THE WORKS OF
FORD MADOX FORD
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE NOVELS

A Thesis

Presented in the Faculty of Arts of the

University of Cape Town for the degree of

Master of Arts

by

John M. Coetzee

November, 1963.

The University of Cape Town

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

The University of Cape Town

Acknowledgments.

My thanks are due to Professor R.G. Howarth of the University of Cape Town for many acts of kindness and helpfulness over a period of two years; to Professor Thomas Moser of Stanford University for the use of his extensive Ford collection; to the staff of the British Museum Reading Room; and to my wife for assistance in the preparation of this typescript.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

I EARLY YEARS: 1873–1903

II COLLABORATION WITH CONRAD: 1898–1903

III 1904–1908

IV 1909–1913

V THE GOOD SOLDIER: 1914–1918

VI AFTER THE WAR: 1919–1928

VII LAST YEARS: 1929–1939

A THE CONRAD CONTROVERSY

B FORD'S POETRY

C BIBLIOGRAPHY and INDEX

INTRODUCTION

Until recently, outside the United States, Ford Madox Ford's sole claim to fame seemed to be the footnote in the literary textbooks that read, "Conrad also collaborated in three slight productions with F.M. Hueffer (Ford)." Twenty-three years after his death Ford was being thought of vaguely as a Pre-Raphaelite friend of Henry James, as an American writer of belles-lettres or as one of Ezra Pound's passing crazes. His books were unobtainable.

Such an eclipse seemed a needlessly harsh fate for a man whose career was notable for above all things its brilliance. Born into a famous Pre-Raphaelite family, author at the age of seventeen of a by no means disgraceful novel, friend of James and model for one of his characters, collaborator for years with Joseph Conrad, editor of a famous review which published within months of each other James, Conrad and (for the first time) D.H. Lawrence, editor of a second review which published Joyce, Pound and Hemingway, author of what are often acknowledged to be respectively the finest historical

romance of the century, the finest French novel in English and the finest novel about the First World War, an acknowledged influence on Hemingway and Graham Greene, Ford would seem to deserve not only critical but also popular recognition.

Yet his neglect is understandable if unforgivable. His early career was perhaps too brilliant: coming back from the war he found himself, at the age of forty-five, largely forgotten. His early collaboration with Conrad served him badly in that his name was throughout his career overshadowed by Conrad's. The unselfish service he provided to other writers as editor of the English Review made him "Only Uncle of the Gifted Young" and obscured his own achievements. The bulk of his production hid his best novels, and the success of the latter was largely a succès d'estime.

But perhaps weightier in sum effect as causes of his neglect were matters only peripherally connected with his writing: his difficult to pronounce surname Hueffer and his confusing change of name in 1919; his German associations; his inability to manage his private affairs discreetly; his appallingly poor taste in titles for his books; the public attacks made on his personal integrity by Conrad's widow and an ex-mistress; his self-exile from England during the last seventeen years of his life; and his

turning to an American public which, together with his circular name, labelled him American in the eyes of the average English reader.

Almost forgotten in England, then, Ford has fittingly been restored to his proper place by Americans. His two best novels, The Good Soldier and Parade's End, have since 1950 been widely read in the United States; since 1948 such critics as Mark Schorer, R.P. Blackmur, Hugh Kenner and Robie Macauley have been subjecting his work to intelligent scrutiny; and in the last two years four books of criticism and scholarship have been published in the United States.[1] Two of these, Ford Madox Ford by Richard A. Cassell[2] and Ford Madox Ford's Novels by John A. Meixner[3] can be regarded as only introductory; the third, Paul L. Wiley's Novelist of Three Worlds,[4] is a penetrating work of criticism which sets Ford in a unique position as historian of his time. Together with the publication in England of The Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford under

---

1. A fifth study, A Good Soldier: A Key to the Novels of F.M. Ford (Univ. of California, 1963), by Caroline Gordon, was published when this essay was in its final stages. I have not been able to examine it.
2. Ford Madox Ford: A Study of his Novels (Johns Hopkins Press: Baltimore, 1961).
3. Ford Madox Ford's Novels: A Critical Study (Univ. of Minnesota and O.U.P.: Minneapolis and London, 1962).
4. Novelist of Three Worlds: Ford Madox Ford (Syracuse Univ. Press: Syracuse, N.Y., 1962).

the editorship of Graham Greene,[1] these studies possibly mark the end of Ford's period of limbo.

Yet it is not an exaggeration to say that it is only with David D. Harvey's monumental bibliography[2] of writings by and about Ford that accurate Ford criticism can begin: several of even Wiley's conclusions are invalidated by misdatings and omissions.[3] Harvey's bibliography gives some indication of the vast quantities of unpublished and even unexamined material by Ford in existence: the first work of Ford scholarship, it opens new fields of criticism but also demands higher standards of accuracy.

Several further studies of Ford are projected.[4] What is most needed, however, is a critical biography to replace Douglas Goldring's valuable but uncritical The Last Pre-Raphaelite;[5] for the relation between

---

1. Four volumes have thus far been published, consisting of The Good Soldier, the Katharine Howard trilogy, selected reminiscences and poems, Some Do Not, No More Parades and A Man Could Stand Up.
2. Ford Madox Ford; 1873-1939: A Bibliography of Works and Criticism (Princeton Univ. Press: Princeton, N.J., 1962).
3. Without explanation Wiley omits from consideration Ford's pseudonymous novel The New Humpty Dumpty (1912); he dates Provence 1938 instead of 1935, and seems unaware that No Enemy was completed ten years before publication in 1929 and The 'Half Moon' three years before publication in 1909.
4. I understand that Frank MacShane is working on a biography of Ford's literary career and Richard W. Lid and Thomas Moser on critical studies, the former concentrating on Ford's technique, the latter approaching his writings from several directions including the Freudian.
5. The Last Pre-Raphaelite: A Record of the Life and Writings of Ford Madox Ford (London, 1948).

Ford's life and his work, undeniably close, has been the subject of too much uninformed speculation. Such a study would do much to explain such matters as the notorious inaccuracy of his reminiscences — which his avowed adherence to Impressionism is not enough to explain —, the bases of several themes to which he returns obsessively in his writing, and the reasons behind his vast production of comparatively trivial work.

The present study is not biographical. It does, however, attempt to suggest the main lines of Ford's life and their immediate effect on his writing. Concentrating principally on his fiction, to which he gave himself most wholly, it examines his novels in chronological order and attempts to trace a course of development in them. This seems particularly necessary to do in the light of the legend Ford himself, with some excuse, spread that The Good Soldier, in fact his seventeenth independent novel, sprang from him unheralded in his forty-first year. The conclusion of this study is that The Good Soldier, probably the finest example of literary pure mathematics in English, is, as Ford considered it, his best achievement; but it attempts to trace in earlier novels experiments without which The Good Soldier would have been impossible.

Chapter One outlines Ford's upbringing and Pre-Raphaelite background, suggesting their influence on his later work. Chapter Two deals at some length with his period of collaboration with Conrad, in many ways the crucial period of his literary career, and outlines the background of Ford's literary theory and the theory itself as expounded in his 1924 study of Conrad. Chapters Three and Four deal with the years 1904 to 1913, during which he wrote fifteen of his twenty-eight independent novels: Chapter Four goes in some detail into Ford's editorship of the English Review and his liaison with Violet Hunt, the former of which being revealing of Ford's literary creed and the latter having wide effect on his life and writing. Chapter Five deals almost exclusively with The Good Soldier. Chapter Six concentrates on Parade's End, though outlining Ford's second editorial venture on the transatlantic review. Chapter Seven treats his semi-prophetic discourses Provence and Great Trade Route at some length as illuminating his best fictional work of this period, and attempts an evaluation of his entire fictional oeuvre.

To appendices have been relegated a short scrutiny of Ford's claims to have been of assistance to Conrad in works other than the signed collaborations and an examination of his poetry, in particular of its influence on Ezra Pound.

I

EARLY YEARS: 1873–1898

Ford Hermann Hueffer[1] was born on December 17th, 1873, at Merton, Surrey. His father, Dr. Franz Xaver Hüffer, settled in England in 1868 and four years later married Catharine, the youngest daughter of the painter Ford Madox Brown. Hüffer, or Hueffer, is described by W.M. Rossetti as "a man learned in various ways but principally concerned with music, ... as musical critic to The Times ... a man of very marked ability ..., a believer in Schopenhauer, and ... [with] a certain tinge of hypochondria in his outlook on life".[2] He was the author of a history of the troubadours and of Richard Wagner, and the Music of the Future (1874). He died in 1889 at the age of forty-three. Ford did not know his father well, as he had been sent to a boarding-school at the age of eight: Dr. Hueffer was usually at Bayreuth during the summer holidays.

Shortly after his arrival in England, Dr. Hueffer had been introduced, probably by Carlyle, into the Pre-Raphaelite circle, and it was largely surrounded by these people that Ford grew up. His reminiscences of his childhood give a bitter picture of himself among "the minatorily bearded, and alarmingly Moral Great":

> I always considered myself to be the most obscure of obscure persons — a very small, very sinful, very stupid child. And for such persons the world of twenty-five years ago was rather a dismal place. ... There were in

---

1. When Ford became a Catholic at the age of eighteen, the names Joseph Leopold were prefixed; in 1919 he changed his surname by deed poll to Ford.
2. Some Reminiscences (1906), vol.2, p.333

> those days a number of those terrible and forbidding things — the Victorian great figures. To me life was simply not worth living because of the existence of Carlyle, of Mr. Ruskin, of Mr. Holman Hunt, of Mr. Browning, or of the gentleman who built the Crystal Palace. These people were perpetually held up to me as standing upon unattainable heights, and at the same time I was perpetually being told that if I could not attain these heights I might just as well not cumber the earth. What then was left for me? Nothing. Simply nothing.[1]

Ford's first school was Praetoria House, a boarding school run on advanced lines by a German couple named Praetorius. For a year after his father's death he went as a day-boy to University College School.[2] His ambition was at this stage to become a composer, but he had to cut his studies short: he claimed that this was because of the antipathy of the principal of his music college to his father.[3]

Ford's next three years were spent at the home of Madox Brown, with whom the family now lived, and on Continental holidays. His sister found him at this stage of his life "very critical. ... [He] thought that nearly everyone was stupid and not worth disagreeing with".[4] He contemplated, to his grandfather's horror, a career in the Army. Of the publication of his first book, a fairy story called The Brown Owl, Ford wrote:

> I hadn't wanted to have a book published, I hadn't tried to get it published. My grand-

---

1. Dedication to Ancient Lights (1911), p.xiii
2. These two were the only schools that Ford attended. The lies he later told about schooling at Westminster and Eton probably arose as a result of his friendship with Arthur Marwood, whose background he admired and perhaps envied.
3. Ancient Lights, p.80
4. Juliet Soskice, Chapters from Childhood (London,1921), p.235

> father had, as it were, ordered Mr. [Edward] Garnett to get it published. ... I can to this day hear my grandfather's voice saying to Mr. Garnett, who was sitting to him on a model's throne: 'Fordie has written a book, too. ... Go and get your book, Fordie!' ... and the manuscript at the end of Mr. Garnett's very thin wrist disappearing into his capacious pocket."[1]

next?

The Brown Owl, published when Ford was eighteen, was followed by The Feather (1892) and The Queen Who Flew (1894); the first two were illustrated by Madox Brown, the last by Burne Jones. Though all three stories are delightful, with engaging touches of irony, only The Brown Owl proved popular. Ford was paid £10 for the copyright: by 1898 the book had gone into a fourth edition.

In 1894, when Ford was twenty, he eloped with Elsie Martindale; the two were married on the 17th May. Elsie, who was three years his junior, had been at school with him at Praetoria House: her father, a distinguished chemist, had objected to the engagement to the extent of making her a ward in Chancery. They settled near Romney Marsh, living on £1 a week allowed by Ford's mother. Thus began Ford's "period of seclusion":

> I went permanently into the country, where I remained for thirteen years, thus losing almost all touch with intellectual or artistic life. ... I lived entirely, or almost entirely, among peasants. This was, of course, due to that idealizing of the country life which was so extraordinarily prevalent in the earlier nineties among the disciples of William Morris and other Cockneys. It was a singularly unhealthy frame of mind which caused a number of

---

1. Mightier than the Sword (1938), p.126

> young men, totally unfitted for it, to waste only too many good years of their lives in posing as romantic agriculturalists. They took small holdings, lost their hay crops, saw their chickens die, and stuck to it with grim obstinacy until, William Morris and Morrisism alike being dead, their feelings found no more support from the contagion of other enthusiasms. So they have mostly returned to useful work, handicapped by the loss of so many good years, and generally with bad digestions; for the country, with its atrocious food and cooking, is, in England, the home of dyspepsia.[1]

David Garnett adds to Ford's picture:

> [Elsie] dressed in richly coloured garments of the William Morris style. ... Ford was at this period playing at being a farmer and an expert on agriculture, so he wore a smock frock and gaiters. The only sign of the farm was that he kept ducks. There was no pond for them, so Ford sank a hip bath in the ground and the ducks stood in a queue, waiting their turn to swim in it. The birds were named after my mother and my aunts."[2]

The period in the country was not, to begin with, one of great literary productivity. At the age of eighteen Ford had published his first novel, The Shifting of the Fire. Shortly after his marriage, however, he found himself commissioned to complete the biography of Ford Madox Brown begun by Lucy Rossetti: this engaged his attentions until 1896; and when in 1911 he wrote, "I had it on my conscience that I had written at least one — and probably three — of the dullest books that were ever written. In these books I had represented the Pre-Raphaelites as pompous demi-gods",[3] it was probably

---

1. Ancient Lights, pp.250,254 (American edition)
2. The Golden Echo (London,1953), p.35
3. Letter to the editor, Outlook, May 6, 1911.

Ford Madox Brown that he had chiefly in mind. Compared With Ford's later reminiscences of his grandfather, the book is almost comically serious; Madox Brown "had an infinite store of 'good stories' to draw upon", Ford writes; "Indeed, often as I have heard him tell a tale with one moral or another during the course of three years, I hardly remember to have heard him repeat the same story twice."[1] The biography brought Ford considerable recognition, however, and was well paid for; with a legacy of £3000 from a German uncle, it made Ford's time all his own. He appears to have worked during this period on two stories which remain unpublished, the first (dated by David D. Harvey between 1894 and 1896 [2]) a tale set in the Viking period, the second the incomplete Romance of the Times before Us, 171 pages in his own hand and another's (probably his wife's), dated 1897-8. When he met Conrad in 1898 he was working on a novel, Seraphina (which became Romance). He was also engaged in collecting material for his book on the Cinque Ports and had begun his research for a projected Life and Times of Henry VIII. His verse of this period is slight and derivative.

