.

In "Tess of the d'Urbervilles", the wounded birds are related to the wounded heart and soul of Tess herself.

"Under the trees several pheasants lay about, their rich plumage dabbled with blood; some were dead, some feebly twitching a wing, some staring up at the sky, some pulsating quickly, some contorted, some stretched out - all of them writhing in agony, except the fortunate ones whose tortures had ended during the night by the inability of nature to bear more." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 354)

"With the impulse of a soul who could feel for kindred sufferers as much as for herself, Tess's first thought was to put the still living birds out of their torture, and to this end with her own hands she broke the necks of

as many as she could find, leaving them to lie 'poor darlings - to suppose myself the most miserable being on earth in the sight o' such misery as yours!'" (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 355)

Nature is also used by Hardy to give prediction to what may come to happen. The first meeting between Gabriel Oak and Bathseba Everdene happens on a fine, bright, cheerful morning. The lovely scene predicts the coming happy life of the couple in the end of the story. While the dark gloomy night and the great storm at the moment when Eustacia is trying to escape secretly with Wildeve stand as a prediction of distressfulness and death. The escape of a swallow 'which had by chance found its way through an opening into the upper part of the tent' (Vivian de Sola Pinto, Op. Cit, p. 41) gives a prediction to what will happen to poor Susan Henchard. She will go away with a stranger who happens to be at the fair and they leave the frustrated husband who has sold his wife in his drunkenness. Later, another bird is found, a gold-finch, which is brought by Henchard for Elizabeth-Jane's wedding present. The bird is forgotten, neglected and then dies of starvation. It reflects the last life of Henchard himself, and it altogether predicts his alienated and lonely death.

Foggy night and darkness seem to be a favourite tool of Hardy to describe disasters and to predict of coming trouble. In 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles' the scene is described of Alec seducing Tess in the dark wood. It suggests the coming of great trouble and misery in Tess life.

" but by this time the moon had

quite gone down, and partly on account of the fog. The Chase was wrapped in thich darkness" (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 90)

"Darkness and silence ruled everywhere around." (Ibid, p. 90)

Juggment on the right and wrong of men's deeds is also given by nature. We remember in "Far from the Madding Crowd" how the heavy rain through the gargoyle washes and sweeps over all flowers and plants which were planted by Troy on Fanny's graveyard. Troy has realized how he had wronged Fanny and ruined her life. His relationship with Fanny was that of husband and wife. But he did not make any effort to marry her though she had pleaded with him many times. He despised her. He even married another woman, Bathsheba. When Fanny and their baby died in poverty and misery, Troy regretted what he had done to her. He tried to show his love and care by planting flowers and plants on Fanny's graveyard. But during the same night there was a heavy rain storm and the water spouted down from the gargoyle sweeping over all those plants and washing them out of the ground. The rain undid Troy's deed. By this nature seems to pass judgment on Troy; he was really guilty and could not make amends for what he had done in such an easy way.

In "The Return of the Native", the great storm, heavy rain and dark night seem to say that the plan made by Eustacia and Wildeve to run away together to flee the country with the husband of another woman, is quite wrong. Nature seems to be very angry and tries to prevent and cancel the plan with all its might.

But the state of Eustacia's and Wildeve's mind at that time makes them stubborn. They try to face nature and resolve to carry out their plan. Nature does prevent them. The heavy rain, the dark night, and the storm ruin their plan and even punish them with death.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary

We are in the eighteen-forties - eighteen-fifties in Dorsetshire, which is named South Wessex in Thomas Hardy's novels. During this time there is a crisis of transformation in the rural society in England. The rise of industrialism changes the character of the people, frightens them and drives many of them into leaving the land. New conditions, new technique, new machinery are being introduced.

"What had happened was that the agricultural labourers had shown quite clearly that they refused to stay on the land if there was any alternative. The growth of industrial towns had offered them better-paid jobs; railways had given them a means of leaving their native villages, and education - it was claimed - had made them dissatisfied with their conditions." 17)

Thomas Hardy has painted this transition in his fiction. Thus we have seen the idea of imigrating carried out by Donald Farfrae and Gabriel Oak who planned to go to Canada and California, while Angel Clare went to Brazil. Education became very important. Michael Henchard, who always worried about his good name and status, was furious with his step-daughter's uncultivated manner though he was not well-educated himself.

