THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION OF THE
NOVELS AND STORIES OF
THOMAS HARDY

Desperate Remedies

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1. Desperate Remedies
2. Under the Greenwood Tree
3. A Pair of Blue Eyes
4. Far from the Madding Crowd
5. The Hand of Ethelberta
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8. A Laodicean
9. Two on a Tower
10. The Mayor of Casterbridge
11. The Woodlanders
12. Tess of the d'Urbervilles
13. Jude the Obscure
14. The Well-Beloved
15. Wessex Tales
16. A Group of Noble Dames
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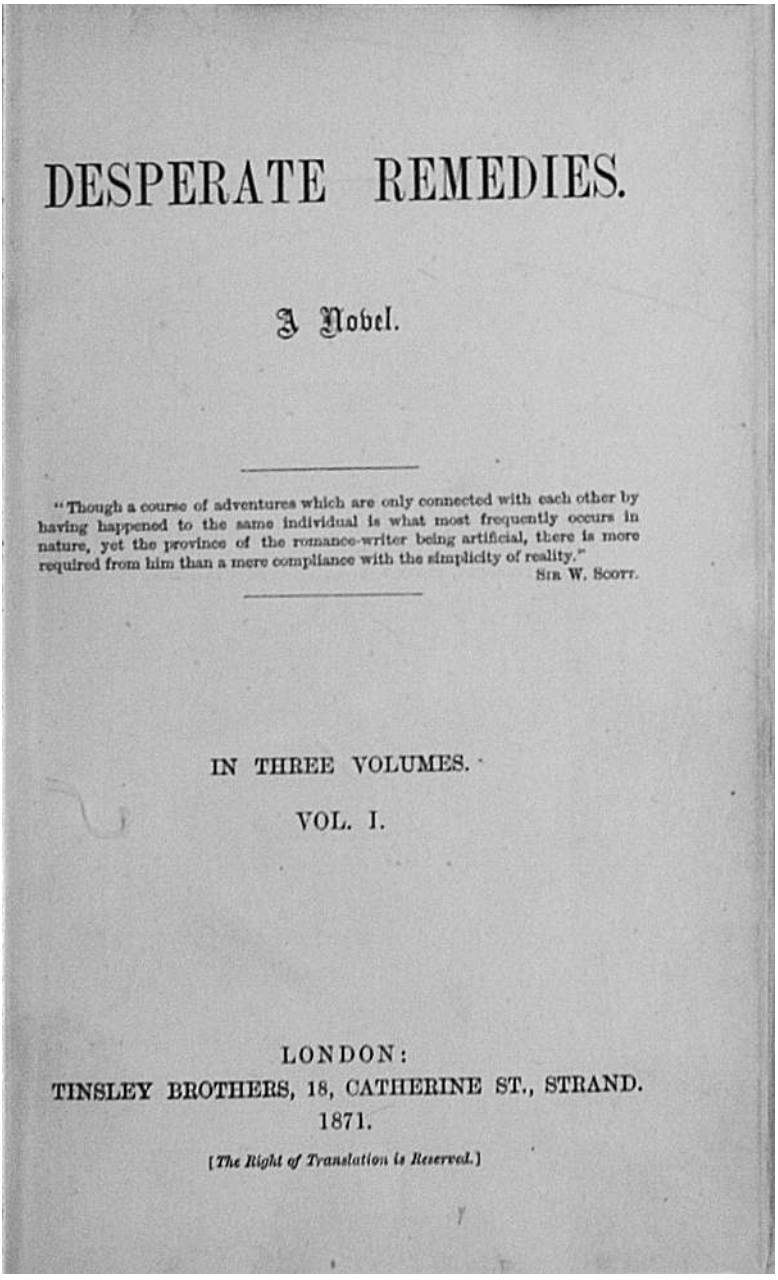

DESPERATE REMEDIES.

A Novel.

"Though a course of adventures which are only connected with each other by having happened to the same individual is what most frequently occurs in nature, yet the province of the romance-writer being artificial, there is more required from him than a mere compliance with the simplicity of reality."

SIR W. SCOTT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
TINSLEY BROTHERS, 18, CATHERINE ST., STRAND.
1871.

FRONTISPIECE

Title page of the Tinsley Brothers first edition.