Shortly before the birth of his first child in 1897, Ford moved to "a real old farm - very jolly and all the rest of it with oak beams and a number of other advantages on ceiling and floor".[3] His life was complicated, however, by the first occurrence of the malady which was to cause his breakdown in 1903. Ford describes it as "agoraphobia

---

1. Ford Madox Brown, p.392
2. Ford Madox Ford (N.Y.,1962), p.117
3. Letter to Walter Jerrold quoted by Douglas Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite (London,1948), p.62.

and intense depression. I had nothing specific to be depressed about. ... The illness was purely imaginary. ... It was enhanced by wickedly unskilful doctoring." [1] Goldring claims that it was "an indication that his subconscious mind was almost constantly in revolt against the pattern of living which, under the influence of William Morris, he had marked out for himself." [2] Whatever its origin, illness seems to have impaired his productivity. Ford called the years 1903-6 "lost years";[3] as John A. Meixner remarks, "Ford did not possess ... the force of character and will of a Conrad, who despite illness and hypochondria could push on with his work at high standards." [4]

In July, 1898, Ford and Elsie made their third move, to Limpsfield in Surrey, and so found themselves living near Edward Garnett. The Hueffer, Garnett and Rossetti families had been very close friends, and Edward had helped Ford with the publication of The Brown Owl and Ford Madox Brown;[5] later on, antipathy developed between the two (Garnett found Ford "too blond"), but it was he who introduced Ford to Joseph Conrad; and this was certainly the most important meeting of Ford's career.

It is as well to take stock of Ford's position at this stage of his life. H.G. Wells, who met Ford with Conrad, describes him as "a long blond with a drawling

---

1. Return to Yesterday (1931), p.266
2. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.63.
3. Return to Yesterday, p.266
4. Ford Madox Ford's Novels (University of Minnesota,1962), p.25
5. Frank MacShane, on the evidence of a letter from Ford to Edward Garnett in the possession of David Garnett, writes that "Edward Garnett became his agent in almost every matter connected with the book's production." See Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.6.

manner, ... oddly resembling George Moore the novelist in pose and person. What he is really or if he is really, nobody knows now and he least of all; he has become a great system of assumed personas and dramatized selves. His brain is an exceptionally good one and when he first came along, he had cut himself for the rôle of a very gifted scion of the Pre-Raphaelite stem, given over to artistic purposes and a little undecided between music, poetry, the Novel, Thoreau-istic horticulture and the simple appreciation of life." [1] This cannot be regarded as over-exaggeration: Ford's own analysis of his indecision and lack of direction, which he blames on his upbringing, corroborates the picture. His reminiscences are notoriously inaccurate in detail,[2] but his rendering of the emotional impression that his childhood made on him rings true. "No greater calamity could befall one than to be trained as a genius", he wrote; together with his brother and his Rossetti cousins he was brought up in what he called "a forcing-house for genius", surrounded by a constant flow of members of the Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic group, by artists and musicians with "their Olympian jealousies": he had to sit on Turgenev's knee, to listen to Swinburne, drunk, being dipped in a bathtub upstairs, to hear Holman Hunt "complaining endlessly like a creaking door", to dress in parti-coloured hose, to perform in Greek plays written by hiscousins. His revolt against

---

1. Experiment in Autobiography (London,1934), p.617
2. See Helen Rossetti Angeli's attack on Fords portrayal of the Pre-Raphaelites in Pre-Raphaelite Twilight (London,1934), p143 ff. About Ford she remarks, "He always seemed in fact to be a particularly normal and cheerful small boy."

his upbringing was partly the desire to be allowed to be ordinary if he wished, partly the rebelliousness of youth against age; but it was also in part a conscious repudiation of some of the aesthetic standards his elders supported. With Pre-Raphaelism in what he considered its pure form he had no quarrel: in its pure form it was only realism, painting things as you saw them. But when Ruskin gave the Pre-Raphaelite painters his patronage, the movement acquired a moral purposiveness incompatible with fundamental realism. With Aestheticism and its later ramifications Ford would have no truck:

> Pre-Raphaelism in itself was born of Realism. Ruskin gave it one white wing of moral purpose. The Aestheticists presented it with another, dyed all the colours of the rainbow, from the hues of mediaeval tapestries to that of romantic love. Thus it flew rather unevenly and came to the ground. The first Pre-Raphaelites said that you must paint your model exactly as you see it, hair for hair or leaf-spore for leaf-spore. Mr. Ruskin gave them the added canon that the subject they painted must be one of moral distinction. You must, in fact, paint life as you see it and yet in such a way as to prove that life is an ennobling thing. How one was to do this one got no particular directions. Perhaps one may have obtained it by living only in the drawing-room of Brantwood House, Coniston, when Mr. Ruskin was in residence. ... Aestheticism, which originated with Burne-Jones and Morris, was a movement that concerned itself with idealizing anything that was mediaeval. It may be symbolized by the words, 'long necks and pomegranates'. Wilde carried this ideal one stage further. He desired to live upon the smell of a lily. ...
>
> [Henley and his circle] took as it were the place of Pre-Raphaelism after Pre-Raphaelism had degenerated into a sort of Aestheticism and Aestheticism into a sort of mawkish flapdoodle.[1]

---

1. Ancient Lights (1911), pp.58,153,175

Ford regarded his grandfather as a "saluted ally" of the Pre-Raphaelites rather than a true Pre-Raphaelite; and his regard for Madox Brown was in the end highest because of his realism:

> He seems to have been the first man in modern days to see or to put in practice the theory that aesthetic salvation was to be found not in changing the painter's subject, but in changing his method of looking at and rendering the visible world. He began trying to paint what he saw.[1]

He admired Madox Brown to the extent that he was a technically well-equipped realist. To the extent that Rossetti, on the other hand, was technically ill-equipped and a painter of pictures that illustrated ideas, he looked down on him:

> Very dangerous to Rossetti, as painter pure and simple, was the literary idea, moral or mood, when he attempted to force it home. When he was content, being in a certain mood, to observe and record, he was up to the limit of his powers successful; when he attempted to paint his moral, to illustrate his mood, he was most liable to fail, and to fail by exaggerating.[2]

The Rossetti who preached that passion justified everything Ford found objectionable: the voice of Christopher Tietjens, at the opening of Some Do Not, is surely Ford's own:

> I tell you it revolts me to think of that obese, oily man who never took a bath, in a grease-spotted dressing-gown and the underclothes he's slept in, standing beside a five-shilling model, or some Mrs. W. Three Stars, gazing into a mirror that reflects their fetid selves and gilt sunfish and drop chandeliers and plates sickening with cold bacon fat and gurgling about

---

1. Ford, The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (London,1907), p.21
2. Ford, Rossetti (London,1902), p.141

passion.[1]

It was the work of Modox Brown done under the influence of Holbein, in Ford's view the greatest realist and master of all,[2] that he admired most deeply.

Another aspect of Ford's revolt was a repudiation, for the time being, of the artistic life in favour of a life of (comparative) action. He later claimed that his flight to the country was made under the influence of "Henley and his piratical gang":

> It was Henley and his friends who introduced into the English writing mind the idea that the man of action was something fine and a man of letters a sort of castrato. They went jumping all over the earth, they "jumped the blind baggage" in the United States, they played at being tramps in Turkey, they died in Samoa, they debauched the morals of lonely border villages. You see what it was — they desired to be men of action, and certainly they infected me with the desire, and I am very glad of it, just as I am very glad that the intolerable boredom of life without sport or pursuit in the country taught me better in time.[3]

Ford's first response to the voices of Imperial England, in particular to Kipling, was enthusiastic; and it was Henley who suggested to Joseph Conrad collaboration with Ford. But as Ford, in the late 1890's, turned against this group of writers, mainly for the technical crudity of their approach,[4] he turned against the idea of Imperialism itself. The Inheritors (1901) is an attack on exploitive Imperialism.

---

1. P.25 (Penguin edition)
2. "The two supreme artists of the world — Holbein and Bach." Ford, The English Novel (London,1931), p.83
3. Ancient Lights (1911), p.267 (American edition)
4. Ford in several places cited Kipling's lines

> There are five and forty ways
> Of inditing tribal lays
> And every single one of them is right ...

as evidence of this.

What Ford had gained from his Pre-Raphaelite elders and in particular from Ford Madox Brown proved, however, to be far more deep-lying than what he rejected. From the time of his acquaintance with Conrad, James and Crane, he held a growing belief in cohesive literary movements (here an "Impressionist" movement of writers of foreign extraction) which had behind it the example of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The same belief is evident in Ford's involvement with the Imagist movement shortly before the War and, indeed, in his obvious desire to _faire ecole_ during his periods of editorship of the _English Review_ (1909-10) and the _transatlantic review_ (1924). The social mediaevalism of William Morris, of which Ford affected to be scornful (Morris "had never looked mediaevalism, with its cruelties, its filth, its stenches and its avarice, in the face" [1]) is not far removed from the social theories expressed in his own _Great Trade Route_ (1937): the most important man in Ford's society here is the small producer,

> the man who with a certain knowledge of various crafts can set his hand to most of the kinds of work that go to the maintenance of humble existences. He can mend or make a rough chest of drawers; he will make shift to sole a shoe or make a passable pair of sandals; he will contrive or repair hurdles, platters, scythe handles, styes, shingle roofs, harrows. But above all he can produce and teach his family to produce good food according to the seasons ... in sufficiency to keep his household supplied independent of the flux of currencies and the tides of world supplies — and to have a surplus for his neighbours. He is the insurance premium of his race. In short a Man. [2]

---

1. _Ancient Lights_ (1911), p.18 (American edition)
2. _Great Trade Route_ (London,1937), p.170

Ford's debt to his grandfather is, aside from its purely material aspect — financial assistance and introduction into influential circles at an early age — difficult to assess, but the characteristics of his grandfather as artist to which Ford himself most frequently refers are his individualism, his interest in experiment, his tolerance of other schools, his down-to-earthness and industry, and his mistrust of academic artists. In him Ford had his earliest example of the artist who portrays what he sees as he sees fit, who works under no particular banner, and to whom art is a continual cycle of experiment, application and development.

Nevertheless, enduring though the Pre-Raphaelite impression was to be, it was the circle of writers Ford was to meet between 1896 and 1898 — in particular James, Crane and Conrad — who were to leave a deeper mark (though, in the case of James, it was more from his reading of James than from anything that passed between them that Ford took his lead: he admits that James hardly ever talked to him about writing). In them he was to find a more up-to-date experimentalism, and, through Conrad, to recognise his own vocation as novelist.

Ford's several memoirs of his association with Conrad give the impression that it began with the collaborators on a not unequal footing. In one place he writes patronisingly of their first meeting, "Upon the writer Conrad made no impression at all. Mr. Conrad was the author of Almayer's Folly, a great book of a romantic

fashion, but written too much in the style of Alphonse Daudet. ... A great, new writer, then. But as to great artists and writers this writer even then en avait soupé." [1] But Ford did, less publicly, admit the truth: Meixner quotes a letter from Ford to Herbert Read in which he observes that but for Conrad he would have been "a mere continuation of Pre-Raphaelism". [2] By 1898 Conrad had published three novels (Almayer's Folly (1895), An Outcast of the Islands (1896) and The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' (1897)) and a book of stories (Tales of Unrest) was about to appear. The Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' shows that the heart of his aesthetic theory had already been formed. Ford, on the other hand, had published three fairy stories, a volume of poems, a novel, a biography of Madox Brown and three or four articles on painting. He had won esteem by his writing (he says that Conrad told him that Henley thought him "the finest stylist then writing in English" [3]), but this was more for promise than for achievement. He was engaged in writing Seraphina (later Romance), which Conrad first saw in November, 1898. Conrad, though not yet popular, was in comparison a considerable novelist, and recognised as such by discerning critics, in particular by Edward Garnett. What Conrad's and Ford's reasons were for undertaking the collaboration are more fully dealt with in Appendix A below; for the moment it is enough to recognise that Ford was something of an unknown quantity, even to himself.

---

1. Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance (London,1924) p.18
2. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.38. The words quoted are Meixner's.
3. Return to Yesterday, p.66

Conrad had, of course, read The Shifting of the Fire;[1] but this juvenile work can hardly be taken as an accurate indicator of its author's subsequent direction. That it would be derivative could be expected, but in its derivation from English rather than Continental models it stands in isolation. The hints that it does give are to the themes of Ford's later novels of English society rather than to his treatment of these themes. This chapter closes, then, with an analysis of these themes as they point to The Inheritors (1901), written with Conrad, and his own novels of contemporary setting subsequent to the collaboration, starting with The Benefactor (1905). The years between 1898 and 1905 were devoted, as far as imaginative writing was concerned, almost entirely to the collaboration. (Ford published two slim volumes of verse during this period, but they hardly count as "work" as he and Conrad understood the word: "The writing of verse hardly appears to me to be a matter of work", he airily confessed in 1913: "it is a process, as far as I am concerned, too uncontrollable. From time to time words in verse form have come into my head and I have written them down, quite powerlessly and without much interest, under the stress of certain emotions." [2])

---

1. Conrad found the novel "delightfully" young, not "drearily or morally or sadly or frightfully or any of these things which politeness would have induced me to paraphrase". Quoted from letter to Ford dated November 1898 by Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.69.
2. Introduction to Collected Poems (London,1913). These remarks should not be taken too literally — see Ford's own analysis of the solid work that went into the first poem of "A Sequence" (from The Face of the Night (1904)) in the article "The Making of Modern Verse", Academy, Apr.19,1902.

The Shifting of the Fire

Ford published his first novel, 322 pages in length, at the age of eighteen. It shows no influence of the French Realist writers whom Ford had at this time begun to read at his grandfather's suggestion, but in its description of interiors and winter landscapes in tones of grey it is modishly aesthetic. The plot owes something to the Victorian thriller. The hero of the novel is a young medical scientist, Clem Hallebone, who impoverishes himself in order to save the creditors of the firm he has inherited. As a pauper he refuses to go through with his marriage to Edith Rylands, a rising young violinist misunderstood by her rich and materialistic father. Edith determines not to lose Hallebone, and so consents to her father's plan to marry her to a wealthy old man, Kasker-Ryves: she hopes soon to be left a wealthy widow. She conceals her marriage from Hallebone, but he gets to hear of it and is driven to hatred and despair: "Were it not for this cursed passion for a wanton, heartless girl I might now be studying hard, benefiting mankind and the great cause of science, and paving the way to greatness for myself".[1] Hearing in turn of Hallebone, Kasker-Ryves, who has proved unsuspectedly virile, taunts Edith with stories of his youthful debauches: "Her whole moral system had been shaken by her husband's revelations, and she began to grow cynical, which is as a rule a bad sign in a girl".[2] The strain proves so great that Edith falls seriously ill. Kasker-Ryves, however, fortunately dies, Hallebone recovers

---

1. The Shifting of the Fire (London,1892), p.128
2. Ibid., p.170

his fortune, and, after some doubt about Edith has been dispelled — he suspects that she has poisoned Kasker-Ryves — the lovers embark on marriage.

