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978-1-107-09105-4 — Wessex Tales

Thomas Hardy , Edited by N. H. Reeve , Richard Nemesvari

Frontmatter

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THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION OF THE
NOVELS AND STORIES OF
THOMAS HARDY

Wessex Tales

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VOLUMES IN THIS SERIES

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
6. The Return of the Native
7. The Trumpet-Major
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
17. Life's Little Ironies
18. A Changed Man and Other Stories

THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION OF THE
NOVELS AND STORIES OF
THOMAS HARDY

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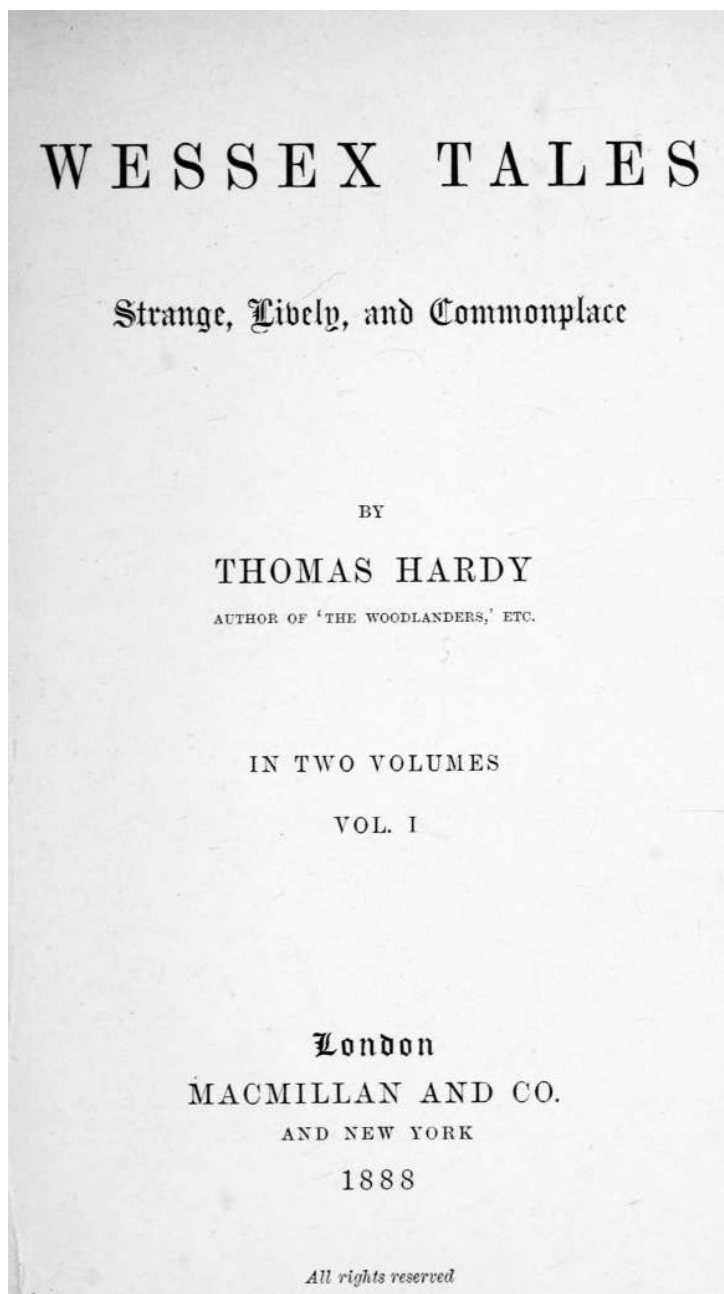
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Title page of the Macmillan and Company first edition of *Wessex Tales*.

THOMAS HARDY

Wessex Tales

EDITED BY

N H REEVE

WITH ASSISTANCE FROM

RICHARD NEMESVARI



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IN MEMORIAM

N H Reeve

As Neil Reeve and I worked together preparing *Wessex Tales* for the Cambridge Hardy Edition it became obvious why I, and all the members of the Editorial Advisory Board, were enormously pleased when he agreed to join our team of editors. Neil's reputation as an exemplary textual critic was already established through his work with the Cambridge editions of D. H. Lawrence and Henry James, but his admiration for, and knowledge of, Thomas Hardy was equally deep. In particular, Neil's keen appreciation of the author's evocation of setting and use of landscape, so crucial in creating the 'partly real, partly dream-country' that is Wessex, found full expression in his introduction to the text and the volume's explanatory notes.