THOMAS HARDY

Desperate Remedies

EDITED BY

RICHARD NEMESVARI

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

Thomas Hardy's career as an author bridged the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and during that time he could count among his accomplishments fourteen novels, more than nine hundred poems, a little over four dozen pieces of short fiction, and a verse drama in three volumes that took as its topic the Peninsular War and the fall of Napoleon. Yet on the brink of his first great success, the publication of *Far from the Madding Crowd* in the prestigious *Cornhill Magazine*, he wrote to its editor Leslie Stephen that, although he might 'have higher aims some day', at that moment he wished 'merely to be considered a good hand at a serial'.[1] It is safe to say that those higher aims were achieved, for after Hardy's Westminster Abbey funeral, and after large crowds had silently filed past his open grave in Poet's Corner, *The Times* in its obituary for him mourned the loss of English literature's 'most eminent figure'.[2] Hardy's stature as a writer was, and remains, unassailable, and the continuing popularity of his fiction, in both print and other media, attests to his powerful and enduring representation of human experience.

Yet the professionalism that Hardy declared to be his goal in his publishing relationship with Stephen was as characteristic of his authorship as the exploration of large cultural issues, since Hardy fully understood that the production of a novel, or short story, took place both in the realm of artistic creation and in the literary marketplace. He became proficient at using (one is tempted to say manipulating) the requirements of Victorian publishing's modes of production for his own purposes. In particular the most common pattern, in which a novel was first serialized in a magazine, then published as a multiple-volume edition for the circulating libraries, and then published again as less expensive, single-volume versions, generated the opportunity for changes at each stage – and Hardy usually took advantage of those opportunities. Indeed, an author as successful as Hardy was given additional chances to modify his texts through the

[1] *CL* 1, p. 28. [2] *BR*, p. 535.

collected editions that demand for his work made attractive to him and his publishers. Hardy's willingness to revise texts decades after they first appeared in print would crucially shape his later audience's responses to his fiction.

As well, Hardy's tendency to stretch, not to say break, Victorian proprieties in his selection of subject matter, and in his unconventional sympathies with 'improper' characters, meant that he more than once found himself in conflict with his editors and their commitment to nineteenth-century status-quo attitudes. This situation came to a climax with the publication of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895), two works which generated such extremities of negative reviewer responses that Hardy declared they destroyed in him any desire to continue producing novels. The fact that many reviewers were equally vociferous in defending Hardy rather undercuts his persona of besieged artist, and it is even possible to argue that he courted such conflict, since by that advanced point in his experience as a writer he could hardly be unaware of the contentious nature of his plots. Nonetheless, the bowdlerization often insisted upon for magazine publication meant that Hardy viewed the alterations made for subsequent, first edition volume publication as necessary to the truer realization of his art.

But even as Hardy was preparing to end his focus on the novel in the 1890s, and to instead concentrate on getting into print the poetry he had been writing since the 1860s, the next major stage of his fiction was being prepared. In 1894 Osgood, McIlvaine and Company, which had become Hardy's publisher in 1891, finalized the arrangements necessary to print those works whose rights previously had been held by other publishing houses, and immediately began preparing the first uniform edition of Hardy's novels and stories. The 'Wessex Novels' edition was published in sixteen volumes from 1895 to 1896, and consisted of thirteen novels plus three volumes of stories. It represents an important point in Hardy's *oeuvre*, not least because he wrote a set of short but revealing prefaces to accompany each text. He also proofread the volumes, made thorough and careful corrections and revisions, and, most significantly, brought more into congruence the topography of those narratives written before his full achievement of the setting of Wessex from which the collection took its name.

Osgood, McIlvaine had good reason to put the word 'Wessex' in its edition's title, since the description of this landscape, and its buildings, customs, and characters, was increasingly seen as Hardy's distinctive contribution to literature. His retroactive efforts to bring all of his fiction into line with this perception elided the fact that the development of Wessex was piecemeal at best, at least until the publication of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Woodlanders* (1887), and *Wessex Tales* (1888), which, with their powerful evocation of a 'partly real, partly dream-country',[3] signalled Hardy's commitment to developing a setting uniquely his own. Unsurprisingly, then, when Hardy changed publishers yet again and decided to transfer his rights to the London firm of Macmillan and Company, the name chosen for its proposed collection of his works (this time including the poetry), was simple and direct: the Wessex Edition.