There is little point in picking out the weaknesses of this juvenile work. Its interest is in its foreshadowing of Ford's later themes and interests. There is, first of all, the theme of passion and frustration. Although there are continual sentimental overtones which are only thinly disguised by an occasional tentative self-mocking irony ("I wonder how many other fellows would have borne having Edith in their arms as I did this evening and not kissed her, in spite of her husband and conventional morality"[1]), Ford does not show "passion justifying everything": whether or not the novel embodies sufficiently strongly a sense of cause and inevitable effect, the suffering of the lovers arises clearly out of Edith's attempt to make use of Kasker-Ryves for her own, and ultimately Hallebone's, ends. Their suffering is the torture of jealousy and frustration to the extent, in Hallebone, of hypochondria and suicidal depression. More important, the mere death of Kasker-Ryves does not do away with this torture: jealousy is replaced in Hallebone by suspicion of Edith's honour, but this doubt does not lessen his desire for her:

> ... The last state of the man was seven times seven worse than the former. He felt her kisses showering on his cheeks, as though a rose were shaking its blood-red petals on to

---

1. Ibid., p.231

> his face - and yet, and yet, she was a murderess that gave them, and it was by murder she had gained the right and the power to give them, and yet her kisses were so sweet, and fell so softly, like summer rain on parched grounds, and he had been yearning for them so long. How could he throw away the power to possess them for ever?

Facile though Ford's treatment here may be, the situation itself is as complex and agonising as that in The Good Soldier.

---

1. Ibid., p.298. Paul L. Wiley points out the similarity of the triangle of lovers and aging husband here to that in Wagner's Tristan, and suggests that the vial of poison given to Edith by Hallebone and kept by her secretly until its discovery by Kasker-Ryves carries overtones of the love-philtre in Tristan. He quotes from The Nature of a Crime, written by Ford in collaboration with Conrad, probably about 1906, in which the narrator, writing to the married woman he has loved secretly, divulges his own motives while analysing Tristan:

> It has always a little puzzled me why we return to Tristan. There are passages in the thing as intolerable as anything in any of the German master's scores. But we are held - simply by the idea of the love-philtre: it's that alone that interests us. We do not care about the initial association of Tristan and the prima donna: we do not believe in Mark's psychologizing: but the moment when those two dismal marionettes have drained unconsideringly the impossible cup, they become suddenly alive, and we see two human beings under the grip of a passion - acting as irrationally as I did when I promised my cabman five shillings to get me to the theatre in time for the opening bars.
>
> It is, you see, the love-philtre that performs this miracle. It interests - it is real to us - because every human being knows what it is to act, irrationally, under the stress of some passion or other. We are drawn along irresistibly; we commit the predestined follies or the predestined heroisms; the other side of our being acts in contravention of all our rules of conduct or of intellect. (The Nature of a Crime, (London, 1924) p.32-34)

See Paul L. Wiley, Novelist of Three Worlds: Ford Madox Ford (Syracuse, N.Y.,1962), p.138.

A second theme, central here and to such novels as The Benefactor, The Nature of a Crime and An English Girl, is the effect of financial pressure on human relationships. The theme of the conflict between materialism and the arts (here between Edith's father and Kasker-Ryves on the one hand and Edith, the violinist, and Hallebone, the believer in "the music of the future", on the other) is not only important in Ford's later novels (The Inheritors, The Benefactor) but is a central issue in all his general critical writing.

Several details in The Shifting of the Fire are interesting in the light of their later development. Clem Hallebone is provided with a genealogy that shows that his name is derived from that of Holbein. This is, first of all, a touch of "justifying" as Ford was to define the word in Joseph Conrad (1924), where he explains that every character in his novels is provided with a personal background and history, and that all characters should be "justified ... in terms of their personal histories".[1] But there is another implication in this choice of name. Ford seems never to have lost awareness of his German descent. This awareness was not blunted by his comparatively cosmopolitan upbringing and his "un-English" education. During the War, his name was to become a liability. His self-consciousness, of which this was an element, presumably lay behind his attempts in his memoirs to project himself as "more

---

1. Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance (London, 1924), p.203

English than the English"; and it is reflected in his novels in a series of men of foreign descent who are nevertheless perfect English gentlemen; Don Kelleg, an Anglicised American, in An English Girl; Robert Grimshaw, half Greek, in A Call; and Count Macdonald, Russian, in The New Humpty-Dumpty.

The use of the title The Shifting of the Fire in the text is noteworthy in the light of the considerable use to which Ford was later to put the title Some Do Not. These words are used as a leitmotif for the Tietjens code of behaviour: occurring in four different places in the novel, they at the same time illuminate his code from four different points of view and unify and contrast different sections. In the earlier novel the words of the title are first used when Hallebone catches a sudden glimpse of Edith's beauty by the fireside as the coals shift and settle. The second use occurs after Edith's marriage, which has been such torture to her that Hell would be only a "shifting of the fire from within my soul to without";[1] the words have been bitterly twisted.

Most illuminating of all, however, in its prefiguring of Ford's later work, is his handling of the sexual theme. Kasker-Ryves is the first of a series of vigorous and virile older men, usually fathers or lovers, who come into conflict with Ford's gentler and more sensitive heroes: one thinks of Gurnard, the sinister and forceful politician, in The Inheritors; the heroine's mad father in The Bene-

---

1. The Shifting of the Fire, p.257

factor; the ruthless Kelleg Sr. in An English Girl). In two scenes in particular involving Kasker-Ryves, Edith and Hallebone, Ford reveals Hallesbone as nervous and frightened compared with Kasker-Ryves when the action has sexual implications. In the first, Edith faints and Hallebone tries to pick her up with Kasker-Ryves amusedly watching. Hallebone is only at the third attempt able to lift her, and "staggers with her to the sofa ... his eyes closed".[1] In the second, just after Kasker-Ryves's death, Edith embraces his corpse, faints and pulls him down upon her: the corpse "lay, stiff and unnatural ... across Edith"; Hallebone feels "horror" [2] as he watches. It is understandable that the nervousness and uncertainties of the young author in rendering scenes with sexual overtones should have been transferred to his creation. What is remarkable, however, is that the same reluctance, nervousness and ineptitude should be afflicting his men as late as A Call (1910) and The Panel (1912). In these books the men rationalize their sexual reluctance as idealism, but, as in The Shifting of the Fire, one senses that their rationalization stems from a reluctance of the author to face a specifically sexual situation. It is not the failure itself to portray sexual situations that mars The Shifting of the Fire, The Benefactor, An English Girl, A Call and The Panel, but the unavoidable impression the reader receives that the author is passing off fright as restraint. It is not until The Good Soldier

---

1. Ibid., p.219
2. Ibid., p.252.

and the scene in which Ashburnham refuses Nancy Rufford when she appears "rising up at the foot of his bed, with her long hair falling, like a split cone of shadow, ... a silent, no doubt agonized figure, like a spectre, suddenly offering herself to him"[1] that we have, in Ashburnham, a man in whose reasons for restraint we can believe.

---

1. The Good Soldier, p.175

II

COLLABORATION WITH CONRAD

1898-1903

Ford gives the following "impression" of his first encounter with Conrad's work:

> It was a Sunday evening. We were all dressed more or less mediaevally, after the manner of true disciples of socialism of the William Morris school. We were drinking, I think, mead out of cups made of bullock's horn. Mr. [Edward] Garnett was reading his MSS. Suddenly he threw one across to me.
>
> "Look at that," he said.
>
> I think that then I had the rarest literary pleasure of my existence. It was to come into contact with a spirit of romance, of adventure, of distant lands, and with an English that was new, magic and unsurpassed. It sang like music; it overwhelmed me like a great warm wave of the sea, and it was as clear as tropical sunlight falling into deep and scented forests of the East.[1] For the MS. was that of Almayer's Folly ...

This was in the middle of 1898. The first meeting took place shortly afterwards (Conrad at first mistook Ford for the gardener). In November the Conrad family took over Pent Farm, Ford becoming their landlord. He and his wife moved to Aldington, overlooking Romney Marsh. Conrad seems to have been happy with the move.[2] By the end of the year he and Ford had agreed to write a book in collaboration.

---

1. Ancient Lights (American edition), p.250.
2. See letter from Conrad to David S. Meldrum dated Oct.12,1898, in which he voices his enthusiasm over Pent Farm. Ford is "an exceedingly decent chap who lets me have the thing awfully cheap." Conrad, Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum, p.30.

The question of who suggested the collaboration has produced a number of answers. Wells asserted that the suggestion came from Ford.[1] Conrad made no public pronouncement. Ford claimed that

> that autumn [1898] I had a letter from Conrad asking that he might be allowed to collaborate with me in the novel about pirates that I was writing. He said that he wrote English with great difficulty because he thought his more unspoken thoughts in Polish and his carefully spoken ones in French. These last he translated into English when he wanted to write.[2] Henley had suggested that he might gain fluency if he collaborated with some good English stylist. Conrad said that Henley had said that I was the finest stylist then writing English. That cannot have been true because, as I have said, Henley later told me that he had never heard of my existence. But Conrad liked to please as much as Henley liked to knock the nonsense out of you.[3]

Jocelyn Baines, in his critical biography of Conrad, supports the Henley story. He quotes two letters from Conrad to Henley which show that, after Henley had praised Ford highly, Conrad approached him: in a letter dated October 8, 1898, he writes of "my plan to work with Hueffer" and in November, 1899, he writes that "the proposal certainly came from me."[4] Conrad's most obvious reason was financial;[5] but he presumably also hoped to acquire a more fluent command of colloquial

---

1. See English Review, Aug.,1920.
2. Conrad later denied this. In a letter to Hugh Walpole dated June 7, 1918, he says, "The ... thing that grieves me and makes me dance with rage is the cropping up of the legend set afloat by Hugh Clifford about my hesitation between English and French as a writing language. For it is absurd." Jean-Aubry, Life and Letters, v.2, p.206.
3. Return to Yesterday, p.66. Unusually for him, Ford repeated exactly the details of this account in Thus to Revisit (p.27) and Joseph Conrad (p.37).
4. Baines, Joseph Conrad (London, 1959), pp.217-8.
5. For a note on Conrad's financial position at this time, see Appendix A of this essay.

English, and to get from Ford the critical reassurance and support that Garnett had until then been providing.[1]

When Ford joined Conrad, he had almost completed the first draft of a romance entitled Seraphina; this was finished by November, 1898, when Conrad wrote asking him to read the work to him; he would later read it himself.[2] Ford had based the tale on the records of the trial of Aaron Smith, the last pirate to be tried at the Old Bailey.[3] He read the records in the first

---

1. Goldring (The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.66) suggests several more personal reasons.

   It is perhaps worth noting that Ford was not the only writer with whom Conrad thought of collaborating. Richard Curle records that "at one stage [Conrad] suggested tentatively that I should collaborate with him; but as I told him, this would do him harm and me no good. ... He never mentioned it again." The Last Twelve Years of Joseph Conrad (London, 1928), p.111. Curle gives no indication of when the suggestion occurred.

   Conrad also thought seriously of collaborating in a play with Stephen Crane — see his undated letter to Stephen Crane published in Bookman (N.Y.), May,1929. A letter dated Feb.3,1898 (Jean-Aubry, Life and Letters, v.1, p.228), however, refers to it. Conrad eventually gave up the idea because he "had no dramatic gift."

2. Quoted by Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.69.
3. The following summary of Smith's story, "Cuban Pirates," is given in All the Year Round, Jan.22, 1870, from which Ford took it.

   "Aaron Smith, being charged with piracy in the West Indies, claimed that he had been the unwilling agent of pirates who had abducted him from his brig the Zephyr which had sailed from Kingston for England in June, 1822. His abduction was effected, he claimed, when the Zephyr was taken possession of by a schooner manned by Spaniards and half-breeds who plundered the ship and forced him to serve as navigator and interpreter. After several months' detention he succeeded in escaping, but at Havana he was recognized as a pirate and handed over to Sir Charles Rowley, the English Commander-in-Chief

instance only as a favour to Dr. Richard Garnett, who had suggested Smith's adventures as a good subject for a novel.[1] He was struck, however, by the possibilities of the subject: "Here indeed was what we [he and Conrad] used to call a subject ... For certain subjects will grip you with a force almost supernatural, as if something came from behind the printed, the written or the spoken word, or from within the aura of the observed incident in actual life, really saying: Treat me."[2]

The completed first draft, Ford writes, "was of an incredible thinness. It was like the whisper of a nonagerian and the writer had tried to make it like the whisper of a nonagerian ... Every sentence had a dying fall and every paragraph faded out."[3] Conrad had expected something utterly different — a treatment in the manner of Flaubert's Salammbô, to which he would have to add only "a few touches of description, sea atmosphere, mists, riggings and the like;"[4] he called Ford's attempt " a Book turned into the dry bone of a technical feat."[5] The two made the pious resolution

---

in Jamaica. He was returned to England to stand trial, and was subsequently declared not guilty."

In 1823, after the trial, Smith wrote a book improbably entitled The Atrocities of the Pirates: Being a Faithful Narrative of the Unparalleled Sufferings Endured by the Author During his Captivity among the Pirates of the Island of Cuba: With an Account of the Excesses and Barbarities of those Inhuman Freebooters. Ford does not claim to have read this. Romance does, however, follow closely the outline in All the Year Round.

1. Return to Yesterday, p.175.
2. Joseph Conrad, p.14.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.22.
5. Ibid., p.23.

that the story "shall be greatly advanced if not absolutely finished in July, 1899,"[1] but for the time being set it aside in favour of work on The Inheritors, the plot of which Ford had sketched. This book was sufficiently advanced by March, 1900, to be submitted to the publishers, and by the end of the year it was completed. It is less a work of collaboration than a work written by Ford under Conrad's supervision: an inscription by Conrad to a presentation copy reads, "There is little of my actual writing in this work. Discussion there has been in plenty. F.M.H. held the pen."[2] In a letter dated November, 1899, Conrad remarks that if he had influence enough with the publishers he would make them publish the book in Ford's name alone, "because the work is all yours — I have shared only a little of your worry," and continues to say that "the proposal [for collaboration] certainly came from me under a false impression of my power of work."[3]

Romance, as Seraphina became, was, however, to be far more of a true collaboration than The Inheritors. Work began in December, 1900, and went on until July, 1902; it was finally published in 1903 over these dates. Conrad called this period "long enough for an artistic conscience;"[4] Ford had proposed "1896-1903."

---

1. George T. Keating, A Conrad Memorial Library (New York, 1929), p.131. The words are quoted from a synopsis of Seraphina.
2. See facsimile in Return to Yesterday, p.205.
3. Quoted by Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.70.
4. Letter to Ford, Sept.,1903, Ibid., p.75.

Madame Bovary took seven years in the writing.

