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THE HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTER: A STUDY OF MEMORY AND DETACHMENT IN THE POETRY OF THOMAS HARDY.

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for the Degree of Master of Arts

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

KARIN FRAN BERKMAN

25th day of MAY, 1987.

TO MY PARENTS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge my deep gratitude to my supervisor, Professor B.D. Cleadle for the extensive help and guidance he granted me and for his continual kindness and patience during the course of my studies. I would also like to thank my parents and husband for their unmerited love and support.

Mrs Nicole Couvaras deserves my warm thanks for her skill and efficiency in typing this dissertation. Finally I would like to thank the Human Sciences Research Council for their financial assistance.

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ABSTRACT

The image of a haunting is of particular significance in the poetry of Thomas Hardy. As metaphor for the workings of memory, it fills Hardy's need for an image which captures the intensity of recall he experiences, and which cannot be described simply in the image of remembering. The image of a haunting is at times implicit in poems concerned with the recreation of the past. The sense we have in these poems of memory summonsing the past, and its consequent materialization, the assumption of immediate form, distinguishes these poems from those in which a conventional memory is recorded, where the past is simply described rather than recreated. The haunting is used explicitly to accomodate Hardy's sensitivity to the lingering presence of past experience which expresses itself in repeated images of shadowy phantoms, presences which seem to edge into the poet's present experience and in the multiplicity of actual ghosts dramatically re-enacting the scenes of the past. By associating the experience of remembering with a haunting Hardy transforms the recall of the past into a dramatic event, in which the self actively confronts his past and is allowed to visualize, hear and address the dead. The image is expressive of Hardy's profound nostalgia for a past which is perceived as affording placement and familiarity to a self unhoused and estranged in a present which bars

comprehension and the perception of significance. In a haunting the self is allowed a rehearsal of the past equipped with understanding and vision.

In an examination of the 1912-1913 poems, the centrality of the haunting image to the sequence is considered. The image of the haunting functions as antidote to the burdens of transience and mortality; in the haunting the pain of estrangement can be allayed and the reality and finality of death can be momentarily annulled. In the 1912-1913 poems the haunting is the medium for an expression of regret and atonement, a mode of expiation.

Finally, the dissertation studies the assumption of ghosthood by Hardy's personae and considers the appositeness of the image of the poet as haunter in expressing the self's tendency to withdrawal and self-effacement. The equation of the self with a ghost is expressive of the self's sense of exclusion from a welcoming community, its retreat from the press of experience, but also of the self's unwilling immersion in the past and consequent inability to maintain a firm grip on its identity.

The complexity of the haunted and haunter images accommodates Hardy's sense of the complexities of memory and identity, concerns to which the poems return repeatedly as the focus of exploration.

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CHAPTER I

When Hardy published *Wessex Poems* in 1898 his rejection of fiction in favour of poetry was widely regarded as an unwise defection; for Hardy the publication of the poems signalled a homecoming, a return to an art form "which had always been more instinctive with him."(1) Hardy's preference for poetry over fiction lies partly in his sense that poetry was accommodating to the intuitive and the mysterious, to "seemings" rather than statement, in a way that fiction could not always be. In a significant note in the Life Hardy states:

> You must not think me a hard-headed rationalist for all this. Half my time - particularly when writing verse - I "believe" (in the modern sense of the word) not only in the things Bergson believes in, but in spectres, mysterious voices, intuitions, omens, dreams, haunted places, etc., etc. But *I do not* believe in them in the old sense of the word any more for that."(2)

For Hardy, like other Victorian poets, an acute sense of loss is the mainspring of his poetry and a major source of concern is what to substitute for belief "in the old sense of the word" once it is no longer viable. Perhaps uniquely in Hardy's poetry, loss is met with the same resources it would have commanded had faith retained its vitality. Bayley captures this peculiar paradoxicality at the heart of Hardy's poetry most accurately: "He does not substitute a new belief or attitude but continues in the old one,

having ceased to believe it. His poetry is an aspect of the liturgy, God having as solid an existence in his art as he did in the old worship."(3) For Hardy the province of poetry is the transcendental longings of man and the ghosts that people the poems are images of those longings. Not "real" in any accepted sense, they yet embody all that they would if they were real; the defeat of time, the evanescence of death, transience as illusion, not as articles of faith, but as imagined possibilities. Divested of actuality, Hardy's ghosts continue to provide solace, if not through a knowledge of the defeat of time, through the imagining of that defeat and through its temporary celebration within the confines of a poem.

Another note from the Life suggests the value Hardy attaches to that act of imagination and its capacity to appropriate the functions of faith through the maintenance of its forms:

> I do not think that there will be any permanent revival of the old transcendental ideals; but I think there may gradually be developed an Idealism of Fancy; that is, an idealism in which fancy is no longer tricked out and made to masquerade as belief, but is frankly and honestly accepted as an imaginative solace in the lack of any substantial solace to be found in life.(4)

A comparison of two poems like "Yell'ham-Wood in a Younger World" and "The Shadow on the Stone" exposes the difference between belief in transcendance in the old sense of the

word and in the modern sense, or between faith and the imagination:

WE believed in highdays then,
And could glimpse at night
On Christmas Eve
Imminent oncomings of radiant revel -
Doings of delight:-
Now we have no such sight.

We had eyes for phantoms then,
And at bridge or stile
On Christmas Eve
Clear beheld those countless ones who had crossed it
Cross again in file: -
Such has ceased longwhile!

We liked divination then,
And, as they homeward wound
On Christmas Eve,
We could read men's dreams within them spinning
Even as wheels spin round: -
Now we are blinker-bound.

We heard still small voices then,
And, in the dim serene
Of Christmas Eve,
Caught the far-time tones of fire-filled prophets
Long on earth unseen....
- Can such ever have been?

I WENT by the Druid stone
That broods in the garden white and lone,
And I stopped and looked at the shifting shadows
That at some moments *fall thereon*
From the tree hard by with a rhythmic swing,
And they shaped in my imagining
To the shade that a well-known head and shoulders
Threw there when she was gardening.

I thought her behind my back,
Yea, her I long had learned to lack,
And I said: 'I am sure you are standing *behind me*,
Though how do you get into this old track?'
And there was no sound but the fall of a leaf
As a sad response; and to keep down grief
I would not turn my head to discover
That there *was nothing in my* belief.

Yet I wanted to look and see
That nobody stood at the back of me;
But I thought once more: 'Nay, I'll not unvision
A shape which, somehow, there may be.'
So I went on softly from the glade,
And left her behind me throwing her shade,
As she were indeed an apparition -
My head unturned lest my dream should fade.

Begun 1913: finished 1916

In "Yuletide in a Younger World", vision, divination, receptivity to the announcements of the divine are commonplaces of experience in an immanent universe. Past Christmases command radiance, animation and revelations, not as dreams but as facts; they enjoy the same reality as the bridge or stile. That factuality of vision is acknowledged as impossible in the present. Each stanza's evocation of past receptivity is met with a countering admission of present blindness and deafness, and the incapacity to even conceive the possibility of revelation.

The phantom of "The Shadow on the Stone" is markedly different from the crowds of ghosts who inhabit the past so freely in "Yuletide in a Younger World". Here the phantom is not a fact but a possibility, summonsed not by the sureties of faith, but by hope and by the claims of the imagination on the past. The Druid Stone which in another age would be the locus of revelation continues to summons the mysterious, but now does so through the play of the imagination on its possibilities. The ghost of "The Shadow

on the Stone" is an illusion, but what the poem acknowledges is that illusion is not deception and that a *presence coaxed and shaped* by the imagination possesses validity and affords consolation. In the tentative evasions of the final stanza, the ghost is acknowledged simultaneously as merely a figment of the imagination, whose presence is sustained by the self's willing connivance in its own ignorance, and a possibility, momentarily independent of the imagining consciousness, ("And left her behind me throwing her shade, / As she were indeed an apparition") whose presence is prolonged by the self's sensitivity.

Hardy's ghosts are images of yearning; they represent the longing for escape from the rigours of a positivist universe and the sterilities of a rational present where the realities of time's demands on the individual cannot be eclipsed. In Hardy's poetry, the knowledge of transcendance of the burdens of time - pain, transience, mortality - afforded by faith, is replaced by an imagining of that transcendance. The media of that imagined *transcendance are two-fold: through memory and through* the pose of detatchment one can imagine the possibility of an escape from the ravages of time. The pose of detachment allows for an imagining of freedom from the press of events; disengaged, the self is no longer at the mercy of experience, no longer jostled and injured by constant

reminders of time's exacting toll on the individual, detached he becomes the observer of events rather than a suffering participant in them. Equally memory transports the self out of the present so that the self no longer confronts the evidence of the unremitting action of time but views events and individuals transfixed in a moment before change and death. The image of the ghost is made to serve both the rendering of the pose of detachment and the process of recall precisely because a ghost is an embodiment of freedom from time, because a ghost refers back to the consolations of religion that Hardy now relocates in detatchment and memory, not as certain rewards but as tentative possibilities.

The prominence of memory and detachment as concerns of Hardy's poetry becomes a subject of Hardy criticism once it escapes its fixation on a determination of Hardy's philosophy and its attribution of "pessimism" to the poems. Edward Thomas' comment in 1915 on the poems "If I were told that he had spent his days in a woodland hermitage, though I should not believe the story, I should suspect that it was founded on fact"(5) suggests Thomas' sensitivity to the elements of reticence and withdrawal in Hardy's poetry, and is perhaps one of the earliest apprehensions of the significance of these to the poems. Hardy's propensity to withdrawal and retreat is the major focus of concern in J. Hillis Miller's Thomas Hardy:

Distance and Desire(6) and "Wessex Heights",(7) in "Hardy and the Poetry of Isolation" by David Perkins (8) and in "The Partial Vision: Hardy's Idea of Dramatic Poetry" by William W. Morgan.(9) Morgan rather than suggesting the function of withdrawal in the achievement of freedom and transcendance as Miller does, in particular draws attention to Hardy's manipulation of the absent persona as an aesthetic principle of Hardy's poetry:

> In a number of his poems, for example he effaces his narrator so completely that there is not so much as a personal pronoun to give the persona an identity. In the best of these... the effect of such effacement is to suggest something like a camera recording without commentary.... This sort of impersonally dramatic poem suggests not so much the absence of the poet's editing mind and eye as it does his modest reluctance to place himself between us and the experience.(10)

Perhaps the most subtle and fertile discussion of Hardy's reticent persona is Bayley's examination of Hardy's presentation of self in his An Essay on Thomas Hardy:

> The self that Hardy expresses in his recurrent themes and fantasies... in no way resembles (the) modern fictional self flaunting its burden of 'seriousness'. Nor is it the self of Montaigne, ondoyant et divers interested both in its own nature and in the nature of that interest. One of the oldfashioned things about Hardy is that he does not come before us seeming to possess a self in any of the sense to which the romantic poets and theorists, the philosophers and the novelists, have accustomed us. His presence is much more indeterminately personal, self-delighting but not self-scrutinising, a tremulous fleeting entity.(11)

The prominence of memory as a concern of Hardy's poetry is the keynote of much of Hardy criticism. There is hardly a critic who does not point to the importance of the past in the poems and the function of memory in retrieving and consecrating that past. R.W. King's comment in 1925: "Hardy is supremely the poet of memories, of individual recollections, carried in the mind often for many years before being recorded, with undiminished vividness, and with a sort of added perspective which enhances their significance"(12) has been restated in numerous forms since.

For Hardy the past with its weight of "memories, histories, fellowships and fraternities"(13) is always more intricate and more commanding than the present. The p[illegible] is at once separate from and too close to the v[illegible] it is separate in that the events of the present, undistilled by memory, can claim no intimacy of relationship with the self. It is too close in that the present allows the self no perspective on itself. Hardy repeatedly asserts the impossibility of recognising value or significance in the moment of their enactment. It is only through looking back, through reconstruction in memory that one can extract from the welter of events what is significant. For Hardy perception is not impossible, but always belated: "We live forward, we understand backward."(14) Memory becomes a medium of seeing, a way of reversing the inevitable present blindness. Through memory, experience can be

rehearsed and the self can confront events armed with comprehension and vision.

The capacity of memory to vouchsafe awareness is made explicit in poems like "The Self Unseeing" and "The Fallow Deer at the Lonely House". In both poems the percipient spectator evaluating a past experience in memory is distinct *from* the *impercipient* participants in that experience:

> One without looks in to-night
> *Through* the curtain-chink
> From the sheet of glistening white;
> One without looks in to-night
> As we sit and think
> By the fender-brink.
>
> We do not discern those eyes
> Watching in the snow;
> Lit by lamps of rosy dyes
> We do not discern those eyes
> Wondering, aglow,
> Fourfooted, tiptoe.

The couple inside the lonely house do not see the deer. The separation, isolation and silence intimated by the poem's title and developed in the lines "As we sit and think / By the fender-brink" are unassuaged by the mystery and miraculousness of the deer, "Wondering, aglow / Four footed, tiptoe."

A careful reading of "The *Fallow Deer* at the Lonely House", reveals that the poem is based upon an impossibility; at its heart lies a fundamental paradox. If the speaker does

not see the deer and if the subject of the poem is that failure of vision, to what then can awareness of their *presence* be ascribed? It becomes clear that there is a second self present in the poem, that the poem, though written in the present tense, contains an implicit recapitulation; the speaker reviewing the experience through the lens of memory discerns the miraculous presence undiscernable to the *self located in* the present. Realization and perception come when the moment is replayed in memory; though nowhere explicit, the poem suggests that it is the act of remembering, of return, that evokes the unseen.

Similarily in "The Self Unseeing", the difference between the participating self and the self who remembers, is made explicit:

> Here is the ancient floor,
> Footworn and hollowed and thin,
> Here was the former door
> Where the dead feet walked in.
>
> She sat here in her chair,
> *Smiling into the fire;*
> He who played stood there,
> Bowing it higher and higher.
>
> Childlike, I danced in a dream;
> Blessings emblazoned that day;
> Everything glowed with a gleam;
> Yet we were looking away!

The almost blinding luminosity of the last stanza, its vision of a haloed moment, the sense of a fulcrum of joy, is realized only from without, from the ruin. The poem moves from the

simple observations of the first stanza to the deeper visioning of the second stanza, the "intenser stare of the mind" which transcends the sight of the fragmentary remnants of the room and perceives things complete; the shell of floor and door is transformed into a room, resonant and populated.

The movement from inanimate to animate, from superficial vision to the intense imaginative gaze is simultaneously a movement from what is simply old, (ancient, footworn, hallowed) or changed (former) to what is irrevocably lost. In the characteristic Hardian movement, the awareness of obsolescence is coupled with belated understanding; in the third stanza the pattern of reconstruction and recollection is interrupted; Hardy moves from the recreation of the shape of a moment to an evaluation of its significance, a seeing of the quality of the time:

> Blessings emblazoned that day;
> Everything glowed with a gleam;

The incandescence of the moment is perceived only from the darkened hush of the ruined house, the participants in the moment are "looking away", oblivious to its unique sanctity.

In both poems memory provides an opportunity for combating the mockeries and ironies of time; though knowledge and comprehension are delayed, they are not impossible. It is

the restorative, creative and constructive powers of memory that impel Hardy's retreat into the past and his attempt to revive the past, to invest it with actuality. In neither "The Fallow Deer at the Lonely House" nor in "The Self Unseeing" is the image of a haunting explicit. Rather, both poems evoke the strenousness of memory's efforts to reconstitute the past. In "The Fallow Deer at the Lonely House" the use of the present tense evokes the immediacy of the experience so that its pastness is almost wholly obscured. In "The Self Unseeing" the movement from ruin to room is a metaphor for the reconstructive power of memory. Between the first and the second stanza the past reconstitutes itself; the hollow ruin is rebuilt, the dead feet transformed into the vivid presences, bowing and dancing. In the context of this intensity of recall, the sense of a wresting of the past from obscurity into prominence, it does not seem gratuitous to use the image of a haunting to convey the kind of remembering Hardy presents here. Its distinctiveness is made clear when these poems are compared with poems like "To Lizbie Brown" or "A Thunderstorm in Town", subtitled "A Reminiscence: 1893" where the impulse is not to re-see the past but merely to recollect, and where the tone is simply nostalgia. It is the experience of a deeper remembering, the attempts to achieve a visioning of the past both implicitly and overtly associated with a haunting, that is the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER II

For Hardy, if memory is to provide the opportunity for a rehearsal of experience, if it is to illuminate blindness and transform the past, the simple image of remembering cannot express adequately the intensity of recall which he invokes. The process of active return, of confrontation with the past is more complex than a remembering and is for Hardy more adequately imaged as a haunting. The image of a haunting allows Hardy to express his sense of memory as more than recall, rather as a revisioning, a rehearsing of the past. Irving Howe's comment on the 1912-1913 poems, "The deepest note struck is not regret but the recapture of experience. Focused and intensified, regret leads to an opening of memory, a flooding return, almost an hallucination of seeing the tracings of memory. The experience rendered is a kind of second life achieved through imagination,"(1) suggests the sense of a deeper remembering, and points, through the use of terms like "return", "hallucination", "second life" to the appositeness of the image of a haunting to express the nature of that remembering.