The first two volumes of Macmillan's collected edition appeared in April of 1912, with the originally proposed total of twenty volumes being completed in 1914, and with four volumes 'published at irregular intervals thereafter (the last, posthumously), to complete the series. Later impressions incorporate the slight revisions made for the Mellstock Edition in 1919 and some 4 pages of trifling corrections submitted in April 1920'.[4] Thus the Wessex Edition could claim to provide something very close to a comprehensive representation of Hardy's literary accomplishment, and Macmillan had no hesitation in describing it as 'definitive', a claim that Hardy endorsed in the 'General Preface to the Novels and Poems' that he prepared for the edition.[5] Once again he revised and proofread the volumes, and he also updated the Osgood, McIlvaine prefaces. For much of the twentieth century, therefore, the Wessex Edition was viewed as the final word on Hardy's fiction, and it was, and in many cases remains into the twenty-first century, the de facto choice for those reprints of his work that appeared after Macmillan's copyright lapsed in 1978. Yet scholars such as Michael Millgate have noted that this putative authority is at least somewhat problematic, since '[f]or all Hardy's devotion to the task of revision and correction there remains the irreducible fact that he was not starting from first principles but working with a text that had itself long lost the bloom and innocence of youth,' and that 'by 1912 each of Hardy's texts

[3] *PW*, p. 9. [4] Purdy, p. 286. [5] *PW*, p. 44.

had gone through long, undramatic processes of erosion and accretion'.[6] The crucial decision facing a scholarly edition of Hardy's novels and stories, therefore, is whether to use the Wessex Edition to provide its copy-texts, and thus assent to the author's apparent wish that it be accepted as definitive, or to employ early text versions that both more nearly reflect Hardy's original artistic intention, and represent the works as they were initially received by Hardy's Victorian readers.

The Cambridge Edition of Hardy, in line with contemporary editorial theory, follows an early text model that allows its readers to trace, through each volume, the work's textual evolution. In most cases this entails the selection of the British first edition in volume form as copy-text, and the emendation policy is to edit the copy-text's 'moment' in order to achieve the best balance between authorial desire and authorial acquiescence to the realities of publication. Obvious mechanical errors are corrected and, in cases where sufficient evidence exists to suggest that the production process has changed legitimate authorial (textual) intention, additional emendations may be made. Emendations to the copy-text are recorded, but certain kinds of typographical elements (e.g. chapter heads, running titles) have been standardized. The record of substantive variants appears as footnotes on the page in which the changes occur, and they are keyed to the line numbers on that page. The quotation from the text is followed by the variant and the siglum or sigla of the text(s) in which it appears, and the variants are presented in chronological order. Variants in accidentals are listed in the apparatus section, and are likewise keyed to page and line number.

A chronology of Hardy's life appears in each volume. The Introduction describes the genesis of the work, its publishing history and cultural context, the process and significance of authorial revision, and the work's reception during Hardy's lifetime, in order to enable the reader to comprehend as fully as possible the text's composition and history. Each volume also provides a rationale for the choice of copy-text, along with a facsimile of the copy-text's title page and a bibliographical description of the principal textual witnesses. A full set of explanatory endnotes, keyed to

[6] M. Millgate, 'The Making and Unmaking of Hardy's Wessex Edition', *Editing Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, ed. J. Millgate (New York: Garland, 1978), pp. 66, 68.

superscript numbers, is included to offer clear and relevant information to the reader by identifying literary and cultural allusions, geographic locations, and references to religion, philosophy, art, and music. Appearances of dialect in Hardy's work are also translated in those instances where uncertainty of meaning may occur. If a work was illustrated for periodical publication those illustrations are reproduced in the volume, usually as an appendix, unless the illustrations were present in the copy-text. The frontispiece illustrations for the Osgood, McIlvaine 'Wessex Novels' edition and the Macmillan Wessex Edition are likewise reproduced in an appendix.

I would like to thank the members of the Cambridge Hardy Editorial Board for their continuing advice and guidance. I am also grateful to Linda Bree at Cambridge University Press for her commitment to the edition and for her help at each stage of its development.

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It is appropriate to begin my acknowledgements by recognizing those who have prepared texts of *Desperate Remedies* before I came to work on this volume. C. J. P. Beatty's 1975 New Wessex edition, Mary Rimmer's 1998 Penguin Classics edition, Patricia Ingham's 2003 Oxford World's Classics edition, and Frank Mitchell's 1992 doctoral dissertation 'Studies Towards a Critical Edition of Thomas Hardy's Novel *Desperate Remedies*' (University of Georgia) have all provided me with useful information on matters textual, analytical, and explanatory. If I have not always concurred with everything they said or argued, such disagreements were nonetheless fruitful because they required me to form considered positions contrary to theirs. And, of course, I was always pleased when our perspectives aligned, and we achieved shared moments of vision into a work that has deeply engaged us all.