Between Ford Madox Brown in 1896 and Romance in 1903, Ford published independently only a volume of poems and The Cinque Ports: A Historical and Descriptive Record (1900), which had been commissioned by Blackwood in 1898 before the collaboration began. Ford was later to call this "a preposterous work purporting to be a history of the Cinque Ports."[1] Parts show signs of hasty writing, though Ford later said of it (probably "impressionistically" and in order to prove a point — the remarks occur in a chapter entitled "Style") that he wrote it "entirely in sentences of not more than ten syllables. He [Ford] read the book over. He found it read immensely long. He went through it all again. He joined short sentences: he introduced relative clauses: he wrote in long sentences that had a gentle sonority and ended with a dying fall. The book read less long. Much less long."[2]

The Inheritors

Because, on the testimony of both Ford and Conrad, Romance is a work entirely different from Seraphina, we may consider The Inheritors (1901) as standing

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.120. Compare with these remarks Ford's claim, in the dedication to The Cinque Ports, that the work is "A piece of literature pure and simple, an attempt, by means of suggestion, to interpret the passing years, the inward message of the Five Ports."
2. Joseph Conrad, p.198.

earlier than Romance in Ford's oeuvre. Ford himself was later, looking back over nearly twenty-five years, to make some caustic but perceptive remarks about the novel. He even claimed that, at the time when Conrad's Collected Edition was projected, he proposed suppressing The Inheritors. But "Conrad remarked with a great deal of feeling ... 'Why not republish it? It's a good book, isn't it? It's a damn good book."[1] Nevertheless, he regarded the "queer, thin book" with "intense dislike. Or no, with hatred and dread having nothing to do with literature. What they have to do with [I] cannot say: some obscure nervous first cause, no doubt, that could not interest anyone but a psychopathic expert."[2] This attitude is perhaps understandable in a man who had just written Some Do Not. Yet The Inheritors is not a disgraceful performance: if anything was to make an older Ford shudder, it would have been the preciousness, the studied languor, the refined sentimentalism of the novel. Ford was never insensible to the fact that comparatively seldom, considering the great bulk of his work, had he, in R.P. Blackmur's words, "stopped on the difficulties that make the job worth doing;"[3] and for his early work he felt, no doubt over-fastidiously, something "like physical modesty ... [I] would give a great deal if the shelf in the British Museum that contains [my] early writings could be burned."[4] He

---

1. Ibid., p.118.
2. Ibid.
3. "The King Over the Waters," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr.,1948.
4. Joseph Conrad, p.97.

seems to have been far more sensitive to the emotional weakness of his early writings — their failure to reflect any emotion outside the spectrum of the gentle, the sentimental, the wistfully ironic — than to their comparable technical inadequacies.

The Inheritors is of course, in the truest sense of the phrase, Ford's apprentice work. Conrad was not so much partner as overseer: "Conrad's function in The Inheritors as it today stands was to give each scene a final tap."[1] As to why Conrad should have been attracted to the book in the first place and wished to collaborate, Ford makes two suggestions. The first is the attraction of Ford's prose style, with everywhere its carefully placed mots justes. As Ford remarked in another context, what he and Conrad most deeply shared was "a devotion to Flaubert and Maupassant. We discovered that we both had Felicité, St Julien, immense passages of Madame Bovary, La Nuit, Ce Cochin de Morin and immense passages of Une Vie by heart."[2] It is not difficult to imagine Conrad enthusiastic over such a sentence as, "I recovered my equanimity with the thought that I had been visited by some stroke of an obscure and unimportant physical kind:" the ironic flatness of "unimportant" gives to the sentence the last twist of the knife that Conrad always strove for. As Ford says, "However much we might have scoffed, it was half-

---

1. Ibid., p.132.
2. Ibid., p.36.

sentences of [mine] that, inscrutably, jumped out of the prose and caught Conrad by the throat."[1]

The other reason that Ford gives for Conrad's interest in the book is the attraction of the subject. The Inheritors is basically a political roman à clef; and, to Ford, Conrad was above all a political novelist whose greatest masterpiece was Under Western Eyes. When Ford read Conrad his draft of the first chapter, Conrad called it "magnificent ... with the voice of the Conrad who was always avid of political subjects to treat, and [I] knew that this indeed was the Conrad subject."[2]

This is not apparently as Conrad later saw the matter. In a letter to Edward Garnett dated March 26, 1900, by which time the novel was sufficiently advanced to be sent to the publishers, Conrad wrote:

> What a lark! I set myself to look upon the thing as a sort of skit upon the sort of political (?!) novel, fools of the N.S. sort do write. This in my heart of hearts. And poor H. was dead in earnest! Oh Lord. How he worked! There is not a chapter I haven't made him write twice — most of them three times over. ... Joking apart the expenditure of nervous fluid was immense. There were moments when I cursed the day I was born and dared not look up at the light of day ... H. has been as patient as no angel has ever been. ... I've been rude to him ... in the course of that agony I have been ready to weep more than once. Yet not for him. ... You'll have to burn this letter ... I suppose you've scornfully detected whole slabs of my own precious writing in that precious novel?[3]

---

1. Ibid., p.132
2. Ibid., p.133.
3. Conrad, Letters from Joseph Conrad, ed. Garnett, p.168. Of Garnett's publication of this "burst of mordant humour at my expense", Ford wrote that Conrad "must have thought he had gone a little too far, for he asked Mr. Garnett to burn it. Mr. Garnett preferred to publish it." Return to Yesterday, p.204.

The political theme of The Inheritors is the supplanting of the old order by a new order "clear-sighted, eminently practical, incredible; with no ideals, prejudices or remorse; with no feeling for art and no reverence for life; free from any ethical tradition; callous to pain, weakness, suffering, and death, as if they had been invulnerable and immortal."[1] The new order represents exploitive Imperialism, typified by the Boer War, which Ford regarded as marking a significant deterioration in British political probity[2] and hence — since his whole social outlook rested upon a belief in the interconnection of the arts with national and political character — a stage in the decline of English cultural life. The new order which is to inherit the earth is represented by the race of Fourth Dimensionists, whose aims are at the outset expounded to the narrator of the story by one of the race ("perhaps Semitic, perhaps Slav — ... some incompatible race"[3]), an ethereal girl who meets him casually on a country road. She intends to bring into disrepute the Foreign Minister Churchill (who stands for Balfour and the old order of political integrity) and to advance the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gurnard (Joseph Chamberlain), himself a Fourth Dimensionist.

The narrator is an impecunious young aristocrat

---

1. The Inheritors (London, 1901), pp.9-10.
2. See Ancient Lights, pp.272-3: "I suppose I was as hot a pro-Boer as any one well could be ... When Mafeking was relieved ... we were ... like a nation of convicted murderers, suddenly reprieved when the hangman's cap was over our eyes."
3. The Inheritors, p.7.

named Granger who devotes his time to literature. He is fascinated by the girl, but regards her story, and in particular her prophecy that he will end by aiding her, as nothing but the opening of a flirtation. Gradually, however, he becomes aware of the reality of her schemes, while his infatuation with her prevents him from taking any action. Churchill, who is a friend of Granger's, in an attempt to keep up with the times allies himself with the Duc de Hersch (Leopold II, King of the Belgians, "the foul beast who had created the Congo Free State in order to grease the wheels of his harems with the blood of murdered negroes"[1]): de Hersch is engaged in the promotion of a fraudulent and exploitive enterprise called the "System for the Regeneration of the Arctic Regions." Granger writes an article for a newspaper exposing the enterprise and then finds himself lacking the courage to stop its publication. De Hersch's scheme is ruined, but Churchill is politically discredited. Gurnard takes over power and marries the girl, whom Granger has allowed to masquerade as his sister: Granger himself declines into nonentity.

The theme of political corruption has its counterpart on another level in the self-betrayal of Granger. His flaw is that he chooses art rather than life — in Pound's words,

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.141.

> his 'fundamental passion'
> This urge to convey the relation
> Of eyelid and cheek-bone
> By verbal manifestations.

His feeling for the girl is not one of love, but of the reverence of the aesthete for the art-object: he speaks of "the desire that transcends the sexual; the desire for the fine phrase, for the right word — for all the other intangibles."[1] Trapped into a continual passive wonder at her glamour, he sinks into self-deception and inaction until he has betrayed his standards of honour. He tries to justify himself to her on the grounds that "passion sanctifies all," but she forces him to admit the truth of her words: "You have lost your case ... because you were false to your standards at a supreme moment; because you have discovered that your honour will not help you to stand a strain ... That is your tragedy, that you can never go again to Churchill with the old look in your eyes, that you can never go to anyone for fear of contempt."[2]

The double rôle of Granger, of narrator of the rise of the Dimensionists and of one of their first victims, gives The Inheritors its main interest: the reader is constantly able to see wider implications to Granger's narrative than Granger himself, to see through Granger's self-deception and follow his decline. As a novel of ideas, however, the failure of the work

---

1. The Inheritors, p.164.
2. Ibid., p.210.

is in its attempt to condense the whole uneasy and slightly guilty mood of late Imperialism into too small a space. The justification of motive in psychological terms is skimped, and the work remains an uneasy mixture of satiric fantasy, romance and psychological novel — almost what Ford called it, "an allegorico-realist romance."[1]

The most stringent of Ford's own later criticism of the novel, however, was confined to the actual prose. The last chapter he found unspeakable, and the rest

> a medley of prose conceived in the spirit of Christina Rossetti with imitations of the late Henry James; inspired by the sentimentality of a pre-Raphaelite actor in love scenes — precisely by Sir Johnston Forbes Robertson dyspeptically playing Romeo to Mrs. Patrick Campbell's Juliet; cadenced like Flaubert and full of little half-lines dragged in from the writer's own verses of that day. He was only twenty-six at the time and very late in maturing ...[2]

It is easy enough to illustrate these strictures from the text. The following, for example, is obviously an attempt to make his characters sound as if they operate at a rarified Jamesian level of nuance:

> In this conversation she, if she did not attain to tacitly acknowledged temperamental superiority, seemed at least to claim it, to have no doubt as to its ultimate according.[3]

And the following, if not exactly a scene between Romeo

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.132.
2. Ibid., p.144.
3. The Inheritors, p.2.

and Juliet, illustrates well enough his other remarks (the second sentence quoted was originally intended to close the book):

> I was silent. A June nightingale began to sing, a trifle hoarsely. We seemed to be waiting for some signal. The things of the night came and went, rustled through the grass, rustled through the leafage. At last I could not even see the white gleam of her face ...
>
> I stretched out my hand and it touched hers. I seized it without an instant of hesitation. "How could I resist you?" I said, and heard my own whisper with a kind of amazement at its emotion. I raised her hand. It was very cold and seemed to have no thought of resistance; but before it touched my lips something like a panic of prudence had overcome me. I did not know what it would lead to — and I remembered that I did not even know who she was. From the beginning she had struck me as sinister and now, in the obscurity, her silence and her coldness seemed to be a passive threatening of unknown entanglement. I let her hand fall.
>
> "We must be getting on," I said.[1]

But to condemn the novel for being pastiche is to neglect the labour that went into "cadencing it like Flaubert" and therefore to neglect the value of the piece to Ford as an exercise. Of his ten novels of contemporary life written before The Good Soldier (1915), it is, with the exception of A Call (1910), The Inheritors which gives the impression of having had the most care lavished on it. Though Ford says that "in the whole of it there cannot be more than a thousand [insertions] — certainly there cannot be

---

1. Ibid., p.18.

two — of Conrad's writing,"[1] it is certainly due to Conrad's rigorous approach that The Inheritors is so carefully written.

Stylistically, however, the novel is not all of a piece. This must be blamed in part on some incompatibility in the collaborators. Conrad's insertions, writes Ford, "crepitate from the emasculated prose like fire-crackers amongst ladies' skirts."[2] This is not entirely true, for the writing that shows insertions obviously Conrad's is not very remarkable:

> It must have been that [that imponderable secret] that was daily, and little by little, pressing down her eyelids and deepening the quivering lines of her [Granger's aunt's] impenetrable face. She had a certain solitary grandeur, the pathos attached to the last of a race, of a type; the air of waiting for a deluge, of listening for an inevitable sound — the sound of oncoming waters.[3]

Conrad's effect is not confined to his insertions, however. The novel lacks, on every level, unity of tone: as Wiley notes, "Ford's historical assumptions seem to spring into shape in a Conradian atmosphere of crisis;"[4] and this clash is carried down to the very prose. Ford describes it humorously: "Do you not hear Conrad saying: 'Damn Ford's women,' and putting in: 'She had good hair, good eyes and some charm'? And do you not see the writer, at twenty-six, hitching

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.133.
2. Ibid.
3. The Inheritors, p.200.
4. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.140.

and fitching with 'a something — a something — a something' to get the effect of delicacy ... "[1]

But it is plain that, if there was agreement as to aims, there was a basic difference of temperament. Hearing that The Inheritors had been completed, Henry James commented, "To me this is like a bad dream which one relates at breakfast. Their traditions and their gifts are so dissimilar. Collaboration between them is to me inconceivable."[2]

Failure as The Inheritors is then, its appeal must be limited to the student of Ford: even to the student of Conrad it will yield little.

The first point of interest is Ford's choice of subject: with The Inheritors he emerges, surprisingly enough in the light of his earlier work, as contemporary historian and critic of society. His attempt is bold, and its failure is due more to too great audacity than to lack of enterprise. The subject was too large for Ford's equipment in 1900: it was only by the time of Parade's End (1924-8) that he was able to deal adequately with so large a public theme. In order to treat the whole of his subject in The Inheritors, he neglects credible motivation and convincing plotting. His characters, with the exception of the narrator Granger, are seen too shallowly; and his treatment of Granger

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.135.
2. David Garnett, The Golden Echo, p.63. James was speaking to David Garnett and Elsie Hueffer.

is uncertain — he is to some extent an embodiment of Aesthetic values, which are shown as leading under pressure to a subtle betrayal of standards, but he is also sympathetically seen as Ford's typical young hero, gentle, refined, reluctant to act. It is in this latter rôle that he aligns himself with Hallebone in The Shifting of the Fire and George Moffat in The Benefactor (1905) and betrays Ford's basic uncertainty in dealing with this character. Granger is seen more clearly than Hallebone, but there is some duplicity in Ford's handling of his passivity. Insofar as he declines to act in public affairs when he ought to, Ford shows him as rationalising his inaction and thereby deceiving himself; but when he is seen in relation to the girl, towards whom his attitude in the face of her cold beauty and power is passive to the extent of accepting her as his sister, the satiric edge to the writing disappears. It is in this indulgence, combined with the rather melancholy cadencing of the prose in the passages between the two, that the book lays itself open to charges of sentimentality and immaturity.