The image of a haunting annuls the sense of memory as a diffuse, random, hesitant recall. Implicit in the experience of remembering is the remoteness and pastness of

that which is remembered. A haunting by contrast, is an immediate re-occurrence, not a pilgrimage of the mind into the past, but a transplanting of the past into the present. In "One We Knew" Hardy makes explicit the distinction between simple memory and the nature of the experience he wishes to record: Mary Hardy is described as "dwelling on such dead themes, not as one who remembers but rather as one who sees". The image of sight illuminates the specificity and concreteness of the past. Memory is made physical rather than cerebral, and most significantly, it assumes form. It is this assumption of form that allows Hardy to discard the sense of memory as a solitary, interior and passive activity, and allows for the possibility of dynamic interaction between the persona and the past. The haunting is significant for its capacity to vouchsafe at very least the possibility of vision, and at best the capacity for address and touch, for its transformation of memory into dialogue and drama.

The haunting image manifests itself in a number of distinct ways in the poems. As I suggested in the previous chapter, it is useful in distinguishing the intensity of memory that Hardy at times evokes from more simple, casual memory, where the image is applied to the poem rather than explicitly manipulated within the poem. Here the haunting image describes Hardy's attempts in these poems to present memory as so acute that it assumes form exterior to the mind of the persona, so that "episode comes back in

pantomime"(2), and where the poems are informed not simply by the desire to recollect, but by the desire to invest the past with such vitality that it eclipses the present. Even when ghosts are not present, the past is recalled with such strength that the sense of sight and presence are conveyed.

The image of a haunting emerges explicitly in those poems in which the longevity of the past, and its capacity to intrude into the present, expresses itself in images of ghostly presences insinuating themselves into the poet's experience. In poems such as "Something Tapped" or "A Night in November" the insistence of the past emerges in the evanescent touches of moth and leaf; barely there, they convey the elusive presence of the past, the sense of gesture and voice almost, but not quite materializing. The frequency of images of phantoms coupled with images of flame, haze, mist, wind, moths and falling leaves, suggests Hardy's sensitivity to the lingerings of the past and his sense of the continuum between past and present. In other poems, Hardy's concern is not with the almost perceptible touch of the past, but with its forceful tangibility. In these poems memory yields not simply brief intimations of presence, but a full-bodied replay of the past. Phantom shapings are replaced by actual ghosts, capable of invitation to and interaction with the poem. Memory vouchsafes an embodying of the past with vivid ghosts who return "just as they were".

The poems whose concern is the return of the past whether expressed as profound memory, phantom shapings, or extended hauntings rarely begin within the memory. Though the memory may fill the poem, it is almost always contained by the present - that is, the consecration of the past occurs within the mind of a speaker located in the present. Hardy tends to record within the first stanza the process of or impetus for recall so that we follow his traversal of the "tract of time"(3).

For Hardy memory is primarily associative. Memory is rarely a random or autonomous meditation on the past, but rather occurs when "a throe from the past awakens a sense of that time"(4). That "throe from the past" is made possible because of Hardy's sense that time should not be viewed as a progression from past to present, but rather as a simultaneity or overlapping of tenses; the present is perceived as a vessel into which the past flows and which is itself changed and reshaped by that inflow. At times then, the impetus for memory is the poet's discovery of the shaping of the present by the past or of the dependancy of the present on the past.

That discovery may occur when the poet perceives that an object which he holds or sees is literally and metaphysically imprinted by the past. Touched by people now dead, the object still preserves their identity. In the indelibility of touch, in the inerasability of

association between the self and its possessions Hardy perceives an extension and preservation of human identity. *The haunting is a testament* then to the durability of the touch of the dead, the impress of their fingers allows the object to speak for the past. For Hardy it is not the absolute form of the object which is significant, but rather the changed form, the reshaping of the object: "...the beauty of association is entirely superior to the beauty of aspect and a beloved relative's old battered tankard to the finest Greek vase".(5) The beauty of the tankard lies precisely in its existence as a possession of the dead, and its malleability of form. The inferiority of the Greek vase lies in its autonomy and its unalterability.

In "Old Furniture" the capacity of the imprinted object to render a visioning of the past, to release phantom presences, is explored:

I know not how it may be with others
  Who sit amid relics of householdry
That date from the days of their mothers' mothers,
  But well I know how it is with me
    Continually.

I see the hands of the generations
  That owned each shiny familiar thing
In play on its knobs and indentations,
  And with its ancient fashioning
    Still dallying:

Hands behind hands, growing paler and paler,
  As in a mirror a candle-flame
Shows images of itself, each frailer
  As it recedes, though the eye may frame
    Its shape the same.

On the clock's dull dial a foggy finger,
  Moving to set the minutes right

With tentative touches that lift and linger
  In the wont of a moth on a summer night
    Creeps to my sight.

On this old viol, too, fingers are dancing -
  As whilom - just over the strings by the nut,
The tip of a bow receding, advancing
  In airy quivers, as if it would cut
    The plaintive gut.

And I see a face by that box for tinder,
  Glowing forth in fits from the dark,
And fading again, as the linten cinder
  Kindles to red at the flinty spark,
    Or goes out stark.

Well, well. It is best to be up and doing,
  The world has no use for one to-day
Who eyes things thus - no aim pursuing!
  He should not continue in this stay,
    But sink away.

Hardy imagines a perpetuity of touch; the objects' irregularities, their "knobs" and "indentations" that are the testament of the lives of past generations, continue to invite their presence. It is human handling that defines the function of the clock, the violin and the tinderbox; the stopped clock, silent violin, extinguished tinderbox are simply inert shells, touched, they acquire function and meaning. Hardy envisages a fundamental reciprocity between object and handler; the object 'brought to life' by human touch, in turn continues to maintain and revive that touch. Something like a genie's lamp, objects store and release the past.

In the ~~final~~ penultimate stanza the process of memory, its stirring, dissipation and rearousal, is implicitly compared to the glow, fading and rekindling of the tinderbox flame. The

brief spurts of flame momentarily illuminate the past; its extinction - "or goes out stark" - signifies the damping of memory and the return to the unilluminated present evoked by the prosy quality of "well, well" and the flat banality of language in the final stanza.

One of the most interesting examples of the imprinted object which triggers the haunting is the musical instrument, a concrete symbol for the vocality of the past. In "A Duettist to Her Pianoforte" the persona addresses the piano in an anguished attempt to close the lid on memory. The intermeshing of music and memory is made explicit in the description of the haunting insistence of the past; in the phrase "upping ghosts press achefully", "press" evokes the striking of the keys and "upping" the return of the keys to their former position. The poignancy of the poem derives from its emphasis on the equal pain attendant on the repression of and invitation to memory; the silent piano epitomizes and intensifies the silence of death, its music emphasizes the singleness of the duettist. The ambiguity of attitude to memory is manifest in the disparity between sense and sound in the adjectives that end each stanza, "hushed, hushed, hushed", "dead, dead, dead", "mute, mute, mute", where the meaning is silence, yet where the spondee evokes the striking of a note. In the denial of sound, sound echoes, in the insistence on forgetfulness, memory insists.

It is interesting to consider this poem in relation to "To My Father's Violin". Here the meditation on the finality of death, *the negation of any possibility of a haunting is* occasioned by a meditation on the decayed violin. The silence of the violin imposed by the decaying agency of time becomes an image for the voicelessness of the past; because the object which carries the past decays, the past itself fades, becomes powerless to assert itself.

If the contemplation of objects acts as impetus for memory, for the discovery of the lingering of the past in the present, so too does the contemplation of landscape. Like objects landscape witnesses and records; like objects it may be shaped and redefined by the past. The viewer, perceiving a kind of tremor in the scene he confronts, becomes aware of a past event evident as a pulse-beat on the screen of landscape, and watches vestigial lingerings expand into hauntings. If the association between object and past is often tenuous and fragile, fading and crumbling as the object itself does, only as durable as the thing itself, the association of past and place is most often *perceived as* inviolable. For Hardy place is more than simply the background to or vessel for experience; rather it is a participant in experience. In "Neutral Tones" the content of the memory is both a face and the scene. In the final line: "Your face and the God-curst sun, and a tree, and a pond edged with grayish leaves", the effect of the sequence is not to suggest the predominance of the face but

rather the simultaneous perception of all elements of the vision. Landscape and face are interfused in an act of mutual definition.

The inviolability of association between experience and landscape is emphasized in the recurrent images of pilgrimage and exile; the persona goes back to scenes of past experience; like a pilgrim to a shrine he returns to commemorate and sanctify the past, or conversely as in "Wessex Heights" or "In a Cathedral City" the poet exiles himself or inverts his quest so that his search is not for a vivid rescreening, but for the blank-sheeted oblivion of unfamiliar places:

> Since nought bespeaks you here, or bears,
> As I, your imprint through and through,
> Here might I rest, till my heart shares
> The spot's unconsciousne.s of you!

In "The Figure in the Scene" and "Why Did I Sketch" placed adjacent to each other in Moments of Vision and both transcribed from old notes, Hardy explores the capacity of landscape to fix experience. In "Why Did I Sketch" the empty landscape is neutral; once it contains human experience it becomes significant, and more profoundly, makes pained memory mandatory. The immutability of landscape becomes paradoxically a reminder of mutability since it eternally holds what is eternally lost.

In "The Figure in the Scene" the relationship between transience and permanence is made more complex. The effect of the rain on the sketch is a paradigm of the effect of time; the rain blurs the outline as time effaces the individual; the blurred picture prefigures change and death. Juxtaposed, however, with the smudged, effaced figure is the ineffacable, unchangeable landscape - the cragged slope persists impervious to time. The poem, in its opposition of the gauzy insubstantiality of the form and the rocky solidity of the crag, presents two forces of nature in dynamic opposition, the rain and the slope, one effacing, one preserving. The paradox that the poem presents is that landscape preserves the moment of change; the ghost haunting the slope and participating in its immutability is the rainy blurred form.

The present from which the gangway to the past is launched is almost uniformly bleak, and the meditating persona almost uniformly alone, placed most often before dim, half-lit firesides, in graveyards, ruins or dawn bedrooms. The stirrings of a haunting are prompted by the isolation of the mind within an inscrutable and unsignifying universe, and the retreat of the self into a knowable past. The vision of experience summed up in "To an Unborn Pauper Child": "The Doomsters heap / Travails and teens around us here, / And Time-wraiths turn our song-singings to fear", can be transformed by memory and replaced by the illuminated companionability of the past.

The poems of remembrance suggest that for Hardy the expansive and recreative capacity of memory is a response to a sense of loss or to the limitedness and barren rationality of the present. The poems become an exploration of the power or helplessness of memory to combat that limitedness, to assert the primacy of the past over the present. Through the medium of achieved or failed hauntings Hardy suggests that memory may either wrest the past from oblivion and invest it with such intensity that it displaces the present, or it may simply confirm the impossibility of the past eclipsing the present, the impossibility of the past transcending its pastness.

"Logs on the Hearth" begins with an apparent assertion of irrevocable pastness, of the triumph of "derisive time":

The fire advances along the log
  Of the tree we felled,
Which bloomed and bore striped apples by the peck
  Till its last hour of bearing knelled.

The fork that first my hand would reach
  And then my foot
In climbings upward inch by inch, lies now
  Sawn, sapless, darkening with soot.

Where the bark chars is where, one year,
  It was pruned, and bled -
Then overgrew the wound. But now, at last,
  Its growings all have stagnated.

My fellow-climber rises dim
  From her chilly grave -
Just as she was, her foot near mine on the bending limb,
  Laughing, her young brown hand awave.

December 1915

The first three stanzas concentrate on the consumption of the log by the fire, and are shaped by the contrast between tree and log, between the organic and the inanimate, the "bearing" and the "stagnant", without any explicit reference to his dead sister. The poem becomes a meditation on transience and mortality, the consumed log an emblem for all death so that the poem is transformed from description into elegy. The movement of the poem should be towards the final conflagration, the tree become ash, but Hardy does not allow the progression towards nullity. In the last stanza the poem expands into memory; the "fellow climber" absent from the first three stanzas, and dead as the tree is, appears and reverses the expected process. The log does not become ash, instead it is reconstituted in memory and restored to suppple vitality and motion ("the bending limb"). What is most striking however is that the haunting of the final stanza seems to be triggered by the fire itself by the contemplation of the agent of destruction, the emblem of time. Implicit in the final stanza is the movement of the fire; the rising smoke of the flames evokes the dim rising *of the ghost, her laughter echoes the crackle of the fire,* and the energetic wave of the hand must evoke the leaping movement of the flame. Paradoxically it is through the contemplation of death and transience that the vision of permanence asserts itself: "Just as she was, her foot near mine on the bending limb, / Laughing, her young, brown hand awave".

"Just as she was", a formula of the haunting poems, asserts an unchanging identity immune to the nullifying agency of time; the "bending limb" with its connotation of suppleness and dance reverses the image of the felled, sapless trunk. Equally, the stilled corpse is transformed into the climbing, laughing girl. The poem then foretalls its expected ending, redirects its tone and transforms itself from elegy into celebration.

By contrast in "During Wind and Rain" remembrance cannot obliterate the facts of transience and mortality. The images of the past, however vital and immediate are powerless against the insistence of the present. The poem does not allow for the almost miraculous emergence of the past as "Logs on the Hearth" does. "During Wind and Rain" presents rather a complex pattern of impingement and intrusion by the present on the past so that memory is eroded by present observation. The poem makes manifest the disjunction between two kinds of seeing, the immediate, what one sees outside oneself, and the inner, what one perceives when one looks inward and backward:

They sing their dearest songs -
He, she, all of them - yea,
Treble and tenor and bass,
And one to play;
With the candles mooning each face...
Ah, no; the years O!
How the sick leaves reel down in throngs!

They clear the creeping moss -
Elders and juniors - aye,
Making the pathways neat
And the garden gay;
And they build a shady seat...
Ah, no; the years, the years;
See, the white storm-birds wing across!

They are blithely breakfasting all -
Men and maidens - yea,
Under the summer tree,
With a glimpse of the bay,
While pet fowl come to the knee...
Ah, *no; the years O!*
And the rotten rose is ript from the wall.

They change to a high new house,
He, she, all of them - aye,
Clocks and carpets and chairs
On the lawn all day
And brightest things that are theirs...
Ah, no; the years, the years;
Down their carved names the rain-drop ploughs.

The erosion of the past by the present is suggested by the persistent relocation of the persona; momentarily transfixed in the past by the memory, he is rudely and unavoidably re-transported back to the graveyard in which he stands. The final lines of each stanza: "How the sick leaves reel down in throngs!", "See the white storm-birds wing across!", "And the rotten rose is ript from the wall", "Down their carved names the rain-drop ploughs" clearly describe the present reality in which the persona is located. The violent destructiveness of the present storm seems at first reading to obliterate utterly the warm interiors and tamed gardens of the memory, yet Hardy allows the evocation of the graveyard present to work in a more complex way; the storm simultaneously effaces the past and impels it, memory is both damped and triggered by the

contrast between the past and present so that the graveyard at once sparks inner vision and confirms its tenuousness.