"..... and she happened to say when he was rising from the table, wishing to show him something, 'If you'll bide where you be a minute, father, I'll get

17) Merryn Williams, Thomas Hardy And Rural England, Macmillan, London & Basingstoke, 1972, p.1)

it.' 'Bide where you be,' he echoed sharply. 'Good God, are you only fit to carry wash to a pig-trough, that ye use such words as those?' She reddened with shame and sadness." (Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, p. 182)

Any transition, as we have often seen everywhere, is almost surely accompanied by rebellion, pain and conflict. Thomas Hardy creates Donald Farfrae, who comes from a younger generation, introducing a new method and new techniques to the rural society, and thus, having conflicts with Michael Henchard who represents the old world. It is said that

"the great corn and hay traffic conducted by Henchard throve under the management of Donald Farfrae as it had never thriven before." (Ibid, p.103)

and

"The old crude viva voce system of Henchard, in which everything depended upon his memory, and bargains were made by the tongue alone, was swept away. Letters and ledgers took the place of 'I'll do't' and 'You shall hae't'; and, as in all such cases of advance, the rugged picturesqueness of the old method disappeared with its inconveniences." (Vivian De Sola Pinto, Op. Cit., p. 103)

The changes actually come slowly in Dorset. As a boy Thomas Hardy witnesses this reform movement. It forms a major theme in his country fiction. First of all there were new inventions of thought and of machines in England. The most popular example was the great improvement of the

steam-engine done by a Scotchman, James Watt (1736 - 1819).¹⁸⁾ These such modern inventions were followed by the revolution. It happened in England in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

"But naturally it took a generation of men to build the machines, to instal them and carry out the consequent re-organization of industry. And the displaced human element resisted"¹⁹⁾

Especially for a rural country like Dorset, it was so slow that "one might almost have supposed that human existence was changeless, un-affected by history or technology, flowing through the centuries like a state-ly procession of verities and recurrences."²⁰⁾ In the "Return of the Native", Thomas Hardy describes Egdon Heath as static and unchangeable, unaffected by outer influences. Egdon Heath is the name of some barren wasted lands in the southern part of Wessex country. It was wild, almost empty, uncultivated and isolated.

"Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis - the final overthrow."
(Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 4)

18) The New Grolier Webster International, Dictionary - Encyclopedic Edition, Vol. II, p. 1124

19) Herbert Read, Art & Industry, Faber & Faber Limited, London, Monlri, p.20)

20) Irving Howe, Op. Cit., p. 4

"The untameable, Israelitish thing that Egdon now was it always had been. Civilization was its enemy; and ever since the beginning of vegetation its coil had worn the same antique brown dress, the natural and invariable garment of the particular formation."

(Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 6)

People with their savage superstitions were still found everywhere. In "The Return of the Native" Susan Nunsuch pricked Eustacia Vye's arm with a long stocking needle to have her blood and put an end to the bewitching of her children. This is only one example of those so various things about their primitive superstitious belief. But Clym Yeobright, representing the new and younger generation, an educated man and an idealist, believes that only education can stamp out such cruel customs. He resolves to stay forever on Egdon and build a night school for his folk where he can teach them. Again, there are conflicts. The negative response does not only come from his mother and his lover, but also from the country folk.

"..... 'He'll never carry it out in the world,' said Fairway. 'In a few weeks he'll learn to see things otherwise.'

' 'Tis good-hearted of the young man,' said another. 'But, for my part, I think he had better mind his business.'"

(Ibid, p. 202)

Thomas Hardy ^{is} ~~was~~ the son of a prosperous master-mason, and his family stood between the gentry above and the peasants below in social scale. If we observe the heroes and heroines in his novels, we will find that

all of them are from a similar class to Hardy's. Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba Everdene, Farmer Boldwood, Sergeant Troy, the Yeobrights and the Vyes and Diggory Venn come from this class, though from various levels. Michael Henchard and Tess of the d'Urberville (Tess Durbeyfield) come from poor ordinary lower workers, but through hard work and fate their status is rising. However, all the main character in the novels are superior to the common labourers and country folk but lower to the people of London and even of Bath. This is shown by the admiring reaction of Casterbridge towards the coming Lucetta, the bright, resplendent visitor from Bath. Even the wealthy Mayor himself detects the difference.