Several archivists were helpful during this project. I would like to thank Patricia Burdick, Assistant Director for Special Collections at Colby College, for providing me with scanned images of the 1892 Heinemann 'Popular Edition' of *Desperate Remedies*. Gabriel Swift, Reference Librarian, Special Collections, and AnnaLee Pauls, Photo-Duplication Coordinator, Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University, were instrumental in providing me with scanned copies of the correspondence between William Tinsley and Hardy from the Robert H. Taylor Collection, and of correspondence between Henry Holt and Hardy from the Archives of Henry Holt and Company. Both sets of letters provided insight into Hardy's relationship with the early publishers of *Desperate Remedies*, as well as reminding me of just how grateful Hardy scholars should be that his handwriting is so legible when contrasted with some of his contemporaries.

A special thank-you goes to Debra Dearlove, Manager of David Mason Books in Toronto, for taking the time to research for me the pattern of compositor signatures of the Henry Holt *Desperate Remedies* held in the

Millgate Thomas Hardy Collection, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

I am also very much beholden to Peter K. Lennon, whose wide-ranging knowledge of Hardy's publication and reception in the United States was on offer whenever I asked. Any email that I sent to him elicited a prompt response, usually followed up by several others in which he pursued whatever query I had posed in more detail than I had any right to expect. His dedication to demonstrating Hardy's impact on nineteenth-century American literature is both passionate and rigorous, and admirable on both counts.

Having invoked the qualities of dedication, rigour, and passion, it naturally follows that I should thank the members of the Cambridge Hardy Editorial Board: Pamela Dalziel, Simon Gatrell, Dale Kramer, Tim Dolin, and Peter Shillingsburg. The guidance they have provided to me has been instrumental at all stages, from the first proposal submitted to Cambridge at the inception of the project, to the creation of the editorial guidelines for volume editors once it had been approved, to specific advice on the edition of *Desperate Remedies* currently before the reader. Each is a devoted scholar of bibliographical theory, and each has a keen admiration for Hardy and his works. I declare my appreciation for all of their help in the sure knowledge that I shall be calling upon them again in the future, with confidence that their expertise will be generously ready and available.

No acknowledgements could be complete that did not mention the constant assistance of Linda Bree, Editorial Director for Arts and Literature at Cambridge University Press, without whose diligence and advice the Hardy edition would never have been realized. Her experience has been crucial throughout, and her ability to keep the details of the Press's multiple ongoing editions in mind, while arranging for the approval of individual volumes in each of those different editions as they proceed, is a feat of organization and memory that I am pleased to recognize, and very pleased not to be called on to duplicate. As well, Anna Bond, Assistant Editor (Literature), and Victoria Parrin, Senior Content Manager (Literature) at Cambridge were immensely patient in responding to enquiries both great and small, as was my copy-editor Hilary Hammond. In all cases they addressed my occasionally obsessive questions with meticulous and admirable efficiency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Early in the preparation of this volume I employed the computer skills of my student research assistant, Kara Pictou, who conducted the OCR transfer of scanned images into machine-readable form using the ABBYY FineReader 11 software program, provided under shared licence by the Angus L. MacDonald Library at St Francis Xavier University. The collations of the principal texts were performed by the PC-CASE (Computer Assisted Scholarly Editing) program under the auspices of my editorial board colleague Peter Shillingsburg. Thanks for this technological aid are gratefully extended to both of them.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the continuing, essential support of my wife, Jane, although the offering of mere thanks cannot begin to encompass all that she has given me over the years. Without her very little of what I do would get done: her intelligence, empathy, and kindness have always shown me the way forward.

CHRONOLOGY

1839	
22 December	Marriage of Thomas Hardy and Jemima Hand; household established in a cottage at Higher Bockhampton, Dorset.
1840	
June 2	Thomas Hardy born.
1841	Birth of Hardy's sister, Mary.
1848	Hardy attends the newly opened Stinsford National School.
1850	Hardy sent to Dorchester British School kept by Isaac Glandfield Last.
1851	Birth of Hardy's brother, Henry.
1853–1856	Isaac Last establishes an independent 'commercial academy' and Hardy enrols; begins to study Latin.
1856	Birth of Hardy's sister, Katherine (Kate).
	Hardy is articled to Dorchester architect John Hicks.
1857	Hardy establishes a close friendship with Horatio (Horace) Moule. Moule becomes Hardy's intellectual mentor and encourages his study of Latin and Greek.
1860	Hardy completes his articles as an architect and is employed by Hicks as an assistant.
1862	Hardy moves to London. Through a letter of introduction provided by Hicks he finds employment with the architect Arthur Blomfield.
	Hardy is elected to the Architectural Association.
1863	Submits two prize-winning entries for architectural competitions.
1865	Hardy's first publication, 'How I Built Myself a House', appears in *Chambers's Journal*.