In the first stanza the last line, "How the sick leaves reel down in throngs!" provides an explicit contrast with the rest of the stanza. The vision of the intertwining of light and warmth in the music and the song is displaced by the "drunken dance of death"(6) but the implication is that it is the contemplation of the reel of the sick leaves that has evoked the joyous musical reel of the memory.

In the second and third stanzas Hardy creates a complex interplay between the refrain and the content so that the memory in the third stanza is overshadowed by the refrain of the second stanza, and the memory of the second stanza is belatedly destroyed by the coda of the third stanza: "See, the white storm-birds wing across!" with its suggestion of the wild flurry of wings contrasts dramatically and violently with the homey domesticity of the "pet fowl (who) come to the knee". The line also effects a dramatic change of perspective, the defined and stable vision of tree, breakfast table and the glimpse of the bay is overshadowed and diminished by the driven flight, the blurred rush and immediacy of white feathers, sky and storm. The clearing and ordering activities of the second stanza are rendered futile by the line ending the third stanza "And the rotten rose is ript from the wall". The harshness of the alliterated "r" reinforces the

violence of the action of nature and suggests the pathos of the careful deliberateness of the verbs in "They clear the creeping moss", "making the pathways neat", "And they build a shady seat".

The seepage of present reality into the memory of the past is suggested not only by the pattern of echoes between memory and observation, but by the nature of the memory itself. The persona's increasing awareness of his own exposure, of the storm, of the power of time and nature emblematized in the gravestones he confronts, shapes the changing content of the memories. The vision of the first stanza is one of warm interior domesticity. The second, third and fourth stanzas are located outside, the fourth stanza in particular creates the sense, in the bright jumble of furniture of an almost disquieting exposure and vulnerability. While the first three stanzas concentrate on the domesticity and communality of action, singing, clearing, breakfasting, the fourth stanza concentrates merely on change; clocks, carpets and chairs lie outside "all day", human presence and intervention noticeably absent. Here again the content of the memory seems influenced by the contemplation of ultimate change symbolized by the gravestone, and the lessening of emphasis on human activity seems a function of the awareness of the stilling agency of time that annuls all action.

Throughout the poem Hardy entrenches the contrast between the description of the memory and the description of the present. In his evocation of the memory, Hardy draws on exact and detailed pictures; he evokes the specificity, unity and inclusiveness of a peopled world. By contrast in the evocation of the present which punctures and annuls memory, Hardy does not present a highly developed, specific description. His focus is rather on the immediacy of flight and fall, his concern is with the wildness and force of the storm, evoked by "reel", "wing", "ript". Only in the final stanza does Hardy allow the wild, flurried movement to slow to the deliberate and exacting "plough". Stone and water asserting the power and dominance of time assume prominence. Human identity petrifies into carved names, and the force of the adjectives, "high", "new" and "bright", is vitiated by the insistent reality of the stone. In "During Wind and Rain", memory is ultimately dwarfed by the present. If "Logs on the Hearth" celebrates the triumph of memory over time, "During Wind and Rain" suggests its frailty, its incapacity to overcome the insistent presence of "the years, the years".

It is Hardy's sense of the pervasiveness of decay and death and the debilitating agency of time that prompts the need for the smiling, speaking, inviting presence of the ghosts. The haunting with its investment of the past with movement, speech and feeling assuages the sense of loss and isolation and vivifies the place where "moles labour" and "spiders

knit" as a simple remembering cannot do.

The haunting is used by Hardy as an image for memory precisely because a haunting is a denial and replacement of the "real", or the immediately visible. It is Hardy's profound longing for the alteration and transformation of the actual that motivates and triggers the memory; in memory the past is recalled, uninjured and undistorted by time. Most significantly, the one unalterable reality, death, can be imaginatively transcended. In the context of a haunting, death can be perceived as temporary or illusory and memory becomes creative, literally life inspiring and triumphant over time and mortality.

In "Could I but Will", the subject of the poem is that longing for the suspension of the real; it juxtaposes what the persona wills with what he knows to be true. The poem presents "a visioning of the impossible" as antidote to the implicit knowledge of isolation, exclusion, stasis, death and time:

> COULD I but will,
> Will to my bent,
> I'd have afar ones near me still,
> And music of rare ravishment,
> In strains that move the toes and heels!
> And when the sweethearts sat for rest
> The unbetrothed should foot with zest
> Ecstatic reels.

Could I be head,
Head-god, 'Come, now,
Dear girl,' I'd say, 'whose flame is fled,
Who liest with linen-banded brow,
Stirred but by shakes from Earth's deep core -'
I'd say to her: 'Unshroud and meet
That Love who kissed and called thee Sweet! -
Yea, come once more!'

Even half-god power
In spinning dooms
Had I, this frozen scene should flower,
And sand-swept plains and Arctic glooms
Should green them gay with waving leaves,
Mid which old friends and I would walk
With weightless feet and magic talk
Uncounted eves.

The poem for all its apparent naieveté and melodic simplicity presents a careful and complex progression, a deepening series of impossibilities. In the first stanza the persona moves from a willing of the bridging of distance, the annihilation of spatial separation, to a willing of the annihilation of all separation emblematized in the ecstatic dance in which all, even the unbetrothed - the single and the isolated - are included.

The first stanza provides the impetus for the articulated desire of the second stanza not simply the bridging of distance, but a healing of the ultimate separation imposed by death. The contemplation of the generalized lovers has given way to a vision of individual lovers and the envisaging of the ecstatic dance has been succeeded by an awareness of the subjection of the solitary corpse to the deep, eternal rhythms of earth and time.

Hardy presents the wish of the final stanza as less than the wish of resurrection articulated in the second stanza, as demanding only half-god power rather than the agency of a head-god needed to recall the dead, but it is the final wish which is ultimately most profound, most impossible and which embraces the longings of the first two stanzas. The expressed wish is for a change in time itself. What the poet wills is a change in the eternal rhythms of earth, nature and time which make separation, loss and death imperative. The stanza expresses a longing for the transformation of winter into an endless summer. The line 'should green them gay with waving leaves' expresses an unending dynamism, emphasized by the use of 'green' as verb, and suggests time suspended but not static. The vision of time is extended and intensified in the image of "men with weightless feet", unbound by the rigid laws of nature, indulging in endless conversation in unmeasured time. "Could I but Will" becomes then an evocation of the possibilities of the haunting, of what the haunting allows in response to the constraints of reality.

The attractiveness of the haunting image lies for Hardy in its positive capacity to suggest the presentation and framing of a past moment, simultaneously invested with life and remote from the grip of wasting experience. But if this is one of the most commanding reasons for the choice of the haunting as image, Hardy's use of the haunting is by no means uniform. The haunting is not always an echoed

moment of perfection, nor is the response of the persona always one of yearning and joyous recognition. If the haunting is at times a yearned-for revelation, it may also be a grotesque and frightening visitation, and the response of the persona may be crouching horror and retreat rather than joy.

If the responses of the persona to a haunting are various, differing or ambiguous, so too are the descriptions of the ghosts themselves. At times they are described as vaporous, evanescent phantoms, glowing and dimming, imaged in recurrent patterns of mist, fog, flame, wind and moths, intimations of mysterious presences. At other times, they can be vividly distinct identities, hailed repeatedly as "just as they were". They are even simultaneously immediate and elusive, illusion and actuality.

The variousness of presentation of the haunting and the persona's response to it allows Hardy to explore the complexity of memory and the ambiguities in his own response to the process of remembering. The poems present a curious succession of poses, a courting of memory and then a retreat from it, memory envisaged as both burden and denied reward. The restoration of the past may afford the poet a triumphant vision of the transcendance of time or may be the source of fear and guilt and the bearer of recrimination and accusation.

"In the Small Hours" and "A Merry-making in Question" are companion pieces in subject. In both a haunting is evoked through music, but the poems are substantially different in tone and direction and together they elucidate the ambivalence of Hardy's response to the past and to memory itself:

I lay in my bed and fiddled
With a dreamland viol and bow,
And the tunes flew back to my fingers
I had melodied years ago.
It was two or three in the morning
When I fancy-fiddled so
Long reels and country-dances,
And hornpipes swift and slow.

And soon anon came crossing
The chamber in the gray
Figures of jigging fieldfolk -
Saviours of corn and hay -
To the air of 'Haste to the Wedding',
As after a wedding-day;
Yea, up and down the middle
In windless whirls went they!

There danced the bride and bridegroom,
And couples in a train,
Gay partners time and travail
Had longwhiles stilled amain!...
It seemed a thing for weeping
To find, at slumber's wane
And morning's sly increeping,
That Now, not Then, held reign.

Here the response to the fiddling is a ghostly wedding-dance, emblem of joy, unity and perpetuity, epitomised in the phrase "windless whirls". The phrase suggests the supernatural ethereality of the ghosts and connotes the gaiety and vitality of the dance.

In "A Merrymaking in Question", the expressed desire is for the community and joviality of "In the Small Hours", but what is vouchsafed is a macabre dance, a cacophonous, slurred mockery of song:

> 'I will get a new string for my fiddle,
> And call to the neighbours to come,
> And partners shall dance down the middle
> Until the old pewter-wares hum:
> And we'll sip the mead, cyder, and rum!'
>
> From the night came the oddest of answers:
> A hollow wind, like a bassoon,
> And headstones all ranged up as dancers,
> And cypresses droning a croon,
> And gurgoyles that mouthed to the tune.

Harmony and order are absent and the animated graveyard is not suggestive of the transcendence of death, but of death walking. The response of the persona is not the pained regret of "In the Small Hours" but perplexity and recoil. The haunting allows Hardy to explore the shapes of the imagination, to contemplate the grotesque forms bred by longing. What the imagination yields is not the comfort of address but an awareness of the grotesqueries of animation, not a "windless whirl" but the shapings of nightmare. Hardy's comments on Wagner's music in the Life express the same sense of the grotesque possibilities of a haunting: "It was weather and ghost music - whirling of wind and storm, the strumming of a gale on iron railings, the creaking of doors, low screams of entreaty and agony through keyholes, amid which trumpet voices are heard."(7)

The ambiguities and contrasts in the imagining of the woken dead express Hardy's exploration of the nature of memory itself; if some of the poems explore what memory vouchsafes, others explore what it demands. On the one hand, the ghosts, weightless, free, wise, mirroring yet discarding reality, suggest the difficulty of remembering, of pinning down and defining the incorporeal; on the other hand, their shrouded vagueness becomes an emblem of horror, of the persona's sense that the ghosts effect a fettering of the mind. Through the medium of images of repeated visitations and visions which cannot be exorcised, Hardy suggests in poems like "Wessex Heights" or "In Front of the Landscape", that memory can become a kind of madness. Like a haunting memory becomes an inescapable indictment, a concretization of guilt. In these poems, the memory-weighted persona, expelled from the ordinary and the immediate, finds not a rosy, illuminated alternative to the present but a splintered, distorted reflection. The image of forced incarceration used so often as a metaphor for entrapment in the present is transferred to the haunting so that the persona becomes paradoxically trapped in the past, edged claustrophobically into a corner by insistent hordes of ghosts demanding attention and voice. If in some poems memory offers a home to the lost seeker, in others its effect is profoundly alienating. The persona is shunted into a limbo; pressed by the demands of the past he becomes unable to maintain a sense of self while the ghosts of the past jostle with his own identity for prominence.

Freud's discussion of the uncanny is particularly apposite to an analysis of the ambiguities and oppositions in Hardy's presentation of a haunting. Freud's definition of the uncanny as "that class of frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar"(8) expresses precisely the mutation of the haunting from a yearned-for awakening of the persona's past to a focus of horror. Further in his discussion of the etymology of unheimlich (uncanny) and its opposite heimlich (homely) he suggests that while the uncanny is initially defined as the opposite of that which if familiar, the two terms develop in meaning until they achieve congruence. Heimlich comes to mean concealed, obscure, hidden and dangerous:

> Thus heimlich is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, unheimlich. Unheimlich is in some way or other a sub-species of heimlich.(9)

In precisely this manner the haunting which begins as an image of placement, embodying the achievement of a home in which the persona is afforded welcome by forms more familiar and more significant than his strange and distant contemporaries, itself becomes strange and dangerous, the ghosts no longer radiant and inviting, but threatening and obscure. The home afforded by the haunting becomes a trap and the achievement of identity and significance becomes dubious.

Stanzas five to eight of "Wessex Heights" express most profoundly the loneliness and alienation attendant on memory:

> I cannot go to the great grey Plain; there's a figure against the moon,
> Nobody sees it but I, and it makes my breast beat out of tune;
> I cannot go to the tall-spired town, being barred by the *forms now passed*
> For everybody but me, in whose long vision they stand there fast.
>
> There's a ghost at Yell'ham Bottom chiding loud at the fall of the night,
> There's a ghost in Froom-side Vale, thin-lipped and vague, in a shroud of white,
> There is one in the railway train whenever I do not want it near,
> I see its profile against the pane, saying what I would not hear.
>
> As for one rare fair woman, I am now but a thought of hers,
> I enter her mind and another thought succeeds me that she prefers;
> Yet my love for her in its fulness she herself even did not know;
> Well, time cures hearts of tenderness, and now I can let her go.
>
> So I am found on Ingpen Beacon, or on Wylls-Neck to the west,
> Or else on homely Bulbarrow, or little Pilsdon Crest,
> Where men have never cared to haunt, nor women have walked with me,
> And ghosts then keep their distance; and I know some liberty.

The speaker caught, Macbeth-like, in a private accusation sees what no-one else can see. He moves from the unspecified, nameless generality of nightmare with its shadowy elongated forms in stanza five to the equally nightmarish specificity of stanza six. The horror of open

spaces is replaced by the circumscription of the valley or of the railway carriage.

In stanza six the evocation of a giddy turning in all directions, a circle hemmed in by ghosts, reflects the impossibility of retreat from memory. Here memory is perceived not as a coaxing of the past into prominence but as an imperative; liberty is located not within memory but in memorylessness or in oblivion, and the search for shrines and witnessing places is replaced by a quest for places indifferent to human presence.

The iteration of names in the final stanza paradoxically evokes a placelessness; the names are of places where nothing has occurred. Stillness of mind, the dulling of memory are made possible only in the unspeaking nothingness of unfamiliar places. The longing for memorylessness which is the subject of "Wessex Heights" finds repeated echoes in the body of poems and in the Life: "Went to Hatfield, changed since my early visit... The once children are quite old inhabitants. I regretted that the beautiful sunset did not occur in a place of no reminiscences that I might have enjoyed it without their tinge."(10)

It is that "tinge of reminiscences", the repeated hints of lingering presence that dictates Hardy's fondness for the haunting image. The image embodies Hardy's sense of memory's capacity to exhume the past, and further, in

its elasticity it conveys acutely Hardy's sense of the \ iousness of memory. A haunting, like memory, is always compelling, but may be either the realization of a dream, or the bodying of nightmare and may be alternately embraced and evaded. The equivocalness of the image allows Hardy to express his fundamental sense of the ambiguity of memory, an ambiguity which underlies his exploration of the past's claims on him.

CHAPTER III

The capacity of memory to coax the past into form, to invest it with shape and presence is the basis of the haunting metaphor in the poems I have so far been considering. Rambling among the decaying possessions and obscure habitats of the dead, the poet enters a reverie in which the dead transcend their muteness and exile from the present and become vocal or visible, capable of re-enacting the significant past. If this is the typical function and pattern of the haunting in the personal lyrics, it is not the only use to which Hardy sets the haunting image. In poems like those which deal with the Mellstock Quire, Hardy manipulates the haunting image in a manner ostensibly quite different to its exploitation in the personal lyrics; not initially obvious as a metaphor for the workings of memory, for the process of retrieval and recreation, the hauntings function not as image but as narrative device, not as metaphor but as plot. The hauntings here are not an analogue for the process of memory, but events in a fantasy. I would like to suggest that the hauntings of the choir poems apparently so different, share significant features with the hauntings of the personal lyrics; as in the personal lyrics, they express Hardy's sense of the essential supremacy of the past over the present, his vision of the past as an illumined territory to which the poet seeks entry, and, as in the lyrics, the hauntings

express Hardy's sense of the self as being beached in the barren present, bereft of the comforts of the past. In the Mellstock Quire poems too the hauntings are a mode of defining the pastness of the experience described and an image of nostalgia. As in the personal lyrics the hauntings are indicative of the longing to overcome the iron dictates of a faithless universe. In the choir poems the hauntings are a mode of commemoration, as in the personal lyrics they are a mode of remembering; in the personal lyrics, Hardy revivifies his own past, animates his own history, in the choir poems through the medium of ghost stories, fantasies of supernatural events couched in incidents of appearance, visitation and revelation, he imagines a communal history, fantasizes a past not immediately personal, but ancestral and therefore impinging on individual experience.