"His voice slowly fell; he was conscious that in this room his accents and manner wore a roughness not observable in the street. He looked about the room at the novel hangings and ingenious furniture with which she had surrounded herself. 'Upon my life I didn't know such furniture as this could be bought in Casterbridge,' he said." (Vivian De Sola Pinto, The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge, p. 236)

Though Thomas Hardy was among the educated members of the local society, throughout his life he retained a strong feeling of social inferiority towards the wealthy or the educated circles, especially in London. Even when he later became very famous, he still thought of himself as a country man, the son of simple and hard-working people. His affection and pride of his native world emphasized his feeling.

"One fact is central to his life and

career: Thomas Hardy did not go to a university, he would never feel quite at ease in either the wealthy or the educated circles he later met in London, and he came from a segment of the English people that had not yet fully entered the cultural life of the nation."²¹⁾

Thomas Hardy was a very sensitive man. He loved simple but "passionate music of the church". Christianity was in fact the everyday way of life in the community at that time. But it was of superficial influence. People did not care about the deep philosophical theology of religion. Most of them were even not church goers. But the surface of the Christian way of life had permeated in their daily activities and they also always regarded themselves as Christians. Tess of the d'Urbervilles, who is not a regular church attendant, even feels the need of her baby to be baptized in its dying moment. The ignorance, the simplicity and superficiality of the Dorset life are nicely woven into all of Hardy's novels. Let us have some of their gossip.

"'Ay, at that time he thought of nothing but high things,' added Billy Smallbury. 'One day Parson Thirdly met him and said, 'Good-morning, Mister Everdene; 'tis a fine day!'" "Amen," said Everdene, quite absent-like, thinking only of religion when he seed a parson. Yes, he was a very Christian man.'" (Thomas Hardy, Far From the Madding Crowd, p. 70)

"'How did Cain come by such a name?' asked Bathsheba.

21) Irving Howe, Op. Cit., p. 3

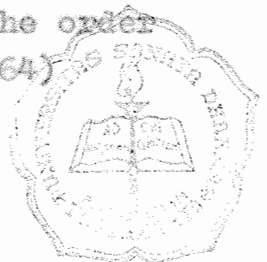
'Oh you see, mem, his pore mother, not being a Scripture-read woman, made a mistake at his christening, thinking 'twas Abel killed Cain, and called on Cain, meaning Abel all the time. The parson put it right, but 'twas too late, for the name could never be got rid of in the parish.' (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 91)

Thus Thomas Hardy's affection towards the Dorset countryside and its people included its simple Christian life. Because of his sensitivity he succeeded in creating and depicting his Wessex world, its lovely countryside, its simple people, its belief and its tradition, which in fact was the lovely romantic reprint of his old Dorset world. How intimate he was to his native country life is shown in these quotations. The first described the activity of the grinding the shears, the others are the scenes of the sheep-shearing season.

"All the surrounding cottages were more or less scenes of the same operation; the scurr of whetting spread into the sky from all parts of the village as from an armoury previous to campaign. Peace and war kiss each other at their hours of preparation - sickless, scythes, shears, and pruning-hooks ranking with swords, bayonets, and lances, in their common necessity for point and edge. Cainy Ball turned the handle of Gabriel's grindstone, his head performing a melancholy see-saw up and down with each turn of the wheel. Oak stood somewhat as Bres is represented when in the act of sharpening his arrows; his figure slightly bent, the weight of his body thrown over on the shears, and his head balanced sideways, with a critical compression of the lips

and contraction of the eyelids to crown the attitude." ((Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, pp. 149 - 150)

"It was the first day of June, and the sheep-shearing season culminated, the landscape, even to the leanest pasture, being all health and colour. Every green was young, every pore was open, and every stalk was swollen with racing currents of juice. God was palpably present in the country, and the devil had gone with the world to town. Flossy catkins of the later kinds, fern-sprouts like bishops' croziers, the square-headed moschatel, the odd cuckoo-pint, - like an apoplectic saint in a niche of malachite, - snow white ladies' -smocks, the toothwort, approximating to human flesh, the enchanter's night-shade, and the black-petaled doleful-beels, were among the quainter objects of the vegetable world in and about Weatherbury at this teeming time; and of the animal, the metamorphosed figures of Mr. Jan Coggan, the master-shearer; the second and third shearers, who travelled in the exercise of their calling, and do not require definition by name; Henery Fray the fourth shearer, Susan Tall's husband the fifth, Joseph Poorgrass the sixth, young Cain Ball as assistant-shearer, and Gabriel Oak as general supervisor. None of these were clothed to any extent worth mentioning, each appearing to have hit in the matter of raiment the decent mean between a high and low caste Hindoo. An angularity of lineament, and a fixity of facialmachinery in general, proclaimed that serious work was the order of the day." (Ibid, pp. 163 - 164)