1866	Hardy begins to submit poetry to magazines.
1867	Returns to Dorset. Works for Hicks on church restoration.
	Begins writing his first, unpublished, novel *The Poor Man and the Lady*.
1868	Submits completed MS of *The Poor Man and the Lady* to Alexander Macmillan. Novel is rejected by Macmillan, who suggests that Hardy submit it to Chapman and Hall.
1869	Chapman agrees to publish the novel if Hardy will provide £20 as a guarantee against losses. Hardy agrees.
	Hardy meets with Chapman's reader, George Meredith, who had recommended against acceptance. Meredith convinces Hardy to withdraw the MS and advises him to write a story with 'more plot'.
	Hardy submits MS to Smith, Elder; novel is rejected.
	Hardy employed by Weymouth architect G. R. Crickmay to complete church restoration work left unfinished with the death of Hicks.
	Hardy submits MS of *The Poor Man and the Lady* to Tinsley Brothers. Tinsley offers to publish in return for a guarantee against losses; Hardy refuses the offer.
	Begins writing his first novel to be published, *Desperate Remedies*.
1870	
7 March	Meets his future wife, Emma Lavinia Gifford, at St Juliot, Cornwall, when he travels there to work on the restoration of a local church.
	Macmillan rejects *Desperate Remedies*.
	Tinsley agrees to publish *Desperate Remedies* if Hardy is willing to provide £75 in advance of printing. Hardy accepts the offer.
1871	*Desperate Remedies* published anonymously in three volumes.

1872	*Under the Greenwood Tree* published anonymously in two volumes by Tinsley Brothers. Hardy sells Tinsley the copyright of the novel for £30.
	Hardy moves from Weymouth to London to work in the architectural office of T. Roger Smith. After positive reviews of *Under the Greenwood Tree*, Tinsley offers Hardy £200 for a serial to appear in the September issue of *Tinsleys' Magazine*.
	Leslie Stephen requests a serial for *Cornhill Magazine*.
	Hardy's first proposal to marry Emma Gifford is rejected by her father.
1872–1873	*A Pair of Blue Eyes* serialized anonymously in *Tinsleys' Magazine*. Published in three volumes by Tinsley Brothers (1873). The volume edition is the first of Hardy's novels to bear his name as author.
1873	
21 September	Horace Moule commits suicide in his rooms at Cambridge.
1874	*Far from the Madding Crowd* serialized anonymously in *Cornhill Magazine*. Published in two volumes, over Hardy's name, by Smith, Elder that same year.
17 September	Hardy marries Emma Gifford.
1875	The Hardys move to Swanage, Dorset.
1875–1876	*The Hand of Ethelberta* serialized in *Cornhill Magazine*. Published in two volumes by Smith, Elder (1876).
	The Hardys move to Yeovil, Somerset, and then to Sturminster Newton, Dorset. Hardy begins writing *The Return of the Native*.
1878	The Hardys move to the London suburb of Tooting.
	The Return of the Native serialized in *Belgravia*. Published in three volumes by Smith, Elder.
	An Indiscretion in the Life of an Heiress, a revised and abbreviated version of *The Poor Man and the Lady*, published in *New Quarterly Magazine*.

	Hardy begins historical research in the British Museum for *The Trumpet-Major*.
1880	*The Trumpet-Major* serialized in *Good Words*. Published in three volumes by Smith, Elder, with cloth binding designed by Hardy.
	Hardy becomes seriously ill and is forced into several months of total inactivity. He dictates the major portion of the serial version of *A Laodicean* to Emma Hardy from his bed.
1880–1881	*A Laodicean* serialized in the European Edition of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. Published in three volumes by Sampson Low (1881).
1881	The Hardys return to Dorset and set up their household at Wimborne Minster.
1882	*Two on a Tower* serialized in *Atlantic Monthly*. Published in three volumes by Sampson Low.
1883	'The Dorsetshire Labourer' published in *Longman's Magazine*.
	The Hardys move from Wimborne to Dorchester. They take up temporary accommodation while their new house is being built on the outskirts of the town. Hardy begins writing *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.
1884	Hardy is made Justice of the Peace.
1885	The Hardys move into Max Gate, the house designed by Hardy and built by his brother Henry. Hardy will live there for the rest of his life.
1886	*The Mayor of Casterbridge* serialized in *The Graphic*. Published in three volumes by Smith, Elder.
1886–1887	*The Woodlanders* serialized in *Macmillan's Magazine*. Published in three volumes by Macmillan and Company (1887).
1888	*Wessex Tales*, Hardy's first collection of stories, is published by Macmillan.
	'The Profitable Reading of Fiction' published in *The Forum* (New York).