The choir poems are fashioned around the imagined experiences of the Mellstock Quire among whom Hardy's father and grandfather featured prominently as musicians. Hardy describes them as "half a dozen to ten full-grown players, in addition to the numerous more or less grown up singers (who) were officially occupied with the Sunday routine, and concerned in trying their best to make it an artistic outcome of the combined musical taste of the congregation."(1) If the events of the narrative poems are imagined, the characters are fashioned on real persons whom Hardy identifies in the Life. The choir members feature

incidentally among the rural personages commemorated in the graveyard meditations of "Friends Beyond", "Voices from Things Growing in a Churchyard", and "Transformations", Hardy's elegies for lost communities. They are however the central focus of the narrative poems: "The Rash Bride", "The Dead Quire", "The Choirmaster's Burial", "Winter Night in the Woodlands", "The Paphian Ball" and "Seen by the Waits".

Hardy's treatment of the Mellstock Quire in these narrative poems is significantly different from the extended fictional treatment accorded them in Under the Greenwood Tree and the passing references to them in a number of the short stories.(2) Hardy himself draws attention to the differences between the poetic and fictional treatment and implies that the suggestiveness of poetry, its capacity to divulge essence rather than actuality, renders it a more fitting medium for a truer vision of the choir:

> The practice(s) (of the choir were) kept up by Thomas Hardy the Second, much as described in Under the Greenwood Tree or The Mellstock Quire, though its author Thomas Hardy the Third, invented the personages, incidents, manners, etc., never having seen or heard the choir as such, they ending their office when he was about a year old. He was accustomed to say that on this account he rather burlesqued them, the story not so adequately reflecting as he could have wished in later years the poetry and romance that coloured their time-honoured observances.(3)

In re-reading the narrative after a long interval there occurs the inevitable reflection that the

> realities out of which it was spun were material for another kind of study of this little group of church musicians than is found in the chapters here penned so lightly, ever so farcically and flippantly at times. But circumstances would have rendered any aim at a deeper, more essential, more transcendant handling inadvisable at the date of writing; and the exhibition of the Mellstock Quire in the following pages must remain the only extant one, except for the few glimpses of that perished bond which I have given in verse elsewhere.(4)

The fictional treatment of the choir in Under the Greenwood Tree is markedly naturalistic, focused on the delineation of the comedies of rural speech and actions, with the choir members, an often burlesqued bunch of rustics. In the poetry, however, they are the centre of a series of Christmas events, privy to revelations and visitations. The choir members in the poetry are not comic, but invested with moral stature, recipients and sources of grace, the foci of regeneration. It is clear that in refashioning his presentation of the choir in the poems, Hardy locates his "transcendant handling" precisely in the familiarity of the choir with ghosts, omens, and portents, and in their susceptibility to and immersion in the supernatural.

In the poems, the choir members are depicted as familiars of a radiant, meaning-laden world, participants in traditions and rituals that invest experience with meaning. But if their familiarity with the supernatural is the source of their attractiveness, it is simultaneously an

image of their obsoleteness. The ghost narratives define and locate the choir as belonging to an irrevocable past, an era in which revelation is not only possible but natural and anticipated. The hauntings and revelations of the narrative poems are here, as in the personal lyrics, an *index of loss, of* the disappearance or unattainability of a signifying universe of the kind Hardy mourns in "The Oxen" and "Yuletide in a Younger World". *In the personal* lyrics significance is located in the ties of love, sexual or familial, here in the rituals of faith and in the patterns of community life.

As in the personal lyrics, the hauntings of the choir poems are indicative of Hardy's railing against the dictates of *reality; time,* transience and mortality. The fantasies of the choir poems represent a bulwark against the barren rationality of the present where *revelation and visitation* are so markedly absent. The hauntings represent a focus of longing, an image of yearning for what is acknowledged as impossible in a mundane present. In "Winter Night in Woodland ", against the realities of fox-hunting, bird-baiting and smuggling that persist unchanged, the choir makes its rounds, separate, mysterious, benign, embodying a dream of *good will, faith and communality:*

> And then, when the night has turned twelve the air brings
> From dim distance, a rhythm of voices and strings:
> 'Tis the quire, just afoot on their long yearly rounds,

To rouse by worn carols each house in their bounds;
Robert Penny, the Dewys, Mail, Voss, and the rest;
till anon
Tired and thirsty, but cheerful, they home to their
beds in the dawn.

"The men of the old quire, with the names of Under the Greenwood Tree pass on their long rounds singing 'worn carols', the only people in the poem neither cruel, nor selfish, nor furtive, engaged on a civilized ritual for the benefit of others."(5)

In "The Choirmaster's Burial" the difference between past and present and the function of the haunting in defining a nostalgia for a gentler, more inviting past is made explicit. The new vicar's dismissal of the choirmaster's request for the playing of the psalm over his grave as "old fashioned" and the desire to get the burial over with quickly, expose the hollowness of modern faith, its imperviousness to mystery and miracle that is the essence of the choir's faith. The haunting of the poem is a mode of redressing the callousness of the present and annulling its gracelessness. Clothed all in white, luminous as a stained glass window, the singing and playing ghosts re-instate the mystery and benevolence of the past that Hardy mourns:

But 'twas said that, when
At the dead of next night
The vicar looked out,
There struck on his ken
Thronged roundabout,
Where the frost was graying

The headstoned grass,
A band all in white
Like the saints in church-glass,
Singing and playing
The ancient stave
By the choirmaster's grave.

The haunting of "The Dead Quire", like that of "The Choirmaster's Burial", exposes the gulf between past and present and functions too as an exposure of the barrenness of the present. The poem juxtaposes two Christmases, the one past, melodious, dignified and illumined, the other present, boisterous, cacophonous, divested of significance. The poem opens with the statement of the death both of the old quire and the Christmas they make possible:

III

'Old Dewy lay by the gaunt yew tree,
And Reuben and Michael a pace behind,
And Bowman with his family
By the wall that the ivies bind.

IV

'The singers had followed one by one,
Treble, and tenor, and thorough-bass;
And the worm that wasteth had begun
To mine their mouldering place.

V

'For two-score years, ere Christ-day light,
Mellstock had throbbed to strains from these;
But now there echoed on the night
No Christmas harmonies.

VI

'Three meadows off, at a dormered inn,
The youth had gathered in high carouse,
And, ranged on settles, some therein
Had drunk them to a drowse.

VII

'Loud, lively, reckless, some had grown,
Each dandling on his jigging knee
Eliza, Dolly, Nance, or Joan -
Livers in levity.

The "Christmas harmonies" of stanza five function here as a pun to suggest the absence of both the music and the order which the choir provides. Through the medium of the haunting of the poem, Hardy is able to imagine the restoration of melody and order, to make possible a halting of the decline of faith and to assert the supremacy and perpetuity of the past over the present. As is common in the personal lyrics, the haunting vouchsafes the opportunity for remorse, atonement and change. The haunting by the choir or their irreverent and careless descendents arrests and reverses their moral degeneration:

T'was said that of them all, not one
Sat in a tavern more.

At the end of the poem the almost exact repetition of stanza three in stanza twenty-three defines the nature of the journey undertaken in the poem:

XXIII

'There Dewy lay by the gaunt yew tree,
There Reuben and Michael, a pace behind,
And Bowman with his family
By the wall that the ivies bind....

The procession of the sinful descendants after the ghostly choir leads back to the graveyard; while stanza three

suggests the irrevocable pastness of the choir and all they represent, its repetition at the end of the poem suggests that their death is not as final as first envisaged, that the values they embody do not moulder with them, but have resonance and effect.

The need for a re-assessment of the graveyard is suggested by the replacement of the period that closes stanza three by the ellipsis of stanza twenty-three; arrest and finality are replaced by lingering possibility. "The Dead Quire's" evocation of a vivified graveyard allies it with poems like "Transformations" and "Voices from Things Growing in a Churchyard" with their similar presentation of the continuity of voice of the dead and the persistence of the past.

In "The Paphian Ball" subtitled "Another Christmas experience of the Mellstock Quire", the choir members themselves are the recipients of grace and are vouchsafed the opportunity for atonement. In the fantasies of the choir poems, the surrender to the devil's temptation can be utterly erased and replaced by an expanded, transcendant celebration of faith:

> 'We've heard you many times,' friends said,
> But like <u>that</u> never have you played!
>
> '<u>Rejoice, ye tenants of the earth</u>
> <u>And celebrate your Saviour's birth</u>,
>
> 'Never so thrilled the darkness through,
> Or more inspired us so to do!'...

The visitations and miracles of "The Paphian Ball" suggest that for Hardy, the choir represents the realization of a dream of a harmonious universe, impervious to the demands and temptations of ordinary experience.

The hauntings and visitations of the choir poems are allied to the hauntings of the personal lyrics in a further significant way; one of the typical patterns of the personal lyrics is a following of the speaker's entry into a reverie in which the past is re-animated, and his jolting return to the present where the haunting is exposed as fantasy and dream, and the demands of the present reassert their claim on the grieving self. In "The Dead Quire", "The Choirmaster's Burial" and "The Paphian Ball", the hauntings are bracketed by disclaimers, or statements which dislodge the fantasies of the poems and relocate us in the present:

> The sad man ceased; and ceased to heed
> His listener, and crossed the leaze
> From Mooring Hill towards the mead -
> The Mead of Memories.
>
> (The Dead Quire)

> Such the tenor man told
> When he had grown old
>
> (The Choirmaster's Burial)

> — The man who used to tell this tale
> Was the tenor-viol, Michael Mail;
>
> *Yes; Mail the tenor, now* but earth! —
> I give it for what it may be worth.
>
> (The Paphian Ball)

The tellers of the tales of the poems are identified as sad, old or dead. The poems end uniformly with a reminder of the claims of time and mortality and the fragility of the choir and its members. The function of these endings here, as in the personal lyrics, seems to be to suggest the tenuousness of the fantasies imagined and to convey the sense of a survivor isolated in a present resistant to the possibilities afforded by the hauntings. Hardy is at pains to qualify the hauntings, to pair his longing for the persistence of the values the choir embodies with an awareness of their passing.

The choir poems, like much of Hardy's work, are elegaic in content and tone; in all these poems Hardy is engaged in the commemoration and mourning of an era and experience he acknowledges as irrevocably lost. The narratives of appearances, revelations and miracles that are Hardy's mode of commemoration define the pastness of the choir while they celebrate its embodiment of an unattainable innocence.

CHAPTER IV

Occasioned by the death of Hardy's wife Emma, the poems of 1912-1913 share the concerns of Hardy's work to that date; the contemplation of death and transience, the solitariness of the bereft survivor, the submission to knowledge which comes too late. But the poems are more than a distillation of the subjects of Hardy's poetry and though their focus is the contemplation of death, they are distinguished from poems mourning the passing of communities or forgotten ancestors, the elegies for dead poets or the famous dead in deserted shrines.(1) Their distinctness lies partly in the proximity of death to the speaker, in the intimacy of the relationship which death disrupts. Closest in tone to the poems which mourn the death of his mother, or sister, or Tryphena Sparks, they assert their uniqueness because the relationship which death disrupts so finally is a marriage, because the ultimate separation imposed by death has already been adumbrated by the estrangement of husband and wife. The unique poignancy of the 1912-1913 poems lies in their unrelenting comparison of a separation, self imposed and fostered, and a separation enforced and unalterable. In no other poems does Hardy provide a more extended examination of the facts of mortality, the shut grave, the finality of absence, the indifference of the dead to all human claims and assertions, or a more complex meditation

on the struggle between reconciliation with or rebellion against those facts.

The twin concerns of the poems, the all-altering finality of death and the undoing of self which are set out in the first poem of the sequence, "The Going", lead Hardy to an exploration of the relationship between the living and the dead, and to an awareness of the fundamental paradoxicality at the heart of that relationship: how can death which ends all relationship bring new relationship, on what can communication between the living and the insensate corpse be predicated? The paradox is both resolved and heightened by the image of the ghost.

The ghost is the central figure of the sequence, almost every poem formed around its presence or absence, around revelation or blankness: the image allows for the imagining of an opportunity for atonement, address to and response from the dead, an annulling of the dual separations of estrangement and death. Simultaneously the image calls attention to itself as simply that, a fiction, a fantasy, which reveals the inadequacy of the imagination in combating the insistent factuality of death. The image of the ghost carries the weight of Hardy's simultaneous acknowledgement of the impossibility of translating regret to the dead, and the value of imagining it possible.

The overwhelming weight of the sequence is towards the assertion of absence. Those poems in which the ghost edges into being are often marked by profound ambiguity; the comfort vouchsafed by the visitation is counterweighed by the poet's deliberate focusing on the illusoriness of the image, or on the chasm between the vague insubstantiality of the phantom, and the vivid presence of the woman when alive. In almost all the poems in which a haunting is presented, Hardy allows the unalterable and the possible to tug at each other so that neither comfort nor despair is given prominence. It is only in 'At Castle Boterel' that Hardy allows a vision of possibility, of affirmation, to triumph, but the affirmation remains discrete, held in check within the poem, its applicability beyond the poem called into question by the nature of the poems which follow it.

The sequence is marked most evidently by its embeddedness in place. Numerous critics have pointed to the pilgrimage structure of journey and return, elucidated by Hardy himself, which the sequence assumes. Donald Davie in particular, points to the correspondence of Hardy's journey with Aeneas' journey to the underworld. He further divides the sequence into three sections corresponding to the three locations of the sequence:

> And so if we say that the landscapes presented so insistently in the "Poems of 1912-1913 are so many stations in a personal purgatory, we can

> mean something quite precise: we mean that each locality - and there are three of them, *Dorset* around Max Gate, Plymouth, and North Cornwall around Boscastle - is presented as the *location*, the haunt and habitat of some one particular moral proclivity or principle. *Max Gate* is the landscape of treason, Boscastle (Beeny Cliff, St Juliot) is the landscape of *loyalty and love*. (2)

While the presence of three *locations* is clearly evident, Davie fails to acknowledge the ambiguities inherent in the presentation of each *location*, and most particularly in Hardy's presentation of Boscastle. Boscastle is not unmitigatedly the scene of triumph, affirmation and revelation. Rather it is consistently shadowed by doubt, pain and grief. Nor does Davie draw attention to Hardy's blatant emphasis on the differences between the solitary returning tracker and the young lovers of forty years ago, a difference which the sameness of the landscape cannot readily eclipse.

Davie's schema of three rigidly distinct and defined landscapes which preclude the imputation of blame and remorse, or the validity of the longing for reversal and renewal, belies the more jagged, uncertain movement of the poems, the opening of contexts of seemingly unalterable grief to momentary hope and vision, and the bracketing or implosion of moments of affirmation by defeat, failure and retreat.

The sequence opens with three poems, "The Going", "Your

Last Drive", and "The Walk" which attest to the impenetrable finality of death. In both "The Going" and "Your Last Drive", the final stanzas assert the futility of remorse, and the impossibility of change. In "The Going" the finality of death is brought to the fore through the heightened contrast between the present and the past. The present is defined as an absence or a negation, described only in terms of darkness and emptiness:

> Till in darkening dankness
> The yawning blankness
> Of the perspective sickens me!

The description of the present as a dark vacuum is placed against the vivid fullness of the description of the past:

> You were she who abode
> By those red-veined rocks far West,
> You were the swan-necked one who rode
> Along the beetling Beeny Crest,
> And, reigning nigh me,
> Would muse and eye me,
> While life unrolled us its very best.

The past is described as mysterious and bright, the rocks themselves are invested with vitality through the coinage "red-veined". The exactitude of movement, the evocation of vital grace suggested by 'swan-necked', plays implicitly against the irreversible stillness of the corpse. Most significantly the lovers are remembered not as victims of time, but as its privileged audience, or as royalty, themselves admired by time, both associations evoked by the metaphor of life "unrolling its very best".