A further mark of esteem occurred when the Press suggested that we should appoint an Assistant General Editor to help me as more volumes of the project came into production. The Advisory Board quickly agreed that I approach Neil to fill that position, and he graciously consented to take on the additional responsibility.

Almost immediately after that, however, Neil received the diagnosis of his potentially terminal illness, so we never had the opportunity to pursue that association. Nonetheless, he demonstrated tremendous courage and dedication as he continued his preparation of *Wessex Tales*, and we had begun discussing his first draft before it became no longer possible for him to continue. His willingness to keep working through debilitating treatments even as his strength fell away showed a commitment and force of character that was extraordinary.

Along with his editorial scholarship, Neil also wrote on the poetry of J. H. Prynne, co-authoring with Richard Kerridge the monograph *Nearly Too Much: The Poetry of J. H. Prynne* and, also with Kerridge, publishing a new annotated version of Prynne's *The Oval Window*. In an edition of Hardy it seems appropriate, then, to end with the last stanza of his poem 'Afterwards':

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IN MEMORIAM

And will any say when my bell of quittance is heard in the gloom
And a crossing breeze cuts a pause in its outrollings,
Till they rise again, as they were a new bell's boom,
‘He hears it not now, but used to notice such things’?

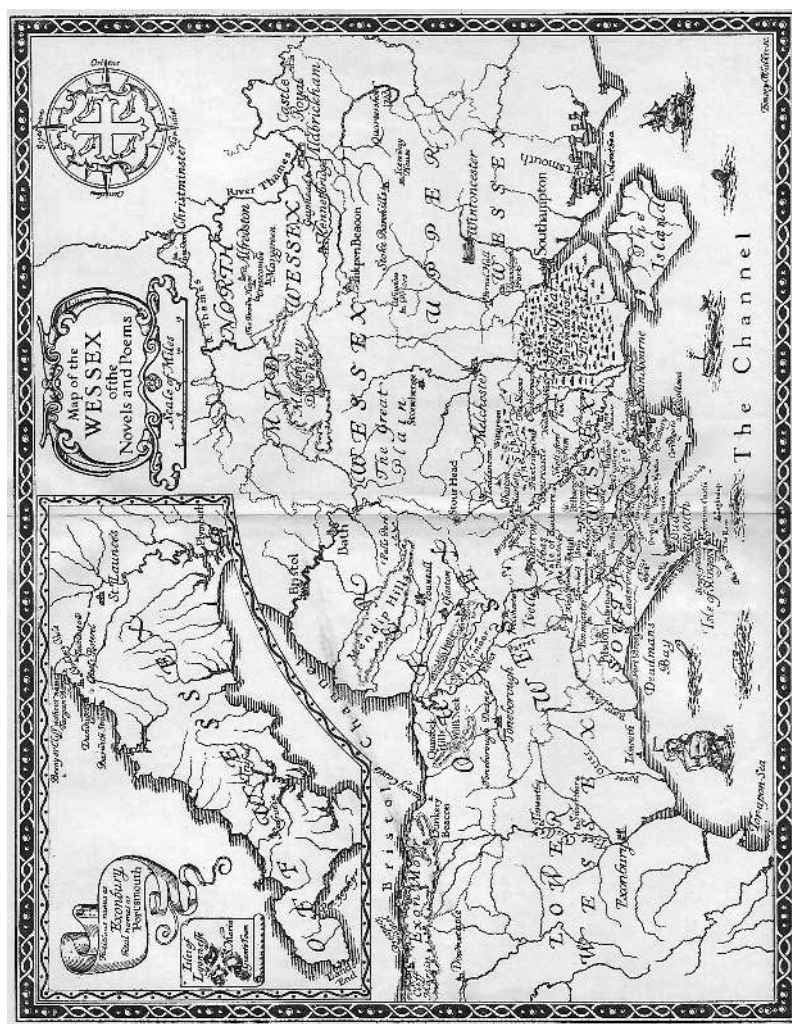
Neil Reeve passed away on Easter Sunday 2018, and his work as both an editor and a sensitive reader of literature shows that he was a man who noticed many fine and important things.