"To-day the large side doors were thrown open towards the sun to admit a bountiful light to the immediate spot of the shearers' operations, which was the wood threshing-floor in the centre, formed of thick oak, black with age and polished by the beating of flails for many generations, till it had grown as slippery and as rich in hue as the state-room floors of an Elizabethan mansion. Here the shearers knelt, the sun slanting in upon their bleached shirts, tanned arms, and the polished shears they flourished, causing these to bristle with a thousand rays strong enough to blind a weak-eyed lay painter, quickening its pants as misgiving merged in terror, till it quivered like the hot landscape outside."

(Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 165)

The transitional background and Hardy's love of farmland, animals, and simple people who live among them, his keen observation, his tenderness and sensitivity are forces in his writing which drove him to become the author of rural simplicity. There is also a tone of pity in his novels, a kind of nostalgia of the gradual extinguished old rural community.

Hardy regards his men and women with gentle and tender feeling, with great sympathy, with pity and love. How he describes the chaos of Eustacia's mind in her great doubt and crisis to decide whether to fly with Wildeve or to remain a captive in her isolated surroundings and even with her present position as a separate married woman or whether to maintain her pride and prefer to death shows Hardy's sad sympathy and pity towards

his heroine.

"Any one who had stood by now would have pitied her, not so much on account of her exposure to weather, and isolation from all of humanity except the mouldered remains inside the tumulus; but for that other form of misery which was denoted by the slightly rocking movement that her feelings imparted to her person. Extreme unhappiness weighed visibly upon her. Between the drippings of the rain from her umbrella to her mantle, from her mantle to the heather, from the heather to the earth, very similar sounds could be heard coming from her lips; and the tearfulness of the outer scene repeated upon her face." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 421)

On the other hand, he can show his pity a more humorous way. This is the episode in which Gabriel Oak longed to see Bathsheba Everdene in "Far from the Madding Crowd".

"E.... every morning Oak's feelings were as sensitive as the money-market in calculations upon his chances His dog waited for his meals in a way so like that in which Oak waited for the girl's presence that the farmer was quite struck with the resemblance, felt it lowering, and would not look at the dog." (Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, p. 26)

If we observe the fate of Thomas Hardy's characters, we find the tragic hero and heroines as Michael Henchard, Tess of the d'Urberville and Eustacia Vye struggling furiously in order to maintain their lives. It is connected with Hardy's conception of the

universe and of life.

In his life experience, when Thomas Hardy was still a boy, he had accepted the religious doctrines of Christianity without question. But then gradually there were problems as he was growing older and starting to question the faith of his youth and struggling to seek resolve and the truth. The influence of the new thought which was introduced in the beginning by his friend Horace Moule, fiercely shook his traditional Christian belief.

"The very act of abandoning Christianity revealed, as perhaps nothing else could, how powerful its hold remained upon his imagination. A turn of such consequence made him unavoidably anxious as to its ethical dangers and seemed to threaten the belief in the virtues of devotion which he had inherited from Christianity."²²⁾

But the damaging influence to his faith grew deeper when he had read Darwin's "The Origin of Species". The effect is that Hardy could not maintain his Christian belief anymore. I think he was not an agnostic because he was still concerned with queries on Providence. This is a quotation of the event of the seduction of Tess by Alec d'Urberville in *The Chase*.

"Above them rose the primeval yews and oaks of The Chase, in which were poised gentle roosting birds in their last nap; and about them stole the hopping rabbits and hares. But, might some say, where was Tess's guardian angel? Where was the providence of her simple faith? Perhaps, like that other god of whom the ironical Tishbite spoke, he

22) Irving Howe, *Op. Cit.*, p. 12

was talking, or he was pursuing, or he was in a journey, or he was sleeping and not to be awaked." (Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, p. 91)

He did not give a fatal judgment that God did not exist, then. But unlike Darwin who still believed the existence of God ²³⁾ Hardy could not entirely believe it. In the above quotation it is clear that he doubted his existence. But in the next quotation he gloomily sighed:

"She resolved to look for the man from Paris no more. But Providence is nothing if not coquettish; and no sooner had Eustacia formed this resolve than the opportunity came which, while sought, had been entirely withholden." (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, p. 140)