The celebration of the past in the fourth stanza is not sustained; the last stanzas mourn the tardiness and frailty of memory; incapable of repairing the rift between the estranged couple while the woman is alive, it is helpless in healing the rift that death opens. The poem ends with a pained assertion of the finality of death, the swallowing of the vivid brightness of the past by the blankness of the present: .

> Well, well! All's past amend,
> Unchangeable. It must go.
> I seem but a dead man held on end
> To sink down soon....

In "Your Last Drive", the woman's assertion and welcoming of the indifference of the dead to all approaches of the living seems to demand the denial of the speaker; we expect the persona to assert the possibility of the acceptance of atonement and the expression of remorse, we expect him to deny the insusceptibility of the dead to all human impulses. Instead the final stanza confirms the deafness and stillness of the corpse:

> True: never you'll know. And you will not mind.
> ...
> Yet abides the fact, indeed, the same -
> You are past love, praise, indifference, blame.

Both poems mourn the inevitable blindness attendant on present experience, and the futility of belated vision. The failure to renew the past, to "think of those days long dead, And ere (your) vanishing strive to seek that time's

renewal" is matched in "Your Last Drive" by the failure to perceive approaching death, to divine the future burial spot.

Although the weight of both poems is overwhelmingly towards the assertion of the finality of death, both poems allow for a curious undermining of their own premise. "The Going" is addressed to an absent ghost. The use of the direct voice, the insistent repetition, particularly in the third stanza of 'you', paradoxically invests the woman, whose unalterable stasis the whole poem asserts, with will, power and vitality. The intimation of visitation, however fragile, in

> Why do you make me leave the house
> And think for a breath it is you I see
> At the end of the alley of bending boughs,
> where so often at dusk you used to be;

however convincingly subsumed by the blankness of the present, is allowed a fleeting validity. In "Your Last Drive" in the midst of the speaker's confirmation of the dead woman's assertion of her own indifference, Hardy paradoxically uses the address "Dear Ghost". Past praise, she is still 'dear', incapable of responding to love and regret, she is still its recipient, utterly still she is named a ghost, so that the address serves to refute the assertions of the speaker as he makes them.

In "Rain on a Grave", the subtle intimations of

possibility, the envisaging of address and response, of visitation, are allowed to expand into prominence. The emphasis on the finality of death eases in a vision similar in tone and content to poems like 'Transformations':

Clouds spout upon her
  Their waters amain
  In ruthless disdain, -
Her who but lately
  Had shivered with pain
As at touch of dishonour
If there had lit on her
So coldly, so straightly
  Such arrows of rain:

One who to shelter
  Her delicate head
Would quicken and quicken
  Each tentative tread
If drops chanced to pelt her
  That summertime spills
  In dust-paven rills
When thunder-clouds thicken
  And birds close their bills.

Would that I lay there
  And she were housed here!
Or better, together
Were folded away there
Exposed to one weather
We both, - who would stray there
When sunny the day there,
  Or evening was clear
  At the prime of the year.

Soon will be growing
  Green blades from her mound,
And daisies be showing
  Like stars on the ground,
Till she form part of them -
Ay - the sweet heart of them,
Loved beyond measure
With a child's pleasure
  All her life's round.

  31 Jan. 1913

The concern of the first three poems of the sequence is with the irremediable finality of death; return to the spring haunts of the lovers which can now no longer be undertaken, a walk together which is now impossible. The vision of the poems is a vision of arrested time; death imposes an end to process and annuls the possibilities of change, of reconciliation, of return that are always potential in time. In "Rain on a Grave" the contemplation of rain becomes the medium for a meditation on time itself and allows for a change in the persona's perception of time, for an awareness of time not as stopped but as endlessly cyclical, of death succeeded by growth, stillness by quickening.

The poem opens in the same vein as the poems which precede it; the first two stanzas establish a contrast between the helpless stillness of the corpse exposed to the pounding devastation of the rain and the darting, self-protective retreat of the living woman. The difference between the attacked corpse and retreating woman is made explicit in the double use of "quicken" with its evocation of the quickening of life itself:

> 'One who to shelter
> Her delicate head,
> Would quicken and quicken
> Each tentative tread'.

Vital movement is evoked too by the multiplicity of verbs in the second stanza: "quicken, "pe[illegible]ls".

In the third stanza the vision of time at a standstill is replaced by a vision of the perpetual cyclic nature of time. The fulcrum of transformation is memory, the longing to be together with the dead woman triggers the memory of undivided closeness and draws to the surface a vision of a time when the day was sunny and the evening clear, and a realization that the rain itself is a portent of the return of fine weather. The rain which has occasioned the contemplation of the helpless stillness of the corpse is now perceived not as confirming that stillness but as a elixir revivifying the dead woman. Stillness is replaced by a vision of organic growth in the metaphor of the woman as the heart of the flowers. Stasis and ending are overcome by a transcendant vision of cyclic renewal confirmed by the metaphor comparing the daisies to stars with its suggestion of the unity of heaven and earth, and made explicit by the imaging of life as a 'round', the evocation of circularity combating the cruel linear penetration evoked by "arrows of rain" in the first stanza, and suggesting the placement of death in an unending and uninterrupted cycle.

The poem begins with an evocation of the inimical cruelty of nature and earth, their unrelenting confirmation of the final separation imposed by death; it ends with a vision of earth and nature confirming the temporariness of death, its place in a pattern of renewal and reconstitution. John Wain's comments on the same pattern of restitution offered

by nature in "Transformations", are particularly apposite to "Rain on a Grave":

> "The earth shows love for the dead man, admits him to her innermost sanctuary, allows him to partake in the sacred process of the renewal of life, in this case the life of a tree, but no less a life for that".(3)

This idealization of death, the assuaging of the pain of finality is associated with the idealization of the relationship between the survivor and the dead. The third stanza with its picture of the idyllic union of lovers, heightened by the prominence of a single repeated rhyme lies at the heart of the poem:

> Would that I lay there
> And she were housed here!
> Or better, together
> Were folded away there
> Exposed to one weather
> We both, - who would stray there
> When sunny the day there,
> Or evening was clear
> At the prime of the year.

The vision of mutuality, so strongly contested by the solitary and separate journeys of "Your Last Drive" and "The Walk", makes the evocation of a ghost unnecessary. In the other poems the evocation of a ghost, the desperate tracking of vision, and straining for sound is made imperative by the insistent reminders of an estrangement that now cannot be healed, by the need to imagine the possibility of proffering explanation and atonement and receiving absolution; vision and voice are not pursued in this poem because the grief at the finality of death is not

here intensified by the guilts and bitternesses of estrangement. The unambiguous affirmation that the poem offers, its annulment of the finality o_ death, is then strongly out of tune with the rest of the sequence.

The possibility of transformation envisaged in "Rain on a Grave" is extended in "I Found Her Out There" but here the vision of the dead subsumed into the cyclic pattern of birth, death and renewal gives way to the first explicit and extended imagining of the dead woman as a ghost.

The imagined haunting of "I Found Her Out There", is, as Davie points out, occasioned by the contemplation of Cornwall, but the waking of the ghost is more than a simple response to the contemplation of the landscape of love and loyalty. Rather the emphasis throughout the poem lies on the meditation on the eternal violence and volatility of wind and sea. The accumulation of active verbs expressing the rush and flurry of the elements; "breaks", "shakes", "beats", "sweeps", "smite", "flapped", "tugged", implicitly contrasts with the stillness of death. The poem evokes a process in which the eternity of movement embodied in wind and sea is made to seem more powerful than the eternal stillness of death. In the last stanza the rush of verbs is stilled, the movement expressed in "swells", "sobs", "throbs", is slower and hushed, a deliberate lull is imposed so that the tentative creeping of the shade, movement drawn by movement, can be perceived:

Yet her shade, maybe,
Will creep underground
Till it catches the sound
Of that Western sea
As it swells and sobs
Where she once domiciled,
And joy in its throbs
With the heart of a child

As in "Rain on a Grave" the fulcrum of the haunting is *memory*. When the woman is recalled, vivacious, unique, acutely present, remembered in minute particularity "As a wind-tugged tress flapped her cheek like a flail", when memory asserts the tenacious particularity of the past, a haunting is made possible.

The movement of "Rain on a Grave" and "I Found Her Out There" is profoundly affirmative; in their final evocation of the joyous world of the child, ('child's pleasure' and 'the heart of a child') they suggest the possibility of a return to and recapturing of innocence, they efface the insistent realities of time, age and death and evoke an almost Blakean world of innocence. The movement of the poems that follow is far more tentative and hesitant. The sureness of the possibility of return is erased and replaced by a return to the emphasis of the first poems; the endings imposed by death. In both "Without Ceremony" and "Lament", the concern is with the arrest of all process that is enforced by death:

She is shut, she is shut
From the cheer of them, dead
To all done and said
In her yew-arched bed. ("Lament").

In "The Haunter", "The Voice" and "His Visitor" the blurred indefiniteness of the ghost, its inarticulacy and invisibility suggest the speaker's profound doubts at the possibility of transcendance and return to innocence. In "Lament" the incapacity of the grieving survivor to draw the dead woman back into the "gay junketings of life" is matched by the equal grief and failure of the ghost to reach the living. The insistent refrain of "Lament" "She is shut, she is shut" is paralleled by the plaint

> "Always lacking the power to call to him,
> Near as I reach thereto!"

and the pathetic unspecificity of the address "O tell him!" in "The Haunter". "The Voice" and "His Visitor" act too as companion pieces with the displaced, lost and confused searcher paralleling the unhoused, unfamiliar and confused ghost.

The pattern of denial, affirmation and hesitation at the possibility of a haunting, suggested by the varying tone and content that these first poems assume, invests the sequence with a dramatic and psychological structure shaped by Hardy's attempt to convey the complexity of grief, the overlapping and disparate responses that constitute the reactions of the survivor. The changing redefined attitudes of the poems mime the process of grief, the pulse of despair and hope, reconciliation with and rebellion against the facts of death.

"The Haunter" is the first of the poems to manipulate the image of the ghost so explicitly. With "His Visitor" it brackets "The Voice" so that two poems written in the ghost's voice play against the personal voice invoked in "The Voice". In fact the three poems are centrally concerned with the nature of voice: the loving, forgiving, comforting but unheard voice of "The Haunter", the petulant, bitter withdrawing voice of "His Visitor" ineffectually trailing off into, and welcoming, silen , and the double voices of "The Voice", that of the ghost, faint, illusory, elusive, and the voice of the speaker, pleading, grieving, cajoling. "The Haunter" and "His Visitor" both turn on a double paradox, the articulacy of the ghost speaker goes unheard, its voice wasted. Its capacity to shape explanation, extend forgiveness and express bitterness is futile. At the same time the voice of the ghost is evidently informed by the voice of the poet; the convention of having the poem voiced by the ghost only intensifies the sense of the persona's own voice expressing, through the medium of an assumed voice, his longing for forgiveness and his acute sense of guilt.

By contrast "The Voice" is set apart by the genuine sense we have of the separation of the two voices - the voice of the persona and the voice of the ghost, both calling, both disappearing. The power of the poem derives precisely from its placement between the two unheard utterances of the

ghost: the ambiguous, near voicelessness of "The Voice" is placed against the untransmittable articulacy of "The Haunter" and "His Visitor":

> Woman much missed, how you call to me, call to me,
> Saying that now you are not as you were
> When you had changed from the one who was all to me,
> But as at first, when our day was fair.
>
> Can it be you that I hear? Let me view you, then,
> Standing as when I drew near to the town
> Where you would wait for me: yes, as I knew you then,
> Even to the original air-blue gown!
>
> Or is it only the breeze, in its listlessness
> Travelling across the wet mead to me here,
> You being ever dissolved to wan wistlessness,
> Heard no more again far or near?
>
> *Thus I, faltering forward,*
> *Leaves around me falling,*
> Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward,
> And the woman calling.
>
> December 1912

The echoing rhymes of the opening lines "call to me, call to me", "the one who was all to me" convey the faintness of the voice and the inability of the imagination to distinguish substance from echo. Our straining to understand the shifting, complex syntax, the movement *between near and distant past in the first stanza* aligns us with the straining effort of the persona to define the nature and quality of what he hears.

The tentative haunting of "The Voice", the alternate pulsing and ebbing of vision and sound, permits an imagining of the revivifying of the past, the annulment of change and the establishment of the ascendancy of a particular, chosen moment from the past. The annulling of ultimate, final change - death - is coupled with the annuling of the years of separation imposed by marriage:

> "...you are not as you were
> When you had changed from the one who was all to me,
> But as at first, when our day was fair."

Through the haunting then, death and estrangement can together be relegated to the insignificant, eclipsed by the chosen moment. "The Voice" however never allows the longed-for eclipse to establish itself as unquestionably real or permanent; the voice barely disc[illegible] hardly separable from the moanings of the wind, the [illegible]escence of "air-blue gown" allows the vision to merge with the shapings and dissolutions of mist. The two questions of the central stanzas, (is the sound heard the voice of the woman or merely the breeze?) are unresolved in the final stanza. The alliterated "f" and "th" sounds and the repeated assonance of "or" manipulated throughout the stanza, evoke the insistence of echoes and voices, the beating of sound on the yearning consciousness of the persona. In the final lines

> "Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward,
> And the woman calling"

both wind and voice are acknowledged; the voice transmits neither word nor message, the wind does not blot out the

voice so that the experience remains quintessentially undefined, simultaneously an illusion and a muted revelation.

"The Voice's" reference to "the town where you would wait for me" and its revisioning of the "original air-blue gown" suggest the imaginative transportation of the self to the places the lovers had inhabited together, and inaugurate a new direction in the sequence. The journey imaginatively undertaken in "The Voice" becomes a literal pilgrimage; the longing for vision becomes more urgent in the actual confrontation of the self with the places of the past, the need for the annulment of change more immediate in the face of an unchanged landscape. The focus of the sequence becomes return; Hardy's literal return to Cornwall makes imperative a metaphysical return, the actual "haunting" of old "haunts" intended to evoke the other haunting. If the major location of the sequence has been the graveyard and its major focus the dead woman, the location now becomes the wide landscape of youth, and the focus becomes dual; the ghost so ferociously longed for becomes not simply the ghost of the dead woman but also the ghost of the persona's former self. From "A Dream or No" to "Places" Hardy allows the major focus to become the haunting, realized or denied, in the *landscapes of the past*. The pattern of the sequence follows the alternation of possibility and absence and suggests the pulse of doubt and affirmation that the

persona experiences in the actual location of union. "A Dream or No", which denies a significant relationship between the self and its habitat, is followed by "After a Journey" which confirms the unbreakable linkage of past "haunts" with present haunting. "A Death-Day Recalled" and "Beeny Cliff" which assert the futility of return and the folly of longing for vision and transformation are followed by "At Castle Boterel" where the possibility of the durability of the past expands to near-knowledge and "Places" which invests the past with the second life of memory.

In "A Dream or No", Hardy's certainty of the unbreakable association between the self and the places it knows, his conviction of a literal in-habiting, that is the habits of a life pressed into, indelibly scored onto the world which witnesses them, expresses itself in the central paradox of the poem; because the landscape cannot yield the presence of the woman, it ceases to exist itself. The poem traces a progression in the questions of the final two stanzas; "can she ever have been?" becomes "does the place exist?". The *captured essence evoked in* "*flounce flinging mist*", *the* sense of a magnified and frozen perception of landscape is the counterpart to the slow particularized visioning of the woman: "Fair-eyed and white-shouldered, broad-browed and brown-tressed". The effacing of the unique particularity of the woman makes imperative the corresponding effacement

of the specific landscape. The poem moves to an assertion that if the presence of the woman, so insistently real to the speaker, is to be relegated to a dream, all reality becomes spurious.