1890	Hardy's set of six stories under the title *A Group of Noble Dames* published in *The Graphic*.
	'Candour in English Fiction' published in *The New Review*.
1891	*Tess of the d'Urbervilles* serialized in *The Graphic*. Published in three volumes by Osgood, McIlvaine.
	A Group of Noble Dames published in a single volume by Osgood, McIlvaine. The volume includes some earlier stories as well as those originally published in *The Graphic*.
	'The Science of Fiction' published in *The New Review*.
1892	
20 July	Hardy's father dies.
	The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved serialized in *The Illustrated London News*.
1892–1893	*Our Exploits at West Poley*, Hardy's only children's story, serialized in the Boston periodical *The Household*.
1894	Hardy's third collection of stories, *Life's Little Ironies*, published by Osgood, McIlvaine.
1894–1895	*Jude the Obscure* serialized in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. Published in a single volume by Osgood, McIlvaine (1895).
1895	Osgood, McIlvaine begins publishing the first collected edition of Hardy's works, the 'Wessex Novels' edition, which includes the first edition of *Jude the Obscure*.
1897	*The Well-Beloved* published by Osgood, McIlvaine as a single volume in the 'Wessex Novels' edition.
1898	Hardy's first collection of verse, *Wessex Poems*, containing his own illustrations, published by Harper and Brothers.
1901	*Poems of the Past and the Present* published by Harper and Brothers.
1902	Hardy comes to an agreement with Macmillan, who will act as his publishers for the rest of his life.
1904	Part First of *The Dynasts* published.

3 April	Hardy's mother dies.
1905	Hardy meets Florence Emily Dugdale, his future second wife.
	Hardy receives an honorary degree from the University of Aberdeen.
1906	Part Second of *The Dynasts* published.
1908	Part Third of *The Dynasts* published.
1909	*Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses* published.
1910	Hardy is awarded the Order of Merit, having refused a knighthood.
	Hardy receives the Freedom of the Borough of Dorchester.
1912	Macmillan begins publishing the second collection of Hardy's works, both novels and poetry, the Wessex Edition.
	Hardy receives the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Literature.
27 November	Emma Hardy dies.
1913	*A Changed Man and Other Tales*, Hardy's last collection of stories, published.
	Hardy receives an honorary degree from Cambridge University and is made an Honorary Fellow of Magdalene College.
1914	
10 February	Hardy marries Florence Dugdale.
	Satires of Circumstances: Lyrics and Reveries with Miscellaneous Pieces published.
1915	Hardy's chosen heir, Frank William George, is killed at Gallipoli.
	Hardy's sister Mary dies.
1916	*Selected Poems of Thomas Hardy* published.
1917	*Moments of Vision and Miscellaneous Verses* published.
	Hardy begins sorting his papers, destroying many of them in bonfires in the backyard of Max Gate.

1919	Macmillan begins publication of a de luxe edition of Hardy's works, the Mellstock Edition.
1920	On his eightieth birthday Hardy receives messages of congratulations from George V and the prime minister, David Lloyd George. He is visited at Max Gate by a deputation from the Incorporated Society of Authors.
1922	*Late Lyrics and Earlier with Many Other Verses* published.
	Hardy receives honorary degrees from the University of St Andrews and Oxford University.
1923	*The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall* published.
	The Prince of Wales visits Max Gate.
1924	Hardy's adaptation of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* performed in Dorchester.
1925	*Human Shows, Far Phantasies, Songs, and Trifles* published.
	Dramatized version of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* performed in London.
1928	
January 11	Thomas Hardy dies. His heart is removed and buried in Stinsford churchyard. His body is cremated and the ashes buried in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey.
	Winter Words in Various Moods and Metres published posthumously.
	The first volume of Hardy's autobiography, *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840–1891*, is published (on his instruction) by Macmillan over Florence Hardy's name.
	Hardy's brother Henry dies.
1930	The second volume of the autobiography, *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, 1892–1928,* published over Florence Hardy's name.
1937	Florence Hardy dies.
1940	Kate Hardy, Hardy's last surviving sibling, dies.