Romance

Romance (1903) is a very different affair from The Inheritors, and much more Conradian. Ford's "whisper of a nonogerian" has become a fast-moving and exciting adventure story, with Conrad's powerful writing almost submerging Ford's more muted effects. The fact that

only two of the five Parts into which the book is divided are by Conrad is misleading, since these two comprise three-fifths of the whole. Because of this, and of the rather cramping insertions of Conrad's in Ford's writing, Romance is dominated by Conrad almost as much as The Inheritors was by Ford.

The story of Romance is basically one of adventure. The hero, John Kemp, is implicated in smuggling and has to flee England to escape imprisonment. On board ship he meets the dying son of a Spanish grandee living in Rio Medio, and returns with him to save his father and sister, Seraphina, from the pirates encircling their palace. Kemp and Seraphina fall in love. Kemp's chief enemy among the pirates turns out to be O'Brien, a renegade Irishman leading them; by refusing to kill O'Brien when he has him in his power, Kemp endangers their lives, but after many adventures he and the girl escape to Jamaica. There, however, he is arrested for complicity in a plot to hand over Jamaica to the United States, and is returned to England to be tried for treason and piracy. At the last minute he is saved by the intervention of friends.

There are two elements that set Romance aside from a plain novel of adventure such as Treasure Island. The first is the view of "romance" that it embodies. "We try to produce a variation from

the usual type of romance," Conrad wrote in 1901, "our point of view being that the romantic in life lies principally in the glamour memory throws over the past and arises from contact with a different race and a different temperament."[1] So the last paragraph of the novel begins, "And, looking back, we see Romance — that subtle thing that is mirage — that is life."[2] By making romance a property of memory rather than of hard experience, the collaborators obtain a continual irony, reminiscent of that of Madame Bovary, which makes the tone of the book more complex than that of the plain romantic adventure story.

The second of these elements is political. Conrad was, in Ford's eyes, "always avid of political subjects to treat," and the evidence of Romance appears to bear out his belief. In Seraphina there was evidently no mention of the group in Jamaica that plotted the island's annexation: it was only at Conrad's instigation that Ford investigated the political atmosphere in Jamaica in the 1820's and discovered the existence of this group, and it was Conrad who brought the group into the novel and involved Kemp with them.[3] Another strongly developed political figure is that of O'Brien, the most vital character in the novel and, unlike Kemp, entirely

---

1. Letter to William Blackwood, Jul.4,1901. Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum, p.130.
2. Romance (London, 1949), p.541.
3. See Joseph Conrad, pp.46-7.

of the authors' invention: controlling a pirate navy in a struggle against England, he reflects Ford's expressed support for Irish Home Rule.[1]

Conrad's involvement of Kemp with the Jamaican plotters has, however, a more deep-lying reason than the mere addition of political interest. Concerned at all times to give an effect of inevitability to the progress of a novel, he and Ford achieved this in Romance partly by progression d'effet — by making each section, each Part and the story as a whole increase in narrative tempo to an inevitable end. But Conrad also made several changes to Seraphina with the aim of giving "one more, and one more, and again one more turn to the screw that sent the rather listless John Kemp towards an inevitable gallows."[2] Thus in the 1899 synopsis Kemp is wrecked off the English coast and picked up by a ship bound for the West Indies; in the final version he flees England to escape punishment as a smuggler. Being implicated in a political plot, said Ford,

> at once made our leading character handleable by Conrad. John Kemp merely kidnapped by pirates and misjudged by the judicial bench of our country was not so vastly attractive, but a John Kemp who was in addition a political refugee, a suspect of High Treason and victim of West India merchants ... that was squeezing the last drop out of the subject.[3]

Ford's forte as a writer did not lie at this

---

1. Paul L. Wiley suggests further that the trial of Kemp before a heavily prejudiced court may have carried overtones of the Dreyfus trial. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.98.
2. Joseph Conrad, p.46.
3. Ibid., p.42.

time in "squeezing the last drop out of a subject." Conrad's tendency was towards toning up, Ford's towards toning down. This clash is evident in the final form of the book, and is emphasized by the method the collaborators chose: the five Parts were drafted more or less independently, Ford taking Parts One, Two and Five, and Conrad Part Four; Part Three is mostly Conrad's reworking of the corresponding section of Seraphina. Of the final version Conrad wrote in 1923: "We collaborated right through; but it may be said that the middle part of this book is mainly mine with bits of F.M.H. — while the first part of the book is wholly out of Seraphina, the second part is almost wholly so. The last part is certainly three-quarters F.M.H. with here and there a paragraph by me."[1] Collaborating, Ford and Conrad worked over each other's drafts, so that the eventual form of many sections became "a singular mosaic of passages written alternately by one or other of the collaborators."[2] The method they chose leads, however, to disharmony on two levels. The prose itself, in the first place, where it is not pure Ford or Conrad, is a mixture of styles of no particular distinction. This is best illustrated by the opening paragraph of the book, which the collaborators reprinted in an appendix to The Nature of a Crime (1924) to demonstrate how closely patterned the "mosaic" was.

---

1. Thomas J. Wise, A Conrad Memorial Library (London, 1928), p.31.
2. Ford and Conrad, "A Note on Romance," The Nature of a Crime (London, 1924), p.105.

(Conrad's insertions in Ford's text are underlined.)

> To yesterday and today I say my polite "vaya usted con dios." What are these days to me? But that far-off day of my romance, when from between the blue and white bales in Don Ramon's darkened storeroom, at Kingston, I saw the door open before the figure of an old man with a tired, long, white face, that day I am not likely to forget. I remember the chilly smell of the typical West Indian store, the indescribable smell of damp gloom, of locos, of pimento, of olive oil, of new sugar, of new rum; the glassy double sheen of Ramon's great spectacles, the piercing eyes in the mahogany face, while the tap, tap, tap of a cane on the flags went on behind the inner door; the click of the latch; the stream of light. The door, petulantly thrust inwards, struck against some barrels. I remember the rattling of the bolts on that door, and the tall figure that appeared there, snuff-box in hand. In that land of white clothes that precise, ancient Castilian in black was something to remember. The black cane that had made the tap, tap, tap dangled by a silken cord from the hand whose delicate blue-veined wrinkled wrist ran back into a foam of lawn ruffles. The other hand paused in the act of conveying a pinch of snuff to the nostrils of the hooked nose that had, on the skin stretched tight over the bridge, the polish of old ivory; the elbow pressing the black cocked hat against the side; the legs, one bent, the other bowing a little back — this was the attitude of Seraphina's father.

The passage is a remarkable piece of visual impressionism in its selection of detail. But as prose it sounds clotted and lacks an overriding feeling of movement and progression: the only moment at which it does gain a sense of style is at the end of the two sentences beginning, "In that land of white clothes;" and, significantly, this sentence is entirely from one hand.

The second clash occurs between the force and visual intensity of the middle (Conradian) section and Ford's lower-toned and visually vaguer opening and closing sections. As Ford wrote, "The differences in our temperaments were sufficiently well marked. Conrad was brave: he was for inclusion and hang the consequences. [I], more circumspect, was for ever on the watch to suppress the melodramatic incident and the sounding phrase."[1] Conrad's section is thus fully developed dramatically, and the last drop is squeezed out of every incident. Ford, on the other hand, is not successful in scenes of violent action: he tends to pass over them rapidly or to report them rather than to describe them directly. This holds true for all of Ford's work in the historical novel, a genre traditionally strong in action: in Ford's work physical strife is subordinate to psychological strife. His weakness in Romance is due, in the end, to the unsuitability of the subject matter in its finally developed form: no reader can be blamed for taking Romance solely as a romance of adventure, for the ironic treatment of romance, particularly in the closing pages, is so much a matter of hints and nuances that it is overwhelmed by the weight of the adventure writing. Ford's share in Romance is, in fact, plainly inferior to Conrad's: it is only in Part Five, where he treats

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.46.

Kemp on trial and so under psychological strain and where Kemp can look back on the story in the perspective of time that he comes into his own.

Taken simply on the level of writing, Romance was, then, for Conrad, nothing to be ashamed of. This he recognised when, in 1902, he wrote to Edward Garnett that, in contrast to "Youth," "Heart of Darkness," "The End of the Tether" and other stories then coming out with Heinemann, "Strangely enough it is yet my share of Romance ... that fills me with the least dismay."[1] His most revealing letter about Romance, however, was written to K. Waliszewski on November 8, 1903:

> Je regarde Romance comme une chose sans aucune importance: j'ai collaboré pendant qu'il m'était impossible de faire autre chose. Il était facile de raconter quelques événements sans me préoccuper autrement du sujet. L'Idée que nous avions était purement esthètique: rendre quelques scènes, quelques situations, d'une façon convenable. Puis il ne nous déplaisait pas de montrer que nous pouvions faire quelque chose dans le genre fort en vogue avec le public en ce moment-ci. ... Il y a eu des moments où nous étions fort gais, Hueffer et moi, en faisant cette machine. Mais on soignait la technique tout le même. Avouez que c'est bien écrit. ...[2]

From the beginning, the attraction of the subject to Conrad — aside from the practical considerations that led him to undertake the collaboration — was "purement esthètique." Ford confirmed this in more

---

1. Letters from Joseph Conrad, ed. Garnett, p.180.
2. Conrad, Lettres Françaises, ed. Jean-Aubry (Paris, 1929), p.54.

general terms when he wrote in 1928 of the aims of the whole collaboration: "What we worked at was not so much specific books as at the formulation of a literary theory, Conrad seeking most of all a new form for the novel and I a limpidity of expression that should make prose seem like the sound of someone talking in rather a low voice into the ear of a person that he liked."[1] But to succeed in his aim, Ford required a context subdued enough for nuances of tone to sound in; and in Romance, in the context of Conrad's mighty prose, his speech is thin and without echo.

Why?

If the collaborations do not stand highly to Ford's credit, however, the "literary theory" he evolved with Conrad and later outlined in Joseph Conrad and elsewhere, was to form the basis of his writing. Its development may not have been so much a matter of equal contribution as he suggests, but even if the ideas had originally been mainly Conrad's, by the time Ford began making formal expositions of them — 1924 — they had become peculiarly his own.

"We accepted the name [Impressionists]

---

1. "On Conrad's Vocabulary," Bookman (N.Y.), June, 1928.

because ... we saw that life did not narrate, but made impressions on our brains. We in turn, if we were to produce on you an effect of life, must not narrate but render ... impressions."[1] T. Hardy.

Impressionism in the English novel, defined by James in 1888 — "A novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life: that, to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or lesser according to the intensity of the impression"[2] — had its roots in the Impressionist movement in French art and in the Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic movements in England. The difference between Pre-Raphaelism and Impressionism as Ford saw it, however, was that the Pre-Raphaelite tried to recapture discrete momentary impressions, whereas the Impressionist attempted to recapture in addition the sense of impressions flowing one into the next: the Pre-Raphaelites

> never convey to us, as do the Impressionists, ... the sense of fleeting light and shadow. Looking at Millais' nearly perfect Blind Girl, or at Mr. Hunt's nearly perfect Hireling Shepherd, one is impelled to think, "How lasting all this is!" One is, as it were, in the mood in which each minute seems an eternity. Nature is grasped and held with an iron hand. There is not in any of the landscapes that delicious and delicate sense of swift change, that poetry of varying moods, of varying lights, of varying shadows that gives to certain moods and certain aspects of the earth a rare and tender pathos.[3]

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.182.
2. The Art of Fiction, p.8.
3. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, pp.104-5.

Impressionism to Ford was not, however, mere prose reverie. The ultimate demands were those of the artistic conscience, and Impressionism was only a means of approaching to the heart of things; as Conrad had written before he met Ford,

> To snatch in a moment of courage, from the remorseless rush of time, a passing phase of life, is only the beginning of the task. The task approached in tenderness and faith is to hold up unquestioningly, without choice and without fear, the rescued fragment before all eyes in the light of a sincere mood. It is to show its vibration, its colour, its form; and through its movement, its form and its colour, reveal the substance of its truth — disclose its inspiring secret: the stress and passion within the core of each convincing moment.[1]

From a basic belief in Impressionism followed naturally a belief in the submerged Flaubertian narrator who does not interpose himself between the reader and the reality of the impression:

> The novel must be put into the mouth of a narrator — who must be limited by probability as to what he can know of the affair that he is adumbrating. Or it must be left to the official author and he, being almost omnipotent, may, so long as he limits himself to presenting without comment or moralization, allow himself to be considered to know almost everything that there is to know.[2]

There also followed the device of the time-shift, which became the most powerful Impressionist instrument for the organization of experience into a pattern not

---

1. Preface to "The Nigger of the Narcissus."
2. "Techniques," Southern Review, July, 1935.

simply chronological and linear. Its justification was the fact that impressions do not occur in the mind in chronological sequence:

> Life does not say to you: In 1914 my next door neighbour, Mr. Slack, erected a greenhouse and painted it with Cox's green aluminium paint ... If you think about the matter you will remember, in various unordered pictures, how one day Mr. Slack appeared in his garden and contemplated the wall of his house. You will then try to remember the year of that occurrence and you will fix it as August 1914 because having had the foresight to bear the municipal stock of the city of Liège you were able to afford a first-class season ticket for the first time in your life. You will remember Mr. Slack — then much thinner because it was before he found out where to buy that cheap Burgundy of which he has since drunk an inordinate quantity though whisky you think would be much better for him! ...[1]

The function of the time-shift is to do away with plot in the sense of a linear sequence of events. As Hugh Kenner notes, "The 'story' is broken into a number of scenes, conversations, impressions, etc., which function as poetic images and are freely juxtaposed for maximum intensity."[2] On the principle of juxtaposition, Ford claimed in 1938, "the whole fabric of modern art depends."[3]

To replace the sense of ~~dramatic~~ narrative progression usually given by the sequence of events in time, "every word set on paper — every word set on paper — must carry the story forward and, ... as the story

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.180.
2. The Poetry of Ezra Pound (London, 1951), p.264.
3. The March of Literature (London, 1939), p.804.

progresses, the story must be carried forward faster and faster and with more and more intensity. That is called progression d'effet, words for which there is no English equivalent."[1] As an example of progression d'effet carried to its highest pitch, Ford often cited James's "The Turn of the Screw," which moves with growing intensity to the final "dispossessed" — "and then, as it were, a lightning flash is thrown back over the whole story and all its parts fall into place in the mind."[2]

As the opening of a novel sets the level on which the progression d'effet starts, openings are "matters of great importance:"

> A real short story must open with a breathless sentence; a long-short story may begin with an "as" or a "since" and some leisurely phrases. At any rate the opening paragraph of a book or story should be of the tempo of the whole performance. That is the regle générale. Moreover, the reader's attention should be gripped by that first paragraph. So our ideal novel must begin either with a dramatic scene or with a note that should suggest the whole book.[3]

Similarly, to obtain the effect of inevitability which is the aim of progression d'effet, every element of the novel must be extensively "justified" — every action of every character must be made credible in terms of his personal history and background, and, more generally, every incident must win the reader's

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.210.
2. The March of Literature, p.580.
3. Joseph Conrad, p.171.

conviction.