Here Hardy admitted that there was the Power which ruled and determined the fate of the people. So, it was not God in the way the traditional Christian people believed it anymore. "Spencer taught him that "the Power which the Universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable" and also provided the germ of Hardy's later notions about Immanent Will or Emergent Consciousness" ²⁴⁾. So, Hardy was standing between a believer and a non-believer, an indifferent agnostic and a diligent philosopher who was seeking the truth for the whole of his life. In his letters to Mrs. Henniker (one of his lady-friends in London) he said:

"Mrs. G. (Mrs. Craigie, another friend),

23) Dr. Frans Bahler - Julius Chandra, Asal Dan Tujuan Manusia (Teori Evolusi), Penerbitan Yayasan Kanisius, Yogya, 1976, p. 23

24) Irving Howe, Op. Cit., p. 13

being a R(oman) C(atholic), and I being a Pagan, we were obliged to go for a walk in the woods on Sunday when the others went to church." (Letter dated Max Gate, Dorchester, Friday, 6. 10. 93)²⁵⁾

From Darwin's influence²⁶⁾ he believed in his feeling that pain and cruelty were built into the structure of existence. He saw that life was of "recurrent rhythms of happiness and suffering". He believed in chance and coincidence which were inevitable in the fate of his characters. They had to experience pain and sorrow according to their destiny, and then found their death.

He also observed that men who did not rebel and patiently endured keeping their steps in accordance with the natural order would find happiness and contentment for their reward. We see this in Gabriel Oak and Diggory Venn.

As we have observed, nature is very important in Hardy's novels. It is not only a background entity but emerges as an animated presence. There is a close link between the natural forces and the fate of the characters. Together with the inevitable chance and coincidence, the natural forces are believed to control human existence and its fate. So we observe that nature becomes the sharer in human fate. Thus through these convictions, Thomas Hardy continuously unites nature and man in all his novels.

His creativity on creating the Wessex world marks him as a regional novelist or more particularly, the Wessex novelist. It is included the foundation of

25) Evelyn Hardy & F.B. Pinion, Op. Cit., p. 29

26) Irving Howe, Op. Cit., p. 13

the setting of place. From his letters to Mrs. Henniker, it is obvious that he often travelled around the country to see the spots for his novel-writing usually on bicycle.

"Today I have refused to go with my American friend to the tombs of the Tubervilles - having a hope of conducting you thither some day,"
(Letter dated Max Gate, Dorchester 13. 9. 93)²⁷⁾

The tombs were called the tombs of the d'Urbervilles in "Tess of the d'Urbervilles" which were situated at Bere Regis, or "Kingsbere" in the novel.

"I have just come back from a bicycle journey to Bristol, Gloucester, and Cheltenham, so that we have crossed each other's path lately. It was blazing hot crossing the Mendips, where we had to push our bicycles 2 miles uphill" (Letter dated Max Gate, Dorchester, July 22. 1898)²⁸⁾

"I have taken some bicycle rides; one into the Vale of Blackmoor. I want to take one to Bath and Bristol, if weather permits. The motor-cars are rather a nuisance to humble roadsters like me, one never knowing whether the comers are Hooligan-motorists or responsible drivers." (Letter dated M. G. D. Sept. 25. 1902.)²⁹⁾

From those phrases taken from his own letters, we know that he paid a great attention to all his places and

27) Evelyn Hardy & F.B. Pinion, Op. Cit., p. 24

28) Ibid, p. 67

29. Ibid, p. 106

spots in his novels. He really worked hard to create his Wessex. He called it "partly real, partly dream-country". It was real because most of the places existed, beside of the custom and the folk. It was a dream country because the rest of them and their names were creatively imagined and conceived.

C O N C L U S I O N

From the above summary we are able to detect some distinctive characteristics of Hardy's novels which are observed in these four major novels.

They are:

- a. the transitional background of the community from rural, traditional and agricultural life towards a new industrial era which is giving colour to the novels.
- b. the crisis of Hardy's belief caused by the influence of modern thought determines the fate of the heroes and heroines.
- c. Hardy's affection for simple people and his belief in simple life which is depicted in his novels.
- d. Hardy's skill as a writer in the creation of his own literary Wessex region.

In general, we have to appreciate Thomas Hardy as a tender author of rural natural life, of people which are little regarded in their simplicity and humbleness. He observes them with his keen intelligence, his great sympathy, nostalgic tenderness and gentle love.

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