ABBREVIATIONS

Principal Texts

HH	Henry Holt edition (1874)
WD	Ward and Downey edition (1889)
OM	Osgood, McIlvaine, 'Wessex Novels' edition (1896)
W	Macmillan and Company, Wessex Edition (1912)

Secondary Sources

BR	Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy: A Biography Revisited*. Oxford University Press, 2004.
CL	*The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*, ed. Richard L. Purdy, Michael Millgate, and Keith Wilson. 8 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978–2012.
LW	Michael Millgate, *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1984.
Morgan	Charles Morgan, *The House of Macmillan (1843–1943)*. London: Macmillan and Company, 1943.
Purdy	Richard L. Purdy, *Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study*. London: British Library; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1954; 2002.
PW	*Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings*, ed. Harold Orel. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1967.
Rimmer	*Desperate Remedies*, ed. Mary Rimmer. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1998.
Weber	Carl J. Weber, *Hardy in America: A Study of Thomas Hardy and his American Readers*. Waterville, Maine: Colby College Press, 1946.

INTRODUCTION

Composition and Publication

By the time Thomas Hardy came to write *Desperate Remedies* he had already experienced the challenging realities of the Victorian literary marketplace. In July 1868 he had approached Macmillan and Company to offer for consideration his first effort at a novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*. When Alexander Macmillan and his reader John Morley rejected it, Hardy attempted to revise the returned manuscript to address some of their criticisms, only to have it turned down again. Morley's report describes a 'very curious and original performance', and notes that while 'much of the writing is strong and fresh . . . there crops up in parts a certain rawness of absurdity that is very displeasing'.[1] Macmillan himself, in a letter of 10 August 1868, declares that he has 'read through the novel . . . with care and with much interest and admiration, but feeling at the same time that it has what seem to me fatal drawbacks to its success', noting in particular that Hardy's 'pictures of character among Londoners, and especially the upper classes, are sharp, clear, incisive, and in many respects true, but they are wholly dark – not a ray of light visible to relieve the darkness, and therefore exaggerated and untrue in their result'.[2] Having questioned the author's satirical excess – 'nothing could justify such a wholesale blackening of a class but large and intimate knowledge of it'[3] – the publisher nonetheless provides some encouragement: 'Much of the writing seems to me admirable. The scene in Rotten Row . . . is full of real power and insight . . . You see I am writing to you as to a writer who seems to me of, at least potentially, considerable mark, of power and purpose. If this is your first book I think you ought to go on.'[4]

More directly practical, however, was Macmillan's suggestion that the publishing house of Chapman and Hall might be interested in the book, and his provision of a letter of introduction to Frederick Chapman, who had become sole manager of the firm in 1864. Hardy visited Chapman in

[1] C. Morgan, *The House of Macmillan (1843–1943)* (London: Macmillan, 1943) (hereafter Morgan), pp. 87–8.
[2] Morgan, p. 88. [3] Morgan, p. 89. [4] Morgan, pp. 90, 91.

the company's Piccadilly offices on 8 December 1868, 'with the MS. under his arm',[5] and left the manuscript for consideration after their interview. In January of the new year came the ambivalently good news that, although Chapman would not purchase the novel unconditionally, he would commit to publishing it if Hardy guaranteed the sum of £20 to cover any losses. Hardy was willing to incur this expense as the cost of getting into print, and after accepting the arrangement he left London expecting to receive proofs of the novel at his family's home in Bockhampton soon thereafter. Instead, what he received was a note from Chapman inviting him back to London to meet the reader assigned to Hardy's novel. That reader turned out to be George Meredith, at this time a highly regarded novelist and poet, and his advice to the fledgling writer in front of him was, according to Hardy, unequivocal.

> Meredith had the manuscript in his hand, and began lecturing Hardy upon it in a sonorous voice. No record was kept by the latter of their conversation, but the gist of it he remembered very well. It was that the firm were willing to publish the novel as agreed, but that he, the speaker, strongly advised its author not to 'nail his colours to the mast' so definitely in a first book, if he wished to do anything practical at literature; for if he printed so pronounced a thing he would be attacked on all sides by the conventional reviewers, and his future injured. The story was, in fact, a sweeping dramatic satire of the squirearchy and nobility, London society, the vulgarity of the middle class, modern Christianity, church restoration, and political and domestic morals in general . . . the tendency of the writing being socialistic, not to say revolutionary; yet not argumentatively so, the style having the affected simplicity of De Foe's . . . Meredith was not taken in by the affected simplicity of the narrative, and that was obviously why he warned his young acquaintance that the press would be about his ears like hornets if he published his manuscript.[6]

Meredith thus echoed Macmillan in cautioning Hardy against such explicit social commentary, and then added that Hardy 'could rewrite the story, softening it down considerably; or what would be much better, put it away altogether for the present, and attempt a novel with a purely artistic purpose, giving it a more complicated "plot"'.[7] This last recommendation would have crucial implications for *Desperate Remedies*, but the immediate

[5] M. Millgate (ed.), *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984) (hereafter *LW*), p. 60.
[6] *LW*, pp. 62–3. [7] *LW*, p. 64.

result of Meredith's intervention was that Hardy withdrew his manuscript from Chapman and Hall, and went away to consider his options.