The Impressionist Novel gained aesthetic validity as a distinctive and unified form by treating what Henry James called "the Affair;" in Ford's words, "A Novel was a rendering of an Affair: of one embroilment, one set of embarrassments, one human coil, one psychological progression. From this the Novel got its Unity ... The whole novel was to be an exhaustion of aspects ... "[1] Ford regarded the Affair as a development peculiar to modern life:

> For no one will today assert that his life is really an affair of bashing of skulls, plots, campaigns, piracies, Wall Street panics, debauches, or the ignoble rewards of virtue. And no one will deny that his life is really a matter of "affairs"; of minute hourly embarrassments; of sympathetic or unsympathetic personal contacts; of little-marked successes or failures, of queer jealousies, of muted terminations — a tenuous, fluttering, and engrossing fabric. And intangible![2]

James, in his "stories about worries and perturbations," his choice of "selected instances of long chains of embarrassments,"[3] had in mastering the Affair captured the tone of modern life.

Selection was to be the keynote everywhere — selection of impressions, selection of instances, and, in the province of style, selection of le mot juste, as long as the word was not too surprising:

---

1. Return to Yesterday, p.209.
2. Thus to Revisit, p.36.
3. Henry James (London, 1913), p.82.

> Our most constant preoccupation ... was to avoid words that stuck out of sentences either by their brilliant unusualness or their "amazing aptness". For either sort of word arrests the attention of the reader, and thus "hangs up" both the meaning and the cadence of the phrase.[1]

Nevertheless, the essence of style was surprise: "carefully examined, a good — an interesting — style will be found to consist in a constant succession of tiny, unobservable surprises;"[2] and the language of the novel was somehow to combine "a constant succession of tiny, unobservable surprises" with "a vernacular of extreme quietness."[3] Ford's and Conrad's chief masters in style were Flaubert and Maupassant, "Flaubert in the greater degree, Maupassant in the less. In about the proportions of a sensible man's whisky and soda."[4] But "our greatest admiration was given to W.H. Hudson, of whom Conrad said that his writing was like the grass that the good God made to grow and when it was there you could not tell how it came."[5]

Ford allied himself, then, with what he considered the Impressionist school of writers — Hudson, Crane, James and Conrad. The effect of his association with Conrad was never to wear off, evincing itself not

---

1. Thus to Revisit, pp.52-3.
2. Joseph Conrad, p.197.
3. Mightier than the Sword, p.216.
4. Joseph Conrad, p.195.
5. Ibid., p.197.

only in his art but also in innumerable memoirs of the collaboration. Yet Ford's temperament inclined him more towards James's subjects than those of Conrad: it is noteworthy that, though none of his independent novels is particularly Conradian, he did "attempt two pastiches in the manner of Mr. Henry James"[1] in 1905 and 1907. His acquaintance with James had begun in 1896, and while they lived in Rye and Winchelsea they often took afternoon walks together. It is apparently true that James drew Ford's "externals" in Merton Densher of The Wings of the Dove — "the longish, leanish, loosish, rather vague Englishman who, never seeming to have anything to do with his days, occupied in journalism his night hours."[2] Ford claimed "a very considerable degree of intimacy with Henry James, ... a wholly non-literary intimacy."[3] James liked him because he "treated him with deep respect, had a low voice — appeared, in short, a jeune homme modeste,"[4] but did not take his writing seriously,[5] though often consulting him on "practical matters".[6] Ford introduced Conrad to James, and

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.175. The novels were The Benefactor and An English Girl.
2. Return to Yesterday, p.218
3. Ibid., p.211
4. Ibid., p.213
5. Ford records that "Once, after I had sent him one of my volumes of poems, he just mentioned the name of the book, raised both his hands over his head, let them slowly down again, made an extraordinary, quick grimace, and shook with an immense internal joke ... Shortly afterwards he began to poke fun at Swinburne." Return to Yesterday, p.219.
6. Ibid., p.219.

between these two there sprang up a deeper intimacy than ever existed between Ford and James. James later became estranged from Ford, largely over the matter of Ford's liaison with Violet Hunt. Ford claims to have made his peace with James shortly before leaving for France in 1915,[1] but there is no confirmation of this. Conrad, too, broke off relations with Ford after a squabble connected with the serial publication of his Personal Record in Ford's English Review in 1909.[2] When Ford went off to the war, however, Conrad consented to become his literary executor, and relations were comparatively cordial at the time of Conrad's death.

Ford's place in the Conrad establishment, after the break, was taken by Arthur Marwood, whom Ford had introduced to Conrad and for whose intelligence Conrad had great respect: Jessie Conrad claimed that she could "trace Arthur Marwood's influence in most of [Conrad's] books written during the period of his close friendship."[3] Marwood was also to exert a deep influence on Ford. A Yorkshire squire and a mathematician with a public school and Cambridge background, "a dandy in London and a farmer in Kent, ... author ... of a learned book on finance,"[4] Marwood had a sharply critical mind which Conrad evidently found stimulating. He founded the English Review

---

1. Return to Yesterday, p.220.
2. See Appendix A.
3. Joseph Conrad and His Circle, p.117.
4. The Flurried Years, p.28.

with Ford and served as model for Christopher Tietjens and several characters in lesser-known novels of Ford's; Goldring notes too that "it is certainly from the Marwood period that Ford began to invent for himself an imaginary public school background."[1] Ford, in his account of the genesis of Parade's End,[2] depicts Marwood as "the last English Tory"; both he and Conrad seem to have valued Marwood for his "Englishness".

The Nature of a Crime

The last and slightest of the collaborated works of Ford and Conrad is The Nature of a Crime, a short novel which first appeared pseudonymously in two instalments in the English Review in 1909;[3] it was published in book form, at Ford's request, in 1924.[4] It "should have become a novel treating of the eternal subject of the undetected criminal,"[5] said Ford, but it was truncated, at Conrad's "earnest entreaties", after eight epistolatory chapters. As it stands it consists of these eight letters written by a middle-aged professional man to his beloved. In them he confesses that he has for years been embezzling funds entrusted to him, that he must shortly be discovered, and that

---

1. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.96.
2. It Was the Nightingale, pp.187-206.
3. Ford explains pseudonymous publication by saying that "Because we were both writing in that number [of the English Review] it would have seemed as it were tautological to publish a collaboration." Paul A. Bartlett, "Letters of Ford Madox Ford," Saturday Review of Literature, Aug.2,1941.
4. Frank MacShane claims, however, that there is evidence that The Nature of a Crime was submitted for publication early in the century but refused. See Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.163.
5. Appendix to The Nature of a Crime, p.97.

he intends to commit suicide after opening his heart to her. In the eighth letter he reports that his crime will not after all be detected and that he need not now kill himself; since he has now revealed himself utterly to her, she must yield herself utterly to him.

The fragment is of little literary value. Conrad evidently perceived soon after beginning it that to write "a piece of work in the nature of an analytical confession" in collaboration was "the most fantastic thing of all." "The real nature of the crime," he goes on, is the "neatness and despatch" with which "all ... [was] thrown overboard."[1]

Despite the comparative unimportance of the three signed collaborations, however, the period of collaboration can be seen in retrospect to have been crucially important to both Conrad and Ford. Its value to Ford was, simply, that it made him into a novelist: not only did he gain enormously in technical proficiency — "If I know anything of how to write," he said, "almost the whole of that knowledge was acquired then"[2] — but he also gained an unflagging belief in his vocation: "Most of all I owe to [Conrad] that strong faith — that in our day and hour the writing

---

1. Conrad, Preface to The Nature of a Crime, pp.v-vii.
2. Return to Yesterday, p.203.

of novels is the only pursuit worth while for a proper man."[1]

The value of the collaboration to Conrad has usually been underestimated: Ford's usefulness to him has usually been left at what Wells called "Englishing him and his idiom". This is true enough, and can be seen by comparing the slightly rhetorical prose of Lord Jim (1900) with the lighter and more lucid style of Nostromo (1904). But the effect of the collaboration was wider than this. Wells went on to speak rather scornfully of Ford conversing "interminably" with Conrad "about the precise word and about perfection in writing;"[2] it was probably this "interminable conversation" that was most valuable to both. Thus (though there is little extended use of the time-shift in Romance) it is significant that Conrad's first systematic use of the device is in Lord Jim.[3] Conversation with Ford seems essentially to have clarified Conrad's ideas about technique: more intuitive in his approach than Ford, he found in Ford someone able to disengage technique from intuition sufficiently to make statements of principle about narrative procedures: it

---

1. Return to Yesterday, p.185.
2. Experiment in Autobiography, p.531.
3. Ford goes so far as to claim having developed the time-shift with Conrad; "Conrad first evolving the convention of a Marlow who should narrate, in presentation, the whole story of a novel just as, without much sequence or pursued chronology, a story will come up into the mind of a narrator; and I eventually dispensing with a narrator but making the story come up in the mind of the unseen author with a similar want of chronological sequence." "Techniques," Southern Review, July,1935.

is noteworthy that nowhere did Conrad attempt so ambitious an outline of the technique of the novel as Ford did in his Joseph Conrad.

The clearest demonstration of the value of the "interminable conversation" to Conrad is given by Edward Crankshaw in his study of Conrad. After analysing the narrative point of view in "The Nigger of the Narcissus" and showing how Conrad at one point slips between the viewpoints of detached observer and omniscient commentator, he continues:

> It seems probable to one that this lapse and others in The Nigger are due to the fact that at the time of writing Conrad, although his instincts were strong, had not got them clearly before his eyes as principles. This kind of lapse is hinted at again in Nostromo very slightly once or twice, but never after that; and it seems to me by no means without significance that the friendship and collaboration with Ford Madox Ford began soon after the completion of The Nigger. This, I may be forgiven for emphasizing, is not to suggest that Conrad's technical dexterity is due bodily to Ford. On the contrary: there are signs even in Almayer's Folly that Conrad has thought a great deal about the craft of fiction. But he is in the earlier books still muddled in the application of his ideas; the whole first person convention in The Nigger is several times misused. ... But after that book there is no large-scale clumsiness. It is plain that Conrad has more completely ordered his ideas, and the signs point to the collaboration as the turning point, and to all the talk which it must have involved, talk which sharpens nebulous ideas as nothing else can.[1]

---

1. Joseph Conrad (London, 1936), p.150.

III

1904-1903

The years 1903 and 1904 were marred for Ford by the nervous depression discussed earlier, and he spent much of his time travelling from spa to spa seeking a cure.[1] The reasons for his illness remain obscure. Ford himself claimed that his ailment was caused by heart trouble.[2] Goldring suggests, among other reasons, the shock of a serious fall of his wife's (she had been semi-crippled from childhood), the disappointing reception of Romance, the cumulative effect of "the always wailing and bemoaning Conrad", his own continuing uncertainty about the direction in which he was heading, and a disastrous move from the country to a damp London house where he and his wife were continually ill.[3] Ford wrote little, but a letter from Conrad dated September 5, 1904 shows that before his complete breakdown at the end of 1904 he had finished The Benefactor and The Soul of London.[4] At the end of this year, Ford says, his doctor told him, in an effort to cure him, that he might have only a month to live; this spurred him to him to complete his monograph on Hans Holbein.

Ford's recovery seems to have owed much to the success of The Soul of London, which appeared in May, 1905. As Edward Garnett put it, "The glorious Press was filled with trumpetings of The Soul. It is very good, ... the

---

1. For a bitterly amusing account of this, see Return to Yesterday, pp.266-274.
2. Ibid., p.268.
3. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, pp.114-116.
4. Quoted by Goldring, ibid., p.124.

best he's done. And I hope and trust it will definitely pick him up, for if ever a man wanted recognition poor Ford does."[1] The book was followed by two similar exercises in impressionism, The Heart of the Country (1906) and The Spirit of the People (1907); the three were collected in New York under the title England and the English (1907). As a whole they form a remarkable survey of England, and also, as Richard A. Cassell illuminatingly observes, "serve for him almost as a writer's notebook".[2] In their pages they contain the germs of many situations and insights that are fully developed in his later writings: they include notes for poems, sketches of conversations with country folk more fully dramatised in Women and Men (1923) and Return to Yesterday (1931), analyses of social conditions in industrial cities used in Mr. Apollo (1908), observations on the English character, and the story that was to form the basis of the Ashburnham-Leonora-Nancy plot in The Good Soldier. But as interesting as what the studies contain is their method. The Soul of London is subtitled A Survey of a Modern City, but it is a survey conducted through "Impressions rather than Statistics":

> A really ideal book of the kind would not contain "writing about" a town: it would throw a personal image of the place on to the paper. It would not contain such a sentence as: "There are in the city of —— 720 firms of hat manufacturers employing 19,000 operatives." Instead there would be a picture of one, or two, or three hat factories, peopled with human beings, where slow and clinging veils of steam waver over vats and over the warm felt on cutters' slabs. And there would be conveyed the idea that all these human

---

1. Letter to Galsworthy dated Aug.8,1905, in Letters from John Galsworthy: 1900-1932, ed. Edward Garnett (London, 1934), p.59.
2. Ford Madox Ford, p.153.

> beings melt, as it were, into the tide of humanity as all those vapours melt into the overcast skies.

Behind this lies Ford's definition of the rôle of the imaginative writer in modern society: in the following passage, Paul L. Wiley lucidly expounds this belief; the only inadequacy of his exposition is that his remarks apply in general not only to Ford's novels but to such works as England and the English and his later memoirs, particularly Return to Yesterday (1931) and It Was the Nightingale (1933), in which he surveys literary society through the means of selected examples, actual or invented. It should not be forgotten that Ford called It Was the Nightingale a novel; and when, in The Soul of London, he writes of the historian of cities as one who "must have an impressionability and an impersonality, a singlemindedness to see and a power of arranging his illustrations cold-bloodedly, an unemotional mind and a great sympathy, a lifelong engrossment in his 'subject' and an immense knowledge, for purposes of comparison, of other cities",[2] he is writing as much of the historian of men as the historian of cities.