By contrast "After a Journey" affirms at least tentatively the validity of the relationship between the self and location, and together with "At Castle Boterel" expands and personalizes the staple of ghost lore, the return of the ghost to the place of significant action:

> Hereto I come to view a voiceless ghost;
> Whither, O whither will its whim now draw me?
> Up the cliff, down, till I'm lonely, lost,
> And the unseen waters' ejaculations awe me.
> Where you will next be there's no knowing,
> Facing round about me everywhere,
> With your nut-coloured hair,
> And gray eyes, and rose-flush coming and going.
>
> Yes: I have re-entered your olden haunts at last;
> Through the years, through the dead scenes I have tracked you;
> What have you now found to say of our past -
> Scanned across the dark space wherein I have lacked you?
> Summer gave us sweets, but autumn wrought division?
> Things were not lastly as firstly well
> With us twain, you tell?
> But all's closed now, despite Time's derision.
>
> I see what you are doing: you are leading me on
> To the spots we knew when we haunted here together,
> The waterfall, above which the mist-bow shone
> At the then fair hour in the then fair weather,
> And the cave just under, with a voice still so hollow
> That it seems to call out to me from forty years ago,
> When you were all aglow,
> And not the thin ghost that I now frailly follow!
>
> Ignorant of what there is flitting here to see,
> The waked birds preen and the seals flop lazily;
> Soon you will have, Dear, to vanish from me,

For the stars close their shutters and the dawn
whitens hazily.
Trust me, I mind not, though Life lours,
The bringing me here; nay, bring me here again!
I am just the same as when
Our days were a joy, and our paths through flowers.

Pentargan Bay

The poem presents the most fully realized haunting of the sequence to this point. It transcends the undefined quality of the haunting in "The Voice", the indistinguishability and merging of voice and wind, vision and mist. But if the haunting is realized, if the vision of a ghost is vouchsafed, the haunting is tempered by the speaker's unsureness about the experience; the haunting is so profoundly sought because what the seeker desires is some confirmation of the insignificance of change and death. What Hardy seeks in all the hauntings is not simply a vision of the dead woman but a meeting of two revived selves who give the lie to the years of separation and the fact of death. In "After a Journey" that annulment of change is both affirmed and denied, the return of the past is alternately celebrated and tempered by an awareness of the insistence of the present.

The opening stanza of "After a Journey" is very close in tone to "The Voice"; the emphasis lies on the confusion of the speaker, the alienness of the environment and the impossibility of defining and locating the experience. The pervasive presence of the ghost "facing me everywhere" is

For the stars close their shutters and the dawn
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the counterpart to the envelopment of the persona in sound and echo in "The Voice", and the haunting seems to be located in the rush of confusing sensation, in the possibilities of sound and vision that surround the lost self. Against the confused din of the opening lines, the ghost is defined suddenly with heightened specificity:

> "With your nut-coloured hair.
> And grey eyes, and rose-flush coming and going".

The fineness of the perception of colour is particularly striking when it becomes clear from the final stanza that the haunting takes place at night ("For the stars close their shutters and the dawn whitens hazily".) The haunting is envisaged as fundamentally luminous, as banishing loneliness and darkness.

The affirmativeness of the description of stanza one and of address, dialogue and explanation in stanza two are tempered by the rising hesitancies of the third stanza: If the images of "nut-coloured hair" and the "rose-flush coming and going" evoke the vital presence of the young girl, the double emphasis on "then", "the then fair hour in the then fair weather", allows the past, and the difference between past and present to intrude jarringly. The contrast between what the haunting reflects and the actual play of events in the past is made explicit; the haunting can only shadow, not repeat the past. In stanza three luminosity is relegated to the past. The woman of forty years ago is "all-aglow", the ghost by contrast is thin,

and insubstantial, and the follower is not the youthful lover but clearly old and weak: "I now frailly follow".

The tentativeness of stanza three is however followed by the rising affirmations of the final stanza so that the poem is made to follow the swell of doubt and hope that characterizes the speaker's confrontation with his past. The assertion of his unchanging identity is a direct contradiction and negation of his admission of frailty in stanza three:

> Trust me, I mind not, though Life lours,
> The bringing me here; nay bring me here again!
> I am just the same as when
> Our days were a joy, and our paths through flowers.

The fiction of the last lines, that is, the assertion of the unchanging selfhood of the speaker, the annulment of the years of bitterness and estrangement, admits itself as dream, and yet transcends its untruth and allows for a chastened affirmation despite and even because of the looming presence of change and mortality.

If in "After a Journey", landscape yields presence, and becomes a screen for the past, "Beeny cliff" together with "A Death-Day Recalled" assert the silence and indifference of landscape to human presence. Haunting is succeeded by absence, revelation and vision are dismissed as fiction. In "Beeny Cliff" Hardy devotes four out of five stanzas to the apparent profundity of the association between person

and landscape. Memory weaves together the lover's experience and the places in which it is enacted so that an affirmative response to the question that ends the fourth stanza seems inevitable: "And shall she and I not go there once again now March is nigh,/And the sweet things said in that March say anew there by and by?" The answer is however emphatically negative and the flat unadorned harshness of the final lines "The woman now is - elsewhere - whom the ambling pony bore,/And not knows nor cares for Beeny, and will laugh there nevermore", dismisses the lilting rhythms and vividness of imagery that characterize the rest of the poem. The starkly separate and undefined "elsewhere" renders insignificant the carefully recapitulated and highly specific beauty of Beeny Cliff, and forestalls the possibility of return and revelation.

"At Castle Boterel", following immediately on "Beeny Cliff", demands comparison with that poem. The titles of the two poems, two place names laid side by side, invite our perception of the contrast between one silent, indifferent landscape and another, vocal, preserving and enshrining. The juxtaposition of the two poems entrenches the sense we have of the sequence's wave-like structure formed by the advance and retreat of ghosts, the absence and presence of hauntings. Here the juxtaposition evokes an almost antinomial structure - one vision argued out and explored against the other:

As I drive to the junction of lane and highway,
And the drizzle bedrenches the waggonette,
I look behind at the fading byway,
And see on its slope, now glistening wet,
Distinctly yet

Myself and a girlish form benighted
In dry March weather. We climb the road
Beside a chaise. We had just alighted
To ease the sturdy pony's load
When he sighed and slowed.

What we did as we climbed, and what we talked of
Matters not much, nor to what it led, -
Something that life will not be balked of
Without rude reason till hope is dead,
And feeling fled.

It filled but a minute. But was there over
A time of such quality, since or before,
In that hill's story? To one mind never,
Though it has been climbed, foot-swift, foot-sore,
By thousands more.

Primaeval rocks form the road's steep border,
And much have they faced there, first and last,
Of the transitory in Earth's long order;
But what they record in colour and cast
Is - that we two passed.

And to me, though Time's unflinching rigour,
In mindless rote, has ruled from sight
The substance now, one phantom figure
Remains on the slope, as when that night
Saw us alight.

I look and see it there, shrinking, shrinking,
I look back at it amid the rain
For the very last time; for my sand is sinking,
And I shall traverse old love's domain
Never again.

March 1913

"At Castle Boterel" is Hardy's most sustained, most fully explored meditation on the haunting as a medium of escape from transience and a medium of preservation of a

significant, chosen past. The uniqueness of "At Castle Boterel" lies in its extended examination of the relation between the haunting and the haunted, the relation between the replay of the past and the viewers of that past. The poem asserts the immutability of the past, entrenched in an immutable landscape, perceived by a mortal spectator. The returns of the past in the haunting, so much more profound than memory, are still tied to the human act of remembering, and the attribution of significance is dependant on the human interpreter. The two dominant symbols of the poem are the "primaeval rocks" and the "sinking sands", the dominant concern the interplay and relation of immutability and instability.

The central affirmation of the poem rests in the fifth stanza. The minisculy insignificant and fragile minute of quality, recorded by the primaeval rocks, shares in their qualities of permanence and invincibility. The paradox that the poem admits, its affirmativeness, lies in the elevation of that moment into a prominence above the aeons of time, and its gaining of a solidity and impregnability equal to that of the rocks. Placed against the widest panorama of time, evoked by "primaeval", the moment is emphasized and outlined rather than dwarfed. Though time can destroy the substance, the physical actuality of human experience, it is powerless against its essence; the qualitative moment which holds fast what is most

significant in human experience, asserts itself invincibly against the rolling centuries. While the poem insists on the immutability of time of quality, it does not disguise the fact that the assessment of its durability stems from the mind of a solitary perceiver: "But was there ever/ A time of such quality, since or before,/ In that hill's story? To one mind never" (my italics). Nor does the speaker shirk an admission of his own mortality. The admissions of subjectivity and mortality do not however check the assertion of immutability; they do not function as ironic mockeries or detractions from the poem's affirmation, nor are they dismissed as illusory or insignificant in the face of evidence of the durability of human experience. The haunting in turn neither deepens the pain of mortality by drawing attention to its own contingency on a mortal perceiver, nor assuages the facts of change and death. Instead immutability and transience are held in balance; Hardy refuses to impose a reading, desisting from either idealizing or belittling the vision of the fifth stanza.

While "At Castle Boterel" refuses to limit the haunting, both "Places" and "The Phantom Horsewoman" expand the emphasis on the solitary, mortal rememberer and develop the limitations and ironies of memory and vision. "At Castle Boterel" and "After a Journey" suggest the capacity of memory to revivify the past in minute particularity and immediacy. In "Places" by contrast, the returning flow of

the past is damped by the insistent negatives that open each stanza:

NOBODY says: Ah, that is the place
Where chanced, in the hollow of years ago,
What none of the Three Towns cared to know -
The birth of a little girl of grace -
The sweetest the house saw, first or last;
Yet it was so
On that day long past.

Nobody thinks: There, there she lay
In a room by the Hoe, like the bud of a flower,
And listened, just after the bedtime hour,
To the stammering chimes that used to play
The quaint Old Hundred-and-Thirteenth tune
In Saint Andrew's tower
Night, morn, and noon.

Nobody calls to mind that here
Upon Boterel Hill, where the waggoners skid,
With cheeks whose airy flush outbid
Fresh fruit in bloom, and free of fear,
She cantered down, as if she must fall
(Though she never did),
To the charm of all.

Nay: one there is to whom these things,
That nobody else's mind calls back,
Have a savour that scenes in being lack,
And a presence more than the actual brings;
To whom to-day is beneaped and stale,
And its urgent clack
But a vapid tale.

Plymouth, March 1913

The progression from "Nobody says" to "Nobody thinks" to "Nobody calls to mind" suggests a deepening obliviousness to the life of the woman now dead. In the context of these repeated denials the heightened detail recapitulated in the body of each stanza acquires ironic resonance; the

negatives pre-empt the reconstruction of the past and prohibit a sense of renewed vitality. The particularity of vision becomes not triumphant but pathetic because its limitation to a single imagination is emphasized. The pattern of the poem reverses that of "Beeny Cliff"; there the progression of stanzas with the minutiae of detail and the vibrancy of description invest the past with renewed life despite the emphatic denial at the end of the poem. Here vitality is immediately limited. The countering denial of the persona in the final stanza: "Nay: one there is" exposes the limitedness of the past's durability. "One" plays against the inclusiveness of the repeated "nobody", the solitary recalling self made weaker in juxtaposition with the encompassing oblivion outlined in the earlier stanzas.

In "The Phantom Horsewoman" the emphasis lies too on the dependancy of the past on a frail and solitary survivor. At the heart of the poem lies the marked contrast between the haunter and the haunted; the ghost is granted a splendid vitality, she returns 'warm, real and keen", envisioned in an eternally extending moment of youth. In the final line "Draws rein and sings to the swing of the tide", the song and movement of the ghost-girl rider are made to seem one with the unending movement and voice of the tide. By contrast, the seer is mired in time. Hardy uses multiple adjectives to suggest the tiredness of the

remembering watcher aware of his own mortality. The vision of the girl is explicitly located in the mind of an old man. While the poem confirms the power of the imagination to accord the woman a second life, its affirmation is quieter, tempered by the unease generated by the reminders of time in "toil-tried", "withers", "caveworn". "The Phantom Horsewoman" moves to the position that "At Castle Boterel" steers clear of; the inherent irony of memory that is outlined in the early poem "Her Immortality":

> But grows my grief. When I surcease,
> Through whom alone lives she,
>
> Her spirit ends its living lease,
> Never again to be!

With the progression of the sequence, the presence of the ghost and the frantic quest for it gradually lose their urgency. In "The Phantom Horsewoman" the absence of the personal voice, and the puzzlement as to who exactly the speaker is - the poet commenting on himself or the ghost describing the searcher she observes - impose distance. Hardy divests the voice of its presentness, deprives us of the sense we have of overhearing the speaker in the process of uttering the poem. Instead the tone becomes quieter, more meditative, the speaker not calling but recapitulating and puzzling over vision or its absence.

In "The Spell of the Rose", the ballad structure, the archaic diction, the static and stylized imagery of myth

and legend, divest the poem of the urgency of felt experience which characterizes "After a Journey", "The Voice" and "At Castle Boterel". As in "The Haunter" and "His Visitor", Hardy, through the use of the ghost as speaker, evokes the unheard articulacy of the dead incapable of conveying their words to the living or knowing their response.

The final two poems extend the meditation at the heart of the sequence on the power of memory, its capacity to coax the past back from oblivion and to afford an antidote to loss. In the presence and absence of ghosts, Hardy alternately affirms and denies that power. In the final two poems the ghost is absent, and the poems admit the frailty of memory, that it cannot wake the past or erase the fact of death with which the whole sequences wrestles. That admission is however markedly different in character in the two poems. In "St Launce's Revisited" the tone is excessively bitter. The poem denies the possibility of a continuum between past and present, invalidates the premise of the pilgrimage which is the rediscovery of the weddedness of past and present, testified to by place. In the final stanza the act of remembering is dismissed as a profligate indulgence:

> Why waste thought,
> When I know them vanished
> Under earth; yea, banished
> Ever into naught!

The stanza reverses the affirmation of "Your Last Drive" which asserts the value of memory against the knowledge of its profitlessness. The final lines assert the impossibility of vision and renewal; death is envisaged as dissolution and exile, and memory as powerless to retrieve and reconstitute the past. The command that opens the poem: "Slip back, Time!" is revealed as impotent against the barricades erected by Time.

The final line of "Where the Picnic Was" echoes the assertion of the eternity of death, but the harshness and absoluteness of "banished" and "vanished" is softened in the euphemism of death as sleep and by the pause that precedes it:
"And one - has shut her eyes / For evermore."

The affirmation of "Where the Picnic Was" lies not in the discovery of the spelling power of memory in the places of significant past experience but in the return to those places despite the knowledge of the finality of death. The contemplation of the endings imposed by death is here coupled with the contemplation of other continuities; the sea continues to breathe brine, its unchanging presence providing consolation despite the honest admission of the absence of phantoms and the obviousness of change in human experience.

The 1912-1913 poems end as they begin; in Dorset, with the grieving survivor's contemplation of the absoluteness of mortality. It is the knowledge of that absoluteness that impels the sequence's testing of the capacities of memory, its questioning of what memory can wrest back from death, its ability to stand as bulwark against the injuries of time. It is in the figure of the ghost that the probing of the powers of memory is embodied, its absences and presences alternately confirm and deny that power; its illusiveness becomes an image of the tortuousness of recall and the meagreness of its rewards, its brief ambivalent appearances records of the momentary triumphs of the imagination over transience and mortality.

CHAPTER V

At times in the 1912-1913 poems Hardy is barely distinguishable from the pale phantoms he tracks; wandering, confused, frail and calling, he appropriates the aspect and form of his own ghosts and appears as much haunter as haunted. The sense we have in the 1912-1913 poems of the persona dissolving into formlessness, absenting himself, alternately appearing and disappearing only repeats the characteristic sense we have throughout the poems of an elusive persona, himself inhabiting the absences and vacuums he mourns.

The haunting self that Hardy's persona assumes is as complex, as multifarious and as ambiguous as the ghosts that the persona seeks: the haunting persona is, like the ghosts, at once an image or distillation of the self's profound longing for retreat from an imperfect universe, and a grotesque, demanding and alien. The process of becoming a haunter, like the complex process of remembering, is both conscious and enforced, the self assumed both monstrous and epitome of heightened vitality, finer than the real self. If the multiple descriptions of the ghosts of the past express Hardy's sense of the complexity of memory, the differing ghost-selves he assumes express his sense of the variety, contrasts and conflicts between the demands and desires of the self and the roles it must assume.