Richard Nemesvari

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FRONTISPIECE Title page of the Macmillan and Company first
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'Map of the Wessex of the Novels and Poems (revised 1914 – prepared by Emery Walker from a holograph original provided by Thomas Hardy)'.

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

¹ CL I, p. 28.

² BR, p. 535.

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was given additional chances to modify his texts through the 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.

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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 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. Four subsequent volumes were added, one in 1919 and another in 1926, with the final two volumes appearing posthumously in 1931. 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.⁴ 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 in 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 had gone through

³ *PW*, p. 9.

⁴ *PW*, p. 44.

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long, undramatic processes of erosion and accretion.⁵ 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 is included to offer clear and relevant information to the reader by identifying literary

⁵ 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.

GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

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, whose role as Commissioning Editor: Literature at Cambridge University Press during the early stages of the edition was instrumental in its development, and to Bethany Thomas, the current Commissioning Editor, for her continued support of the project.

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On behalf of Neil Reeve and myself, I would like to thank the following individuals and institutions who have helped us complete the Cambridge Edition of *Wessex Tales*.

I am grateful to the following for their particular contributions and for the advice, encouragement and support they provided to Neil: Michael J. Franklin, Christopher Nicholson, Glyn Pursglove, M. Wynn Thomas and John Worthen.

Kathryn King's 1988 dissertation 'Studies Toward a Critical Edition of Thomas Hardy's *Wessex Tales*' (Emory University), and the Oxford World's Classics edition that was its result, provided valuable insights into the stories and their backgrounds. Her analysis of the impact of Hardy's revisions is carefully considered and supported, so that if we do not always follow her conclusions the evidence adduced was very helpful in determining our own readings. John Shoesmith, Librarian at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Room, University of Toronto, provided digitized copies of the illustrations for 'An Imaginative Woman', an important contribution that makes this edition unique in what it provides to readers, along with other digital material from the Fisher's extensive holdings. As well, the staff at the Media Commons, Robarts Library, University of Toronto, were uniformly kind when lending their assistance in transferring the serializations of 'Fellow-Townsmen', 'The Distracted Young Preacher' and 'An Imaginative Woman' from microfilm to PDF files, a process that we all agreed was the opposite of intuitive.

Mary Catherine Kinniburgh and Emma Davidson of the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, New York Public Library, provided me with a scanned copy of the manuscript of 'The Three Strangers', and they were most welcoming during my three-day visit to the Berg Collection to work with the monograph original in November 2019. Likewise, Tim Noakes, Head of Public Services, provided me with a scanned copy of the manuscript of 'The Distracted Young Preacher' courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford Libraries, Stanford

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

University. He and Benjamin L. Albritton, Rare Books Curator, Curator for Classics, Stanford Libraries, generously provided me with more information than I had originally requested on the provenance of that manuscript, which is included in Appendix D of this volume. I would also like to thank the staff at the Wolfson Reading Room, Special Collections Centre, The Sir Duncan Rice Library, University of Aberdeen, for providing me with a scanned copy of the manuscript of 'An Imaginative Woman'.

The editorial board of the Cambridge Hardy Edition was, as always, ready whenever advice was needed, so my gratitude goes to Pamela Dalziel, Tim Dolin, Simon Gatrell, Dale Kramer, Alan Manford and Peter Shillingsburg. More specifically, Simon and Alan provided me with important insights on possible explanations for the differences between the manuscript and the British and American serializations of 'The Distracted Young Preacher', while Alan's meticulous transcription and notes on the manuscript of 'An Imaginative Woman' were invaluable. Jacqueline Dillion was instrumental in providing me with physical details of the MS of 'The Distracted Young Preacher', held in the Stanford University archives, when my ability to travel to California was curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and I very much appreciate her willingness to take on that task during a challenging time. Similarly, Mary Rimmer arranged for me to receive scans of Hardy's notations in his study copy of the 1912 Wessex Edition, held by the Dorset Museum, when I was unable to attend the 2022 Dorchester Hardy Conference. The generosity of such colleagues is one of the pleasures of engaging in Hardy scholarship.