Wiley writes that

> in ascribing broad powers to the novelist, Ford gave proof of his intent to defend imaginative literature against the weakening of traditional values perceptible at the turn of the century. To blame for this were not only the cheap newspaper, dating from the South African War, but also the rise of the specialist and the statistician, whose reductions of experience to abstract data deprived the ordinary man of a hold on social continuities forming a consistent picture of the life of the day. Ford's slogan of "the Impression over the Statistic" made a case for the vital

---

1. The Soul of London (London, 1905), p.xii.
2. Ibid., p.8.

> function of the novelist who alone, through his gift of direct and imaginative apprehension, could present a unified vision of the world at large and as fictional historian close the breach between the divided areas of factual and statistical information, an argument by which Ford in his plea for imaginative synthesis to transcend abstraction came close to Koestler's recent stand in The Sleepwalkers. In a life more bewildering through the loss of familiar landmarks, the novelist may present the mind beset by accumulations of fact with some idea of pattern and also aid in restoring contact between man and man which, in an age of the crowd and of metropolitan breakdown in understanding by the individual of the lives of his fellows, Ford thought a main characteristic and issue of contemporary existence. Because statistics bring no insight into the nature of private life and its passions, the novelist alone can record such experience of other men as the increasingly isolated reader lacks, the writer not moralizing but simply "rendering" or accurately projecting selected instances so as to place the reader at a height where he can better observe himself and his neighbors and stimulate his dormant powers of reflection.[1]

The Benefactor

The Benefactor is the first of Ford's novels really worthy of his artistic powers. It is narrower in range than The Inheritors, restricting itself rather to a profounder development of two themes, the failure of a Victorian type of altruism in a more self-seeking society, and the conflict between passion and conscience. Ford was later to call the novel "a pastiche in the manner of Mr. Henry James";[2] and a number of Jamesian mannerisms do mark it. But these are at a comparatively superficial

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.43.
2. Joseph Conrad, p.175.

level. The deeper influence of James, in the "small circle" with which the novel deals (it is subtitled A Tale of a Small Circle), in the figure of the mature, intense, sensitive but confined heroine and in the concentration on the analysis of shades and nuances, brings out much of the best of Ford: in The Benefactor he moves significantly towards the form of the Affair perfected in The Good Soldier.

The central figure, George Moffat, is the now middle-aged son of a great Victorian painter from whom he inherited a large fortune. He is a talented poet, but is too self-critical to think his work "good enough".[1] He spends his life in the practice of benevolence, helping promising artists who usually cheat him or turn on him, partly because they find him weak and lack respect for him. He receives their ingratitude without complaint in the manner of the typical Fordian stoic hero: "That, afterall," he says, "is the highest of human qualities. Not to yelp. Not to disturb the neighbours."[2]

Moffat's principal charity is an attempt to rehabilitate a clergyman named Brede who has suffered from fits of madness ever since accidentally causing his wife's death. Brede is nursed by his daughter Clara, a sensitive and cultivated woman of thirty who sees her life passing away in endless duties. She believes in Moffat's poetic gift: he is spurred by her to serious work and falls in love with her. He decides, however,

---

1. The Benefactor (London, 1905), p.118.
2. Ibid., p.216.

to say nothing, partly because he feels that he cannot deprive her father of her, partly because of his own marriage to a woman who "became very religious ... and left him after five years that were miserable to them both."[1]

But Moffat is driven to bankruptcy by his charities, and secretly sells his home and prepares to leave the country. Clara discovers his plan, and he is driven by pity of her desolation to declare his love. At this stage, providentially, Moffat's latest book becomes a financial success and Brede, who at Moffat's well-meaning insistence has returned to the pulpit, grows violent under the stress and has to be committed to an institution. Freed, Moffat and Clara agree to leave together for Italy. But at the last moment Moffat has qualms of conscience: as he is about to take Clara in his arms the figure of Brede appears before his eyes and he seems to hear a voice saying, "Oh, Brede. He's in a lunatic asylum and his daughter ran away with a married man."[2] He cannot go through with the "treachery" of running away with Clara, and pleads with her for the need for self-sacrifice. "Self-sacrifice," she slowly says: "Doesn't that ever end?"[3] She parts from him in bitter but muted resentment.

Writing about the theme of benefaction, Wiley says, "In some measure, as the abstract title of the novel suggests, Ford's purpose was to treat his main character

---

1. Ibid., p.11
2. Ibid., p.344
3. Ibid., p.346.

as a type figure standing for the Victorian principle of benefaction at odds with primal instincts,"[1] noting incidentally that "from the allusion to George's unsuccessful marriage to a young Scottish girl who first views him as a godhead and then leaves him after becoming primly religious, it is evident that Ford modeled his main figure upon Ruskin." The clash Wiley writes of, between a Victorian ethic embodied in the rather old-fashioned Moffat and the more selfish habits of his protéges is certainly present, but not so explicitly as to make Moffat "a type figure": the benefaction of Moffat is a much more individual trait than Wiley's analysis admits. In fact, Ford wrote about the title that he had wanted to use "The Altruists" but that this had already been used by Ouida: "I can't think of anything better than 'The Benefactor' ... I wish there were no such things as titles."[2] The plural form of "The Altruists" indicates the inclusion (probably ironic) of Clara, whose last act of altruism is certainly not voluntary. Wiley's emphasis on Moffat as the embodiment of a specifically Victorian principle must be relinquished in favour of a view of Moffat as embodying a more personal and more generally self-sacrificial outlook.

Moffat's altruism is regarded by Ford with a mixture of criticism and indulgence: it is at the same time what Wiley calls "his subtle form of Victorian hypocrisy"[3] and his redeeming feature in a society of profiteers. Insofar

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.144.
2. Letter by Ford to J.B. Pinker. Quoted by Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.19.
3. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.144.

as Ford keeps both these aspects in perspective, The Benefactor is a novel of considerable maturity and a large step forward from The Inheritors: Granger is not nearly so many-sided a creation as Moffat. But in the final scene of Moffat's renunciation of Clara he makes a choice which even his previous excesses of altruism cannot make credible, and of which the context gives no trace of criticism; Ford indulges Moffat here to the extent of blindness. Some of Ford's remarks on A House of Gentlefolk, which of Turgenev's novels he admired most and to which, as Cassell points out,[1] the conception of The Benefactor owes much, are relevant to the last pages of his novel: he speaks of "pain rendered hopeless, of desire intense but self-frustrated on account of ethical scruples, of self-immolation, of eternal regret."[2] The tone of the last pages leaves this emotional impression. But the impression is at the level of emotion only: it does not arise naturally out of the situation.[3] The weakness of the scene is fundamentally that the reader cannot believe that Moffat is motivated by "ethical scruples". His rejection of Clara violates the logic of the novel and points towards reasons of which Moffat is certainly unconscious and at which Ford himself never hints.

The language of the last scene suggests powerfully that Clara longs to have Moffat take her and that he fears to do so. Awaiting his arrival, she thinks, "her father

---

1. Ford Madox Ford, p.127.
2. Thus to Revisit, p.99.
3. This analysis is confirmed by Ford's own pronouncement on The Benefactor: it is "the product of an emotion, as you get over things by writing them down in your diary". (Joseph Conrad, p.175)

was gone now ... it would be easy." As they talk, her heart starts to beat quickly. After a while she lies back in silence in her chair.

> He stepped towards her recumbent figure. It was as if already he held her in his arms; as if she had said, "Ah!" as if her head had fallen back. Suddenly it slipped into his mind, like an odd thought that he regarded contemptuously, "This is seduction."
>
> She wondered for one swift moment what it felt like to be dishonoured. Was it like a pain? She had looked coldly at other women. He was coming: she shut her eyes. ... She felt in herself no dishonour, but the glory of sacrificing herself to him — But he was coming, and she shivered. Outside the darkness of her closed lids something paralysing, something terrible and blissful was coming towards her.[1]

But at this moment of surrender, George Moffat finds his desire dissipated by the memory of the "black and tremendous " figure of her father, and he begins to plead with Clara for the need for renunciation. The struggle here is between passion and the fear of passion: it is a fine self-deception on Ford's part that prevents it from being credible as a struggle between passion and conscience on Jamesian lines. Strether's rejection of Maria Gostrey at the end of The Ambassadors and the parting of Densher and Kate Croy at the end of The Wings of the Dove have complex reasons behind them, but they are credible in terms of character and in terms of the entire movements of the respective novels. On the other hand, as Meixner observes, Ford's characters seem to lack autonomy: "With Ford's characters, denial most often is something they cannot help. It is not a victory, for it

---

1. The Benefactor, pp.342-3

flows from weakness;"[1] Moffat's denial, at the end of The Benefactor, flows from his own weakness and from Ford's inability to deal with the strong scene.

The Jamesian imprint is, as already remarked, all over The Benefactor, most superficially on the language, which is sometimes almost a parody of James's blandest manner:

> George was the same, glamour and all. Mrs. Moffat had long since outlived her appreciation of the glamour, but her meaning glances to her companions indicated that she very much acknowledged George's sameness. Everyone, save those who for the moment were sufficiently new to him to lie under his inevitable and tremendous spell, always indicated that George was the same.[2]

Similarly, a family is described as conscientious and lovable: "That's their note,"[3] a character observes.

It is probably for the reason of its language that Ford called The Benefactor a pastiche in James's manner. It represents, with An English Girl, a phase in Ford's writing in which he took over James's narrative tone comparatively uncritically, but it is plain that the problem of the narrator concerned him. Conrad had solved a comparable problem with the creation of Marlow in 1898. In his historical novels Ford could avoid the problem insofar as he could disguise himself in an approximation to the language of the period. His progress in style after An English Girl, however, consists more of a stripping down of language than ventures into further

---

1. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.132.
2. The Benefactor, p.2.
3. Ibid., p.25.

Jamesian elaboration. By the time of A Call (1910) he had a style sensitive enough to respond to nuances yet so subdued as never to be obtrusive. By 1915 the style was perfected. Here is Dowell, in The Good Soldier, speaking of his first meeting with Leonora:

> She sat down opposite to me and then, for the first time, she paid any attention to my existence. She gave me, suddenly, yet deliberately, one long stare. Her eyes too were blue and dark and the eyelids were so arched that they gave you the whole round of the irises. And it was a most remarkable, a most moving glance, as if for a moment a lighthouse had looked at me. I seemed to perceive the swift questions chasing each other through the brain that was behind them. I seemed to hear the brain ask and the eyes answer with all the simpleness of a woman who was a good hand at taking in qualities of a horse — as indeed she was. 'Stands well; has plenty of room for his oats behind the girth. Not so much in the way of shoulders,' and so on. And so her eyes asked: 'Is this man trustworthy in money matters; is he likely to try to play the lover; is he likely to let his women be troublesome? Is he, above all, likely to babble about my affairs?'
>
> And, suddenly, into those cold, slightly defiant, almost defensive china blue orbs, there came a warmth, a tenderness, a friendly recognition ... oh, it was very charming and very touching — and quite mortifying.[1]

It is, as Conrad said of W.H. Hudson's style, "like the grass that the good God made to grow and when it was there you could not tell how it came."[2]

Technically, The Benefactor is not adventurous. Richard W. Lid has observed that in it Ford does carry out some experiments in the time-shift,[3] but in general the story moves along the line of time. The novel is less

---

1. The Good Soldier (London, 1962), p.39.
2. Quoted by Ford, Joseph Conrad, p.197.
3. Richard W. Lid, "Time in the Novels of Ford Madox Ford," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation for University of Michigan, 1958. Quoted by Cassell, Ford Madox Ford, p.136.

notable for experiment than for consolidation. It progresses steadily and powerfully to the final climactic scene; the dramatic possibilities of individual scenes are fully developed; and there is a sense of some inevitability in Moffat's deeper and deeper embroilment in the labyrinthine Affair. At the age of thirty, Ford was displaying himself as a considerable novelist.

An English Girl

During the second half of 1906, Ford and his wife spent a short holiday in the United States. The most immediate result of this was An English Girl (1907), the first of Ford's novels to touch on the international theme. The book shows signs of hasty composition, and the Jamesian mannerisms of The Benefactor have not disappeared. It is, in fact, perhaps more than The Benefactor "a pastiche in the manner of Mr. Henry James," for it contains less matter that is original. Ford subtitled it "A Romance," and later said disparagingly that it was "written as a variation on a book of essays to give the effect of a tour of the United States."[1] The basic situation of a young artist suddenly finding himself the richest man in the world is so unreal as to belong to fantasy only: the work is less interesting for itself than for several new themes that it touches

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.175.

on and that will become important in Ford's later novels.

The central character is once again the sensitive, idealistic dilettante, here Don Kelleg, a young American who has studied painting in Paris and now lives quietly in Canterbury doing occasional magazine illustrations. He is engaged to Eleanor Greville, the "English Girl," who seems to Don to embody the perfection of English breeding and taste. Their relationship is one of quiet intimacy: he feels for her a tender adoration without passion, and she accepts this.

When the novel opens, Don has just received news of the death of his multi-millionaire father, who, born in a Yorkshire workhouse, had emigrated to the United States and by ruthless business methods made himself the richest man in the world. Don, his sole heir, resolves in a spirit of naïve idealism to use the money to redress the wrongs caused by his father and to combat Big Business in general. He leaves for New York, taking with him Eleanor, her father and her cousin, a lawyer who is to act as his adviser. But the disorder and amorality of New York only confuse him, and he soon discovers that his father has made certain that he has no power to use the money bequeathed to him — has left him, in fact, "absolutely impotent." The party returns to England, and Don and Eleanor prepare to set up house. But Don cannot bear the taste of defeat. He must return to America — "I <u>can't</u> funk it." "Then you know it means good-bye?" replies Eleanor. It is the first show of

fight in either of the rather bloodless couple, and the last.

As an epilogue to the book we have a long letter written to Eleanor by Don's step-brother, Count Carlo Canzano, an Italian nobleman whom the couple had met travelling to New York. In the letter he accuses Eleanor of parting with Don because, as an English girl, she is afraid of her emotions. "Your duty," he says, "was to be good, to be kind, to be dear to the noblest and best man you've ever seen." This defence of Don is strange, for a number of reasons. First, there is no tone of irony to it, so that it seems as if Ford intended it to be taken at face value. Second, Canzano is portrayed as a man of maturity and perspicacity, with a capacity for frank expression, so his letter must be read as a serious summing-up. Third, coming as it does as an epilogue, the letter spoils the finality of the last scene and so the shape of the novel: Ford must therefore have considered the letter, as a justification and explanation of Don's actions, of considerable weight.

Yet the letter is entirely implausible in the light of the character Don has been given in the preceding three hundred pages. Don's keynote is impotence. He is an aesthete rather than an artist: as Elinor's father remarks, "He is for Aestheticism right or wrong."[1] He is an idealist rather than a reformer: "Was he not going

---

1. An English Girl (London, 1907), p.268.

to the United States to strike a deathblow at what his father represented? ... Was he not going to — as far as he could — set up a different standard? And would not that standard be the standard of Eleanor?"[1] As a lover, he is characterised by a kneeling pose:

> In a swift access of tenderness she put her cheek against his.
>
> "You dear!" she said in soft tones of emotion. Then she drew back and looked into his eyes from quite close. "At the same time I don't see what we're consulting about."
>
> He knelt down suddenly and kissed first one foot and then the other, that she held out a little as if to a shoeblack, pulling her skirt a little back and peering over.[2]

He lacks entirely the drive and energy of his father, and the sight of the hotel suite he and his parents occupied during his childhood "affected him deeply with a sense of solitude, a sense of smallness, a sense of impotence that he hadn't felt since he had been a small child."[3] His idealism is even seen in a satiric light: "He does, really," says the fastidious Mr. Greville, "want the American people to go in for certain European virtues — for Poetry and the Higher Thought and National Dress. Well, they can't! — How can they? America is made up of men who've fled from him just as much as they've fled from me."[4]

Ford's defence of Don, then — a defence which

---

1. Ibid., p.106.
2. Ibid., p.24.
3. Ibid., p.121
4. Ibid., p.268

implies that his final flight to America was not a flight from Eleanor and that the fault was hers rather than his — betrays a remarkable blindness to the nature of the character he has created; it is the final implausibility in a novel full of implausibilities.