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The centrality of the ghost-self both to Hardy's thinking and poetry is expressed most plainly in a note from the Life which defines the impulse behind the choice of the ghost as image for the self, and which crystallizes the multiple functions of the haunting persona. Expanding on a remark by Thackeray's daughter in which she confesses to feeling like a ghost, arousing feelings of sadness in those she visits, Hardy, in a well known passage, admits to a similar sense of self as phantom and widens the assumption of ghosthood by the self into a locus of value and even a personal aesthetic:

> I have attempted many modes (of finding the value of life). For my part if there is any way of getting a melancholy satisfaction out of life, it lies in dying, so to speak, before one is out of the flesh; by which I mean putting on the manners of ghosts, wandering in their haunts, and taking their view of surrounding things. To think of life as passing away is a sadness, to think of it as past is at least tolerable. Hence even when I enter a room to pay a simple morning call I have unconsciously the habit of regarding the scene as if I were a spectre, not solid enough to influence my environment; only fit to behold and say as another spectre said: "Peace be unto you!" (1)

The note makes explicit the multiple functions inherent in the haunter image: in the first place Hardy places emphasis on a particular mode of vision, a spectral beholding which he distinguishes from ordinary vision; ghostly watching is defined as fundamentally passive, as without effect on the object of perception, and because the watcher is an invisible ghost, the action of perception is given

paramountcy over the agent. If for Hardy the poet is always defined as a watcher that definition is honed by perceiving the poet as a ghostly watcher, whose central characteristics are his invisibility and unintrusiveness. Secondly, Hardy's definition of the ghost as beholder rather than participant suggests that for Hardy the image of the self as haunter expressed his sense of exclusion from the communities he viewed, his status as outcast rather than member. Thirdly, Hardy's emphasis at the beginning of the note, on the assumption of ghosthood as affording a relief from the burdens of time and transience, defines the centrality of the haunter image to his dominant concern with escape from the cell of time. Finally, the description at the beginning of the note of "dying before one is out of the flesh", the image of the self's confrontation with its own corpse, suggests the grotesque possibilities inherent in the self's retreat from the world of time and mortality, where that retreat yields not an essential, preserved self but an unrecognisable monster. It is these four complementary and differing aspects of Hardy's depiction of the self as haunter that I wish to examine in this chapter.

Central to Hardy's aesthetic is his identification of the poet with a ghost. At its simplest level this finds expression in Hardy's explicit comparison of the poet to a phantom in "The House of Silence":

'That is a quiet place -
That house in the trees with the shady lawn.'
'- If, child, you knew what there goes on
You would not call it a quiet place.
Why, a phantom abides there, the last of its race,
And a brain spins there till dawn.'

'But I see nobody there, -
Nobody moves about the green,
Or wanders the heavy trees between'
'- Ah, that's because you do not bear
The visioning powers of souls who dare
To pierce the material screen.

'Morning, noon, and night,
Mid those funereal shades that seem
The uncanny scenery of a dream,
Figures dance to a mind with sight,
And music and laughter like floods of light
Make all the precincts gleam.

'It is a poet's bower,
Through which there pass, in fleet arrays,
Long teams of all the years and days,
Of joys and sorrows, of earth and heaven,
That meet mankind in its ages seven,
An aion in an hour.'

In this poem the basis of the comparison of the poet and the ghost lies in the poet's capacity to penetrate "the material screen" that insulates present experience. Like a ghost the poet is unbound by material constraints, his mind is unlimited and free to move effortlessly between different spheres. Like a ghost, the poet becomes a privileged viewer of a mysterious, endlessly signifying universe, obscured to the ordinary individual. The poet's phantom-like invisibility to the unschooled and unvisioning child is here not an index of alienation and source of discomfort or grief but an accolade, a source of exultation at the penetration and illumination of the poet.

"The House of Silence" is uncharacteristically Romantic in its lauding of the separateness and uniqueness of the poet and in the elevation of his powers and vision. Characteristically however the identification of the poet with a ghost turns not on the uniqueness and otherness of the ghost but on its invisibility and anonymity, and the congruence between spectral vision and the poet's mode of seeing.

The concept of the invisibility and non-participation of the self is central to Hardy's conception of the poet; most significantly it allows for the elevation of the act and objects of perception over the person of the perceiving self. This sense of the poet as observer through whom the scene is perceived is suggested very early by a drawing which accompanies "In a Eweleaze Near Weatherbury" in Wessex Poems. The drawing of a pair of glasses superimposed on the scene suggests that the poet, like a pair of spectacles, makes us see, focuses our attention but does not intrude between the scene and its description. It is this conception which underlies the vision of "Afterwards". In the line which functions like a refrain "He was a man who used to notice such things" Hardy expresses the conviction that the objects of vision persist unchanged, no less visible for the death of the seer; what is recorded and remembered is the act of noticing rather than the nature of the noticing self.

Hardy is persistently concerned with absenting the persona so as not to intrude on the vision that he consecrates. The forerunners of the effaced persona are the itinerant, inconsistent multiple selves that Hardy repeatedly defends in the prefaces to the volumes of poetry; the claim of the prefaces is that the identification of a static shaping self would impose distortion on the visions of the poems, would falsify their content by directing attention at the viewer rather than through him. In the preface to Time's Laughing Stocks Hardy defends the autonomy of the poems from a discrete, defined self by exhorting the reader to view the poems as "dramatic monologues by different characters".(2) In later volumes that autonomy is preserved by removing an identifiable self and by replacing it with an invisible, anonymous self. Hardy seems then to move towards an attempt to remove the directing, moulding hand of the poet completely. If any one of the fifteen "Satires of Circumstance" is compared with poems like the "New Boots" or "Expectation and Experience" the difference becomes apparent. The personae of "Satires of Circumstance" are insistently present, directing our moral judgements, edging us into particular stances, while in "New Boots" and "Expectation and Experience" it is impossible to locate the self that transcribes the monologues. Clearly distinct from their tellers, he is invisible to us, his position indefinable. Poems like these suggest the usefulness of the ghost metaphor for

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describing the poet; the metaphor illuminates the sense we have of the poet as a transparency and defines the peculiar tangible absence, or unlocated presence that the poems epitomize.

Hardy's concern with the erased viewer, his exploration of the potentialities of absence, reaches its fullest expression in "A Light Snowfall after Frost". The extremity of its position is made apparent when it is compared with "Snow in the Suburbs" which immediately precedes it and which shares a similar subject.

In "Snow in the Suburbs" an identifiable, present persona is absent until the final line "We take him in" transforms the entire poem through the intrusion of human presence and the consequent shifting of focus from the scene, the described exterior, to the watchers. "We" allows us to perceive the descriptions of the preceding stanzas as a shared watching and to read a particular tone back into the poem, to impute to the watchers anticipation, delight and pity. The effect of the personal pronoun is a reassessment of the poem located precisely in its humanising or personalising effect.

By contrast in "A Light Snowfall After Frost" an identifiable, located presence never impinges on the material of vision:

On the flat road a man at last appears:
  How much his whitening hairs
Owe to the settling snow's mute anchorage,
And how much to a life's rough pilgrimage,
  One cannot certify.

  The frost is on the wane,
And cobwebs hanging close outside the pane
Pose as festoons of thick white worsted there,
Of their pale presence no eye being aware
  Till the rime made them plain.

  A second man comes by;
His ruddy beard brings fire to the pallid scene:
  His coat is faded green;
  Hence seems it that his mien
  Wears something of the dye
Of the berried holm-trees that he passes nigh.

The snow-feathers so gently swoop that though
  But half an hour ago
The road was brown, and now is starkly white,
A watcher would have failed defining quite
  When it transformed it so.

  Near Surbiton

That a watcher is present is betrayed by phrases like "at last appears" which convey the presence of a waiting sensibility. The poem's recording of the passage of time makes implicit too a measuring and defining consciousness, but that recording self of the poem is almost wholly effaced. If "Snow in the Suburbs" is transformed by the *personal pronoun*, *Hardy here seems* at pains to divest the poem of any intrusive personal presence; personal pronouns are replaced by the undefined "one", an "eye" and "a watcher". Moreover, the refusal to intrude extends to the persona's refusal to direct or define his or our perceptions in any way.

In the first stanza that abrogation of direction is suggested by "one cannot certify", in the third the implications of the seer's perceptions are presented as only "seeming" to convey a congruence between the man and the landscape. In the final stanza the watcher is incapable of defining the change he records. The definitions of the poems are vested only in the acuteness and accuracy of perception: "The road was brown, and now is starkly white" and the microscope-like magnifications of vision in the second stanza focus our seeing, hone our vision, but refuse the right of extrapolating anything from that vision. Perception is divorced from personality and thereby vouchsafed absolute autonomy and honesty. Once again the image of the self as ghost seems implicit in the complete anonymity of the recording self; the effect is such as to allow Hardy to resolve the tension between absence and presence, in essence to merge the two.

If in the poems like "A Light Snowfall after Frost" the absence of the persona fulfills a particular aesthetic function, at times the metaphorical comparison of the persona with a ghost expresses most powerfully Hardy's propensity to withdrawal, his sense of exile and his imputation of outcast status to the speaker of the poems. Hardy manipulates the image of the persona as ghost to express the sense of himself as outsider, like a ghost shut out from and incapable of merging with the community of men. The image of the ghost becomes then a profound

emblem of the loneliness to which the persona is inescapably and almost constantly subject.

David Perkins in "Hardy and the Poetry of Isolation" elucidates the predominance of the motif of loneliness in Hardy's poetry, and the exclusiveness of its depiction in the context of Romantic and Victorian poetry:

> In Hardy's poetry the feeling of isolation does not primarily stem from the typical Victorian complaint that the forms of society themselves keep people apart. Nor does it arise, as in much of the poetry earlier in the century, from the experiences of an inner light, of possessing sources of inspiration and insight unavailable to the generations of mankind. To feel that you have secret springs of insight entails some alienation; but as with Blake and Wordsworth, it also makes that insight more a cause of joy than uneasiness. In Hardy however the ever present sense of difference seems to have resulted only in unmingled discomfort. (3)

Isolation for Hardy does not permit entry into a select band of exiles for whom separateness is the medium of transcendance; instead Hardy explores the almost banal suffering that inheres in separation, and perceives in his estrangement from his community, his family and the woman he loves, a divestment of life itself. "The Dead Man Walking" attests to a depleted selfhood as those sources of value- community, family, love are successively pared away to leave nothing but an animated corpse:

They hail me as one living,
  But don't they know
That I have died of late years,
  Untombed although?

I am but a shape that stands here,
  A pulseless mould,
A pale past picture, screening
  Ashes gone cold.

Not at a minute's warning,
  Not in a loud hour,
For me ceased Time's enchantments
  In hall and bower.

There was no tragic transit,
  No catch of breath,
When silent seasons inched me
  On to this death...

-A Troubadour-youth I rambled
  With Life for lyre,
The beats of being raging
  In me like fire.

But when I practised eyeing
  The goal of men,
It iced me, and I perished
  A little then.

When passed my friend, my kinsfolk,
  Through the Last Door,
And left me standing bleakly,
  I died yet more;

And when my Love's heart kindled
  In hate of me,
Wherefore I knew not, died I
  One more degree.

And if when I died fully
  I cannot say,
And changed into the corpse-thing
  I am to-day;

Yet is it that, though whiling
  The time somehow
In walking, talking, smiling,
  I live not now.

In the identification of the self with an undefined "shape", a "pale past picture", the persona exposes his own

formlessness, admits himself incapable of maintaining any sense of embodied reality. The sense of the self's own growing unrecognizability is epitomised in the vague unspecificity of "corpse-thing" with its evocation of nightmarishly mutated forms. The persistent sense of a slipping, dissolving reality is conveyed by the peculiar syntax and strange linguistic couplings that the poem employs like "untombed although" and "it iced me"; coupled with the delayed verbs and negatives, "I knew not", "died I", "I live not", such verbal forms suggest that the fracturing of coherence corresponds to the self's sense of fractured reality, the impossibility of maintaining a handhold on identity. The vague unreality that the poem embodies is heightened too by the oddities of rhythm; the poem's sudden swings into almost jaunty sing-song patterns crumble into discordancy so that lilting rhythms are replaced by stilted, jagged beats and at the end the poem seems to grate into silence.

The frequency with which Hardy repeats the description of the self's dissolution into wraith-like insubstantiality *reflects his sense of the inevitable loss of those* experiences, forms and people that extend housing to the dislocated self. Identity is as tenuous as those forms; families, lovers, communities, which invest one with selfhood, which define the nature of that selfhood, and yet which are quintessentially transient.

Moreover, the sense of individual isolation is intensified by Hardy's conviction of the incommunicability of individual loss; suffering becomes a form of difference, ultimately a medium of exile making explicit the distance between the pained sensibility and the world in which it is located.

At times the identification of the persona with a ghost is not so much an index of the contingency of identity on transient forms, or a record of loss, but an image of unbelonging, and a reflection of Hardy's sense of his growing unrecognizability to those around him. Here invisibility is not a consciously conceived and wrought pose but a source of surprise and pain, an image of imposed exclusion. This sense of otherness is made explicit in the ironically titled "Welcome Home":

> Back to my native place
> Bent upon returning,
> Bosom all day burning
> To be where my race
> Well were known, 'twas keen with me
> There to dwell in amity.
>
> Folk had sought their beds,
> But I hailed: to view me
> Under the moon, out to me
> Several pushed their heads,
> And to each I told my name,
> Plans, and that therefrom I came.
>
> 'Did you?... Ah, 'tis true,'
> Said they, 'back a long time,
> Here had spent his young time,
> Some such man as you...
> Good-night.' The casement closed again,
> And I was left in the frosty lane.

The poem describes the return of the speaker to his native place, the emotionally weighted 'home' of the title, clearly in search of identity and placement which he assumes will be offered by a familiar community, faithful to a shared history. The return is clearly futile; in the peculiarly grotesque phrasing and syntax of the second stanza, "to view me/ under the moon, out to me,/ several pushed their heads", Hardy conveys the dislocating shock of denial. The disembodied heads poked out through closed windows afford no drama of recognition, invitation and accommodation. Instead the replies, laconic, tired, trailing off into indifferent silence confirm the homelessness of the unidentified speaker, left in the typical pose of the Hardian viewer, outside, looking at blank windows, afforded neither vision of, nor entry into, a warm interior.

Although the poem does not explicitly exploit the metaphor of the persona as ghost, the image is clearly implicit in the poem; the revenant convention evoked in the opening lines suggests also the Rip Van Winkel legend; a man returning after protracted absence to a familiar environment in which he alone becomes strange. Moreover, the poem is clearly related to haunting fantasies like "His Visitor" or "Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave", where a ghost returns to a familiar environment to find herself usurped and forgotten. Significantly in "Welcome Home" the illusion of continuity is exposed within the speaker's

lifetime, the span of forgetting compressed so that the returning searcher becomes a living ghost. In the final lines of the poem, the unexplicated grief expressed in the blank simplicity of "The casement closed again/ And I was left in the frosty lane" recalls the pattern of the foundering self, unanchored by confirmation of identity rooted in place and time, fading into ghostly incorporeality.

If the image of the persona as ghost is not always explicit in a poem, it exists often as an implicit stance expressive of the persona's felt sense of invisibility to a world unaccommodating of and oblivious to individual suffering or isolation. In "Just the Same" Hardy expresses that sense of invisibility in the metaphor of the cloud which obscures the persona's presence to a world persisting in careless jollity, unaltered by individual experience:

> I went forth, heedless whither
> In a cloud too black for name;
> - People frisked hither and thither,
> The world was just the same.

In "Nobody Comes" the striking oddity of the description of the car which "whangs along in a world of its own" is the counterpart of "frisk" in "Just the Same" and embodies the careless blindness of an indifferent world, responsive only to the insistent call of town and telegraph wire:

A car comes up, with lamps full-glare
  That flash upon a tree;
  It has nothing to do with me,
And whangs along in a world of its own
  Leaving a blacker air;
And mute by the gate I stand again alone,
  And nobody pulls up there.

In the mute stillness of the speaker's pose, in his invisibility despite the full glare of the car-lamps, the image of the ghost resides as implicit metaphor for isolation and anonymity.