The continuing support provided, to this volume and to the overall Hardy series, by those at Cambridge University Press also needs to be acknowledged. Bethany Thomas, Commissioning Editor, Literature, and Bethany Johnson, senior content manager, provide the type of professional guidance essential for the successful completion of such a complex endeavour, while Emma Goff-Leggett, marketing coordinator, spreads the word about our editorial efforts as widely as possible in both academic and non-academic settings.

The provision of an administrative leave by Wilfrid Laurier University during the 2019–2020 academic year was instrumental in providing me with the time needed to work on this volume, and I very much appreciate my home institution's investment in my scholarship.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would also like to provide thanks to Cheryl Reeve for her kind support in my finishing the volume begun by her late husband, my esteemed colleague Neil Reeve. And, finally, my wife Jane's assistance, devotion and commitment made this edition of *Wessex Tales* possible, in ways that cannot be described in so small a space, or indeed, put adequately into words at all.

Richard Nemesvari

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 enrolls; 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*.

CHRONOLOGY

- 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*.

CHRONOLOGY

- Leslie Stephen requests a serial for the *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 the *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 the *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 the *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).

CHRONOLOGY

1881	The Hardys return to Dorset and set up their household at Wimborne Minster.
1882	<i>Two on a Tower</i> serialized in the <i>Atlantic Monthly</i> . Published in three volumes by Sampson Low.
1883	‘The Dorsetshire Labourer’ published in <i>Longman’s Magazine</i> . 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 <i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i> .
1884	Hardy is made a Justice of the Peace.
1885	The Hardy’s 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	<i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i> serialized in <i>The Graphic</i> . Published in three volumes by Smith, Elder.
1886–1887	<i>The Woodlanders</i> serialized in <i>Macmillan’s Magazine</i> . Published in three volumes by Macmillan and Company (1887).
1888	<i>Wessex Tales</i> , Hardy’s first collection of stories, is published by Macmillan. ‘The Profitable Reading of Fiction’ published in <i>The Forum</i> (New York).
1890	Hardy’s set of six stories under the title <i>A Group of Noble Dames</i> published in the <i>Graphic</i> . ‘Candour in English Fiction’ published in <i>The New Review</i> .
1891	<i>Tess of the d’Urbervilles</i> serialized in <i>The Graphic</i> . Published in three volumes by Osgood, McIlvaine. <i>A Group of Noble Dames</i> published in a single volume by Osgood, McIlvaine. The volume includes some earlier stories as well as those originally published in <i>The Graphic</i> . ‘The Science of Fiction’ published in <i>The New Review</i> .
1892 20 July	Hardy’s father dies. <i>The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved</i> serialized in <i>The Illustrated London News</i> .

CHRONOLOGY

1892–1893	<i>Our Exploits at West Poley</i> , Hardy’s only children’s story (written 1883), serialized in the Boston periodical <i>The Household</i> .
1894	Hardy’s third collection of stories, <i>Life’s Little Ironies</i> , published by Osgood, McIlvaine.
1894–1895	<i>Jude the Obscure</i> serialized in <i>Harper’s New Monthly Magazine</i> . 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 <i>Jude the Obscure</i> .
1897	<i>The Well-Beloved</i> published by Osgood, McIlvaine as a single volume in the ‘Wessex Novels’ edition.
1898	Hardy’s first collection of verse, <i>Wessex Poems</i> , containing his own illustrations, published by Harper and Brothers.
1901	<i>Poems of the Past and the Present</i> 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 <i>The Dynasts</i> 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 <i>The Dynasts</i> published.
1908	Part Third of <i>The Dynasts</i> published.
1909	<i>Time’s Laughingstocks and Other Verses</i> 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.