The letter tacked on to the end is not, however, the only sign of hasty composition. After Don and the Grevilles have been introduced to the reader in the first chapter, there follow thirty pages of information about Don's history and background which Ford does not attempt to integrate into the narrative. The writing itself is full of sentimental clichés and Jamesian mannerisms. The sections of the book dealing with New York are an uneasy mixture of fiction and travel tour.

An English Girl marks, then, no progress in Ford as a novelist. What it does show, however, is the expansion of his interests, most notably in his attempt to realize the American way of life, which, paradoxically, confuses Don the American and enchants Eleanor the English girl. Ford's method of rendering America is, as Wiley notes, "simple Impressionism, the device of bringing an unfamiliar eye to bear on externals in such a way as to make the ordinary vivid" [1] — the same method, in fact, that James used in The American Scene, published in the same year as An English Girl. The international theme is complicated by the presence of Canzano, who is able

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.146.

to see Americans and Englishmen from a Latin viewpoint. In his final letter he sums up the difference between them:

> The Englishman's eyes are always tranquil: he has formed his ideas: he has had them formed for him: he knows: he is never going to learn any more. ... But the people here [America] are so different: they don't know: they haven't any standards; they don't even know why they live or what they live for. But they are always alert to meet circumstances, to form new judgments.[1]

An English Girl is the first of Ford's novels to deal specifically with the difference between American and European standards. Ford was not to return to this theme, in his fiction, until the 'thirties, when in such novels as When the Wicked Man (1931), The Rash Act (1933) and Henry for Hugh (1934) he was to treat the particularly American problem of wealth without cultural standards.

Katharine Howard Trilogy

Ford's greatest attention at this period, however, was given not to his novels of contemporary life but to his elaborately wrought historical trilogy on the rise and fall of Katharine Howard, The Fifth Queen (1906), Privy Seal (1907) and The Fifth Queen Crowned (1908). It was upon what Graham Greene calls "this magnificent bravura piece"[2] that Ford's pre-War reputation as a

---

1. Ibid., p.304.
2. Introduction, Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford, vol.1, p.10.

novelist largely rested, and justly so: in both its scale and its detail it reveals the hand of a master-craftsman.

The precision of detail in the trilogy, and its author's obviously intimate knowledge of Tudor life are to be explained by Ford's original intention, which was to write a life of Henry VIII. For this purpose he had been assembling material since 1898. The following is his "impression" of how the project was brought to a halt in 1901:

> I had got together all my material for the life of Henry VIII and had made a synopsis of the chapters and even a list of the illustrations. And I had chosen my publishers. The book was to be heavily illustrated with reproductions of Holbein and the like. There was only one publisher in London then for finely illustrated books. That was the house of Virtue. I went up to London with my synopsis and specimen reproductions. I saw one of the partners of the firm and laid my plan before him. He said:
>
> "You saw the gentleman who just went out. Do you know who that was?" I didn't and he said:
>
> "That was Mr. Pollard of the British Museum. Just before you entered we signed an agreement for a Life of Henry VIII by him." Mr. Pollard's synopsis allowing for difference in idiosyncrasies was almost word for word the same as mine. His list of illustrations was identical.[1]

Ford's synopsis has been preserved: it is interesting in the light both of the "psychological analysis" as in fiction to which he wished to subject Henry and of the shift of focus in the final form of the trilogy from Henry to Katharine Howard:

---

1. Return to Yesterday, p.170-1.

> As the title [*The Life and Times of Henry VIII*] should indicate this is intended to deal with Henry VIII as a central figure, not to be a history of the country during the reign of that King. The author will attempt to make Henry "live" as vividly as do the characters in a work of fiction or as he does in his portrait by Holbein. ... It will be an attempt at as careful a psychological & picturesque analysis of the King as may be possible. The writer may lay claim to a fairly intimate acquaintance with the subject, based upon the great series of "Letters and Papers of Henry VIII" published by the Rolls Office.... Whilst in no way agreeing with theories of Henry's character which represent him as a Protestant hero of incredible immaculateness, the writer is in even less danger of adopting the Roman Catholic view of him. ... It would be well adapted to make a large and expensive illustrated work. It should contain reproductions of all the Holbeins which are at Windsor Castle, at Hampton Court & at other places at home and abroad ... in all 150-175,000 words of which a certain proportion would go to notes and Appendices to which the more solid & less picturesque matters would be relegated.[1]

Freed from the necessity for historical accuracy, Ford, besides interpreting his personages with more imaginative latitude than the historian-biographer, made several significant deviations from fact. The changes are all to the person of Katharine Howard, and are virtually necessitated by the portrayal Ford intended of her.

W.M. Rossetti was not unjustified when he observed to Ford that Katharine was "a slightly scabreuse female."[2] The historical Katharine seems to have been a girl of slight education, one of a large family and a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, and brought up by her grandmother.

1., Quoted in Harvey, *Ford Madox Ford*, p.118.
2. Letter dated Nov.3,1903. Quoted by Goldring, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite*, p.116.

Evidence brought at her trial showed that as an adolescent she joined in the revels of her grandmother's maidservants and their gallants; on her own confession she had sexual relations with one Francis Derham on the basis of pre-contract.[1] She was brought to Henry's court to attend on Princess Mary, and captivated the King by her gaiety and vivacity. She married Henry when she was twenty and he forty-nine. As Queen, she attached Derham to her household retinue. She also continued an affair, begun shortly after her arrival at court, with Sir Thomas Culpepper, her cousin, "one of the most privileged gentlemen of the Privy Chamber."[2] Henry appears to have been infatuated with her, but her influence did not extend to matters of state.

Katharine as Ford portrays her is a very different woman, for she is designed to embody one side in the fundamental conflict dealt with in the trilogy, the conflict between the mediaeval spirit of faith and the modern relativistic frame of mind: the Katharine Howard sentenced to death in The Fifth Queen Crowned is little less than a Catholic martyr. Where the real Katharine was "very small and well-rounded",[3] Ford thus makes his Katharine "very slim and tall"[4] and regal. Derham is kept in the background, and Katharine is presented as having been only a child when she knew him. Culpepper

---

1. Francis Hackett, Henry VIII (London, 1929) p.457
2. Ibid., pp.458,466
3. Ibid., p.456
4. The Fifth Queen, (London, 1962), p.138.

is portrayed as a rustic soldier unacquainted with court life; he is in love with Katharine, but her attitude towards him is one of pity and tenderness only: she is faithful to Henry. The nature of their relationship before her marriage is described only ambiguously. As for education, she has spent her childhood in the country immersing herself in the classics and finds herself "more learned than any man she had ever met:"[1] she is as proficient in Latin as the scholar-princess Mary, and "she had some Greek, more than a little French, she could judge a good song, she could turn a verse or Latin or the vulgar tongue. She professed to be able to ride well, to be conversant with the terms of venery, to shoot with the bow, and to have studied the Fathers of the Church."[2]

Set against Katharine are, in the first two books, the Machiavellian Lord Privy Seal Thomas Cromwell, and in the third Lascelles, a shadowy personage mainly of Ford's own creation, to whom Cromwell symbolically hands his annotated copy of Il Principe and who guides Katharine's accuser, Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. When The Fifth Queen opens, Cromwell is at the zenith of his power. The head of a network of spies which keeps the land in a state of terror, he is the actual ruler of England, and has just brought about his greatest coup in arranging the marriage between Anne of Cleves and Henry, thus cementing an alliance with the Protestant

---

1. Ibid., p. 55
2. Ibid., p. 58

princes of Germany. Arriving at court, Katharine very soon realises that this brewer's son is not what she at first arrogantly thought him, "the dirt beneath her feet."[1] And although a contest develops between the two for control of Henry, himself self-doubting and too guileful ever to be controlled, Katharine finds that Cromwell is in his own way as devoted to Henry as she. Her wish is to restore the Old Faith, to bring peace to Henry's spirit and to turn his kingdom into the Fortunate Isles. Cromwell stands for "kingcraft, solid, austere, practical and inspired:"[2] as Throckmorton, his chief spy, observes to Katharine,

> If Cato cried for years: Delenda est Carthago; Cromwell hath contrived for years: Floreat rex meus. Cato stuck at no means. Privy Seal hath stuck at none. Madam Howard: Privy Seal wrote to the King in his first letter, when he was but a simple servant of the Cardinal. "I, Thomas Cromwell, if you will give ear to me, will make your Grace the richest and most puissant king ever there was." So he wrote ten years agone; so he hath said and written daily for all those years.[3]

So that, in the culminating scene between the two, with Cromwell unaware that he has been betrayed by Throckmorton and Katharine knowing his fall imminent, there is in their conflict something approaching poignance:

> 'My lord,' she uttered, and stretched out one hand. 'Come over to us. 'Tis such great pity else — 'tis such pity else.'
>
> She looked again at Throckmorton, who, in the distance, was surveying the Archbishop's spy with a sardonic amusement, and a great mournfulness went through her. For there was the

---

1. Ibid., p.54.
2. Ibid., p.30.
3. Ibid., p.175.

traitor and here before her was the betrayed. Throckmorton had told her enough to know that he was conspiring against his master, and Cromwell trusted Throckmorton before any man in the land; and it was as if she saw one man with a dagger hovering behind another. With her woman's instinct she felt that the man about to die was the better man, though he were her foe. She was minded — she was filled with a great desire to say: 'Believe no word that Throckmorton shall tell you. The Duke of Cleves is now abandoning your cause.' That much she had learnt from Udal five minutes before. But she could not bring herself to betray Throckmorton, who was a traitor for the sake of her cause. ''Tis such pity,' she repeated again.

'Good wench,' Cromwell said, 'you are indifferent honest; but never while I am the King's man shall the Bishop of Rome take toll again in the King's land.'

She threw up her hands.

'Alack!' she said; 'shall not God and His Son our Saviour have their part of the King's glory?'

'God is above us all,' he answered. 'But there is no room for two heads of a State, and in a State is room but for one army. I will have my King so strong that no Pope no priest no noble no people shall here have speech or power. So it is now; I have so made it, the King helping me. Before I came this was a distracted State; the King's writ ran not in the east, not in the west, not in the north, and hardly in the south parts. Now no lord nor no bishop nor no Pope raises head against him here. And, God willing, in all the world no prince shall stand but by grace of this King's Highness. This land shall have the wealth of all the world; this King shall guide this land. There shall be rich husbandmen paying no toll to priests, but to the King alone; there shall be wealthy merchants paying no tax to any prince nor emperor, but only to this King. The King's court shall redress all wrongs; the King's voice shall be omnipotent in the council of the princes.'

'Ye speak no word of God,' she said pitifully.

'God is very far away,' he answered.

'Sir, my lord,' she cried, and brushed again the tress from her forehead. 'Ye have made this King rich with gear of the Church: if ye will be friends with me ye shall make this King a pauper to repay; ye have made this

> King stiffen his neck against God's Vicegerent: if you and I shall work together ye shall make him re-humble himself. Christ the King of all the world was a pauper; Christ the Saviour of all mankind humbled Himself before God that was His Saviour.'
>
> Cromwell said 'Amen.'
>
> 'Sir,' she said again; 'ye have made this King rich, but I will give to him again his power to sleep at night; ye have made this realm subject to this King, but, by the help of God, I will make it subject again to God. You have set up here a great State, but oh, the children of God do weep since ye came. Where is a town where lamentation is not heard? where is a town where no orphan or widow bewails the day that saw your birth?' She had sobs in her voice and she wrung her hands. 'Sir,' she cried, 'I say you are as a dead man already — your day of pride is past, whether ye aid us or no. Set yourself then to redress as heartily as ye have set yourself in the past to make sad. That land is blest whose people are happy; that State is aggrandised whence there arise songs praising God for His blessings. You have built up a great city of groans; set yourself now to build a kingdom where 'Praise God' shall be sung. It is a contented people that makes a State great; it is the love of God that maketh a people rich.'[1]

But even though Privy Seal closes with the defeat of Cromwell and The Fifth Queen Crowned opens in an atmosphere of peace and warmth, with Henry, happy in his marriage, moving towards reconciliation with Rome, Katharine's ascendancy is not one that can endure, for she is essentially an anachronistic figure in the Tudor court. Power can be attained and held only by guile, deceit and subterfuge, and with such means Katharine will have no truck. Indeed, her instinctive reaction is to be away from this Machiavellian world: "I am not made for courts," she says, "... I will get me gone to Calais ... and then to a

---

1. Ibid., pp.297-299

nunnery. I am not for this world."[1] Henry himself later gives an unconsciously prophetic twist to these words: "'Before God!' — and his voice had a sneering haughtiness — 'ye will not be long of this world if ye steer by the point of honour.'"[2] And Katharine, condemned to death, reaffirms her conviction: "This world is no place for me who am mazed by too much reading in old books."[3]

The contrast between Katharine and the court is in fact precisely the contrast Ford drew between the great contemporaries Dürer and Holbein in Hans Holbein. To Ford, Dürer was a mystic and the last great mediaeval painter, while Holbein represented the emerging modern spirit: "He was a painter of men and cities, and inasmuch as modern life is a matter of men and cities, he was the first painter of modern life."[4] The eyes of Dürer's figures "dream, accept, or believe in the things they see;" those of Holbein's are "half closed, sceptical, challenging and disbelieving."[5] Katharine, in her dreaminess, her idealism and her faith, is a figure from Dürer. Tudor statesmen from Henry downwards, are portrayed exactly as Holbein painted them. Thus, for example, the portrait of Cromwell painted in 1534 when he was Master of the Jewel House shows a heavy and placid-faced man seated and staring in profile across the picture: the face is expressionless, the eyes

---

1. Ibid., p.227
2. Ibid., p.337
3. Ibid., p.590
4. Hans Holbein, p.11
5. Ibid., p.12-13.

intent, calm and slightly hooded. This is precisely the appearance of Ford's Cromwell; indeed, at one point Ford presents him in the pose of Holbein's portrait: "Cromwell sat down in his great chair, and his eyes gazed at nothing through the tapestry of his room."[1] Similarly, the portrait of the Duke of Norfolk, Katharine's uncle and leader of the Catholic faction who nevertheless becomes one of her chief accusers, represents him holding in his gnarled right hand the Grand Marshall's gold baton and in his left the white wand of the Lord High Treasurer. He has a long face, a yellowish complexion and a wide and bitter mouth