If the identification of the persona with a phantom is characteristically an index of isolation and separation, it is not always an isolation imposed and enforced, nor is the assumption of ghosthood always an image of the draining away of vitality or of the fading of a sense of definable reality. At times isolation is a voluntary, indeed coveted withdrawal from the jabbing intrusiveness of experience and ghosthood is a mask assumed consciously as disguise. Slipping out of the bondage of the body which Hardy views at times with an almost medieval perception of bones and flesh as cage, his personae attain immunity from the press of time, achieve the comforting conception of time as past rather than passing.

Brackenbury points to this characteristic impulse to withdrawal, the "distaste and incapacity for immediate and direct personal involvement in life", as the fulfilment of Hardy's "aesthetic need to distance himself from his

materials, (Memory, Time) in order to dominate rather than to be encompassed and overwhelmed by them."(4) As ghost the persona becomes a viewer of experience rather than its victim.

In poems like "The House of Hospitalities" and "In the Small Hours", the persona is implicitly indistinguishable from the ghosts he summons up. Sharing their insubstantiality, he is welcomed into a community of phantoms and shares in their inviolability, the indifference of the dead to decay and mutability. In "He Revisits his First School" the divestiture of physical form is embraced as vouchsafing a more robust, vital and appealing selfhood:

> I should not have shown in the flesh,
> I ought to have gone as a ghost;
> It was awkward, unseemly almost,
> Standing solidly there as when fresh,
> Pink, tiny, crisp-curled,
> My pinions yet furled
> From the winds of the world.
>
> After waiting so many a year
> To wait longer, and go as a sprite
> From the tomb at the mid of some night
> Was the right, radiant way to appear;
> Not as one wanzing weak
> *From life's roar and reek,*
> His rest still to seek:
>
> Yea, beglimpsed through the quaint quarried glass
> Of green moonlight, by me greener made,
> When they'd cry, perhaps, 'There sits his shade
> In his olden haunt - just as he was
> When in Walkingame he
> Conned the grand Rule-of-Three
> With the bent of a bee.'

But to show in the afternoon sun,
With an aspect of hollow-eyed care,
When none wished to see me come there,
Was a garish thing, better undone.
  Yes; wrong was the way;
  But yet, let me say,
  I may right it - some day.

The assumption of ghosthood effects a reconciliation of form and essence. The incongruencies imposed by nature are healed by an imaginative relegation of the worn body to the temporary and the inessential, by the choice of a form congruent with desire, complying with an imaginative truth undictated by time.

The poem presents a curious transformation of the haunting convention; here it is not the ghost who is the frightening spectral intruder. It is the persona, imprisoned in the unsuitable cloak of flesh, who has appropriated the conventional elements of a frightening haunting. It is the mortal visitor whose aspects of "hollow-eyed care" evokes a gaunt, skeletal corpse-like image, whose appearance like that of a phantom, is a harbinger of death. By contrast in the imagined haunting, the phantom is not a vivified corpse but a playful child untouched by the tumult of experience, sharing in or repeating the innocence that Hardy ascribes to the remembered child in the first stanza: "Pink, tiny, crisp-curled,/ My pinions yet furled/ From the winds of the world". The imagined haunting is "radiant" rather than "garish" as is the actual appearance, and it is perceived as a mysterious and wondrous transformation, a

medium of transcendance.

While the ghost of "He Revisits His First School" is radiant and benign, the ghost forms that Hardy's personae assume are not always wondrous; transformation becomes not an emblem of transcendance but of mutation. In poems like "Welcome Home" or "Nobody Comes", the implicit equation of the persona with a ghost expresses the persona's sense of invisibility. At times however the metaphor is expressive not of an imposed anonymity, but of the self's own unrecognizability, the self's shock and recoil from its own manifestations. Mary Jacobus points to the grotesque potentialities inherent in imagining oneself a ghost:

> "These funeral anticipations share a common structure - a self-duplication or doubling that involves an encounter, or, more usually, a dialogue between Hardy and his ghostly other. Freud reminds us how the double, from being initially an insurance against mortality, becomes a portent of death. Hardy's poetic quest for immortality regularly gives rise to intimations of this kind." (5)

The assumption of ghosthood by the persona expresses the desire for retreat from the demands and distortions of time; the penalty for that release, for unfettered entry into and utter familiarity with the past and with the speaking dead is that the self is barred from return to and reintegration with its present self. The splintering of selves, the divorce between desired and actual selves, or past and present selves effects too radical a separation. The ghost persona expresses then not an imposed or

preferred identity but the proliferation of selves unbound by a controlling identity. If the aesthetic impulse behind the prefaces is a claim for just such a multiplication, for a negation of a static, defining sensibility, Hardy does not shirk from an exploration of the negative effect of such a multiplication, the grotesque and terrifying possibilities inherent in that claim.

The sense of nightmare latent in the ghost persona image manifests itself explicitly in a poem such as "I Have Lived with Shades":

I

I have lived with Shades so long,
And talked to them so oft,
Since forth from cot and croft
I went mankind among,
  That sometimes they
  In their dim style
  Will pause awhile
  To hear me say;

II

And take me by the hand,
And lead me through their rooms
In the To-be, where Dooms
Half-wove and shapeless stand:
  And show from there
  The dwindled dust
  And rot and rust
  Of things that were.

III

'Now turn,' they said to me
One day: 'Look whence we came,
And signify his name
Who gazes thence at thee.' -
  -'Nor name nor race
  Know I, or can,'
  I said, 'Of man
  So commonplace.

IV

'He moves me not at all;
I note no ray or jot
Of rareness in his lot,
Or star exceptional.
  Into the dim
  Dead throngs around
  He'll sink, nor sound
  Be left of him.'

V

'Yet,' said they, 'his frail speech,
Hath accents pitched like thine -
Thy mould and his define
A likeness each to each -
  But go! Deep pain
  Alas, would be
  His name to thee,
  And told in vain!'

2 February 1899

The fantasy of a dialogue between the self and the ghosts with whom it is so dangerously familiar yields a growing perception of the self's estrangement from itself. The failure of the self to recognize the irony of its dismissal of its unrecognized double suggests a consciousness so much at home in the insubstantial halls of the past and future that the present becomes an alien domain, and renders unassuagable the self's divorce from itself.

"He Follows Himself" presents an even more radical and complex self division:

In a heavy time I dogged myself
  Along a louring way,
Till my leading self to my following self
  Said: 'Why do you hang on me
    So harassingly?'

'I have watched you, Heart of mine,' I cried,
  'So often going astray
And leaving me, that I have pursued,
  Felling such truancy
    Ought not to be.'

He said no more, and I dogged him on
  From noon to the dun of day
By prowling paths, until anew
  He begged: 'Please turn and flee! -
    What do you see?'

'Methinks I see a man,' said I,
  'Dimming his hours to gray.
I will not leave him while I know
  Part of myself is he
    Who dreams such dree!'

'I go to my old friend's house,' he urged,
  'So do not watch me, pray!'
'Well, I will leave you in peace,' said I,
  'Though of this poignancy
    You should fight free:

'Your friend, O other me, is dead;
  You know not what you say.'
- 'That do I! And at his green-grassed door
  By night's bright galaxy
    I bend a knee.'

- The yew-plumes moved like mockers' beards
  Though only boughs were they,
And I seemed to go; yet still was there,
  And am, and there haunt we
    Thus bootlessly.

In "I Have Lived with Shades", division is located in and explained by the persona's familiarity with the past. The persona's failure to recognize his other is distinct from

the reader's recognition of the congruence of the two selves. In "He Follows Himself" the situation remains unexplicated; it is unclear why the two selves are so radically divided, who the dead friend is, or what precisely the situation of the final stanza expresses. The reader shares in the persona's confusion, not privy to explanation or an ordering framework. In the final lines of the poem, the complexity of phrasing enmeshes the reader in the tangle of identity so that he is incorporated into the nightmarish incoherence that the poem embodies.

In the final stanza the inner and conveyed dislocations and confusions are intensified. The sense of unreality is heightened paradoxically by a location of reality in the first two lines; the poet demystifies the metaphor as he states it "The yew-plumes moved like mockers' beards/ Though only boughs were they". The imagined is deliberately separated from the actual. In the context of that separation the grotesqueness of the final lines is intensified because we are unsure as to whether to locate the image of two selves locked by their opposition into stasis, as an imagining or an actuality, as metaphor or statement. In the final stanza the alienation of selves is unmitigated; the final image is of phantom shapes, bound together but mutually unrecognisable, splinters of a fragmented self.

Hardy's equation of the persona with a ghost expresses accurately the tentative, elusive, withdrawing self that is our common experience in reading his poetry. The image captures the paradoxical sense we have in the poems of a conspicuous absence, of a viewer, of a listener there, but unlocated, almost lost within his own subject. As in Hardy's manipulation of the haunting as an image for the processes of memory, the image of self as ghost is expanded and developed to encompass multiple associations. The image becomes a vessel for Hardy's complex exploration of the ways in which one can write oneself into a poem, whether that self is the poem's subject or the consciousness that shapes its subject. Hardy's need for an image which would invest that selfhood with form and yet divest it of intrusive substance, which would express both the yearnings and nightmares of the self, is answered by the metaphor of self as haunter.

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER I

(1) F.E. Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy 1840-1928 (London: Macmillan, 1962), p.291; hereafter cited as Life.

(2) Life, pp.369-70.

(3) J. Bayley, An Essay on Thomas Hardy (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1978), p.49.

(4) Life, p.310.

(5) E. Thomas, quoted in "Critical Comment up to 1928," in Thomas Hardy Poems: A Selection of Critical Essays, ed. J. Gibson and T. Johnson (London: Macmillan, 1979), p.73.

(6) J.H. Miller, Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1970).

(7) J.H. Miller, "'Wessex Heights' The Persistence of the Past in Hardy's Poetry," Critical Quarterly, 10 (Winter, 1968), 339-59.

(8) D. Perkins, "Hardy and the Poetry of Isolation," in Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. A.J. Guerard (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1963), pp.143-59.

(9) W.W. Morgan, "The Partial Vision: Hardy's Idea of Dramatic Poetry," in Thomas Hardy Poems: A Selection of Critical Essays, ed. J. Gibson and T. Johnson (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp.244-52.

(10) Morgan, pp.247-48.

(11) Bayley, p.23.

(12) R.W. King, quoted in "Critical Comment up to 1928," in Thomas Hardy Poems: A Selection of Critical Essays, ed. J. Gibson and T. Johnson (London: Macmillan, 1979), p.105.

(13) H. Orel, ed. Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings: Prefaces, Literary Opinions, Reminiscences (London, Macmillan, 1967), p.215.

(14) D. Taylor, Hardy's Poetry 1860-1928 (London: Macmillan, 1981), p.41.

CHAPTER II

(1) I. Howe, Thomas Hardy (New York: Macmillan, 1967), p.123.

(2) "The Place on the Map".

(3) "The Two Rosalinds".

(4) "Under the Waterfall".

(5) Life, p.120.

(6) T. Gunn, "Influence of Ballad Form," in Thomas Hardy Poems: A Selection of Critical Essays, ed. J. Gibson and T. Johnson (London: Macmillan, 1979), p.223.

(7) Life, p.181.

(8) S. Freud, "The Uncanny", in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works. Vol 17. Trans. J. Strackey, ed J. Strackey in collaboration with A. Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), p.220.

(9) Freud, p.222.

(10) Life, p.55.

CHAPTER III

(1) T. Hardy, Pref., Under the Greenwood Tree, by T. Hardy (Harmondsworth, Midd.: Penguin Books, 1978), p.33.

(2) The members of the Mellstock Quire appear incidentally rather than as the major focus, in the short stories "The Fiddler of the Reels," "The Grave by the Handpost," "The Waiting Supper," and "Absentmindedness in a Parish Choir." They share features too with the rustics of Far From the Madding Crowd" and some of the characters of Tess of the D'Urbevilles.

(3) Life, p.12.

(4) T. Hardy, Pref., Under the Greenwood Tree, by T. Hardy (Harmondsworth, Midd.: Penguin Books, 1978), p.35.

(5) R.L. Eakins, "The Mellstock Quire and Tess in Hardy's Poetry", in P. Clements and J. Grindle, eds., The Poetry of Thomas Hardy (London, 1980), p 59.

CHAPTER IV

(1) "Poems of Pilgrimage" in Poems of the Past and Present can also be considered a sequence in which the ghosts of dead poets, like Keats and Shelley, feature prominently. But these poems never approach the emotional intensity of the 1912-13 poems and the

ghost image is not invested with the same complexity as in the 1912-13 poems. Here the ghost image functions as a convention rather than as the dominant and significant focus of the sequence.

(2) D. Davie, "Hardy's Virgilian Purples," in Thomas Hardy Special Issue, ed. D. Davie Agenda, 10 (Spring-Summer, 1972), 147.

(3) J. Wain, "The Poetry of Thomas Hardy," Critical Quarterly, 8 (Summer, 1966), 171-2.

CHAPTER V

(1) Life, pp.209-210.

(2) T. Hardy, The Complete Poems, ed. J. Gibson. New Wessex ed. (London: Macmillan, 1962), p.190.

(3) D. Perkins, "Hardy and the Poetry of Isolation," in Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. R.J. Guerard (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1963), p.143.

(4) B.J. Brackenbury, "Perception and Memory: A Thematic and Structural Study of Thomas Hardy's Lyric Poetry," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Nevada, Reno, 1975, p.60.

(5) M. Jacobus, "Hardy's Magian Retrospect," Essays in Criticism, 32(1982), 259.

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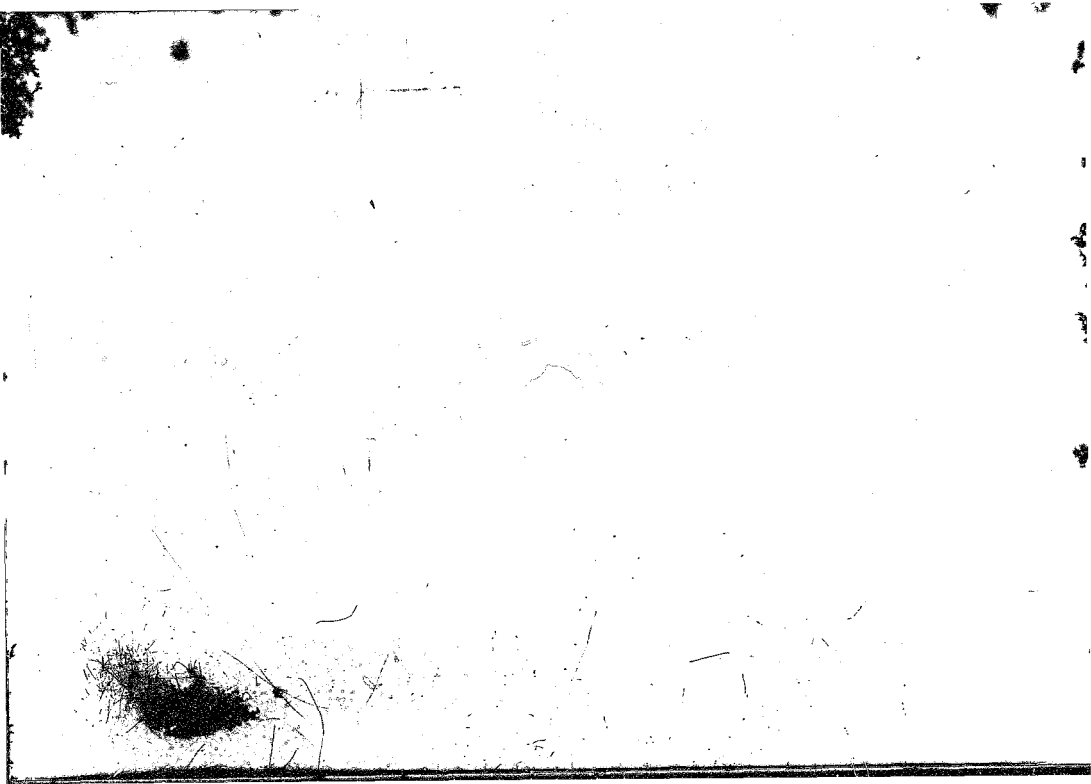

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