Despite Meredith's prominence, however, Hardy did not simply accept his warning. On 15 April 1869, Hardy posted the manuscript of *The Poor Man and the Lady* to Smith, Elder and Company, only to have them reject it two weeks later. Then, gaining the MS back from Smith, Elder on 8 June of that same year, he made one final effort by sending it to the publisher Tinsley Brothers, who apparently made him the same type of offer as had Chapman, only with less attractive conditions. In his letter requesting the return of the manuscript from the Tinsleys, Hardy thanks them for considering his novel and 'mentioning to my friend the terms on which you wd be willing to publish it: I am sorry to say they are rather beyond me just now'.[8] His initial attempt to publish fiction having met with a singular lack of success, and with Meredith's advice still fresh in his mind, Hardy decided that a more strategic approach was necessary. If social satire was not attractive to publishers, there was another novelistic genre whose popularity remained strong in the late 1860s – a genre that made no apology for its emphasis on complicated plots, and which indeed depended for its effectiveness on 'plotting' in both its narrative structures and its themes: the sensation novel. And so Hardy set out to write one.

According to Michael Millgate, the first draft of *The Poor Man and the Lady* was written 'during the last five months of 1867', with the creation of an expanded and revised fair copy occupying 'all of Hardy's spare time between late January and early June of 1868'.[9] The reason that only spare time was available to devote to his writing was because this period coincided with Hardy's employment by the Dorchester architect John Hicks, which followed his sojourn in London from 1862 to 1867, when he had worked for the city architect Arthur Blomfield. Given Hardy's temperament, it is unsurprising that his exposure to the metropolis produced a satirical response, his views 'in fact, being obviously those of a young man with "a passion for reforming the world"',[10] a passion that would find

[8] R. L. Purdy and M. Millgate (eds.), *The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) (hereafter *CL*), vol. I, p. 10.

[9] M. Millgate, *Thomas Hardy: A Biography Revisited* (Oxford University Press, 2004) (hereafter *BR*), pp. 100, 101.

[10] *LW*, p. 63.

expression again in later works. But a specific literary controversy was also occurring during these years. The explosive critical debate created by the conflict between sensation fiction and its supposed opposite, the realist novel, dominated the 1860s, and provoked continuing reviewer commentary well into the 1870s. Initiated by the extraordinary popularity of Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* (1860), sensation texts were market phenomena, outselling by wide margins works by George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, William Makepeace Thackeray, and Meredith himself. As Rachel Ablow observes, however, 'the negative critical backlash against [sensation novels] . . . only began to appear in 1863 and 1864, several years after the publication of *The Woman in White*',[11] for that particular text received largely positive reviews. It was the equally startling success of *East Lynne* (1861) by Ellen Wood, along with Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) and her similarly provocative *Aurora Floyd* (1863), which generated the increasingly fervid opposition to sensationalism. Hardy's time in London matched exactly the initial, and most heated, exchanges about this new and successful form of melodramatic writing, a debate that appeared in such influential literary magazines as *The Westminster Review, The Athenæum*, and *Blackwood's Magazine*.

It may seem strange that an aspiring writer who had been counselled by a more experienced novelist to avoid the controversies of satire should turn to a genre that was by definition controversial, but there is logic to this choice. If the problem with *The Poor Man and the Lady* was that its cultural critique was too naively explicit, and that therefore Hardy could come under personal attack for his views, then choosing a form of novel that itself tended to elicit strong responses might divert attention away from his particular perspective. Further, throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century sensation fiction had no trouble finding an audience, as Braddon's lucrative career continued to demonstrate well into the 1890s. So the chance of catching a publisher's eye, and perhaps even turning a profit, was not unlikely; in the *Life* Hardy observes that, 'finding himself in a corner, it seemed necessary to attract public attention at all hazards'.[12]

[11] R. Ablow, 'Good Vibrations: The Sensationalization of Masculinity in *The Woman in White*', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 37.1 (Spring 2003), p. 159.
[12] *LW*, p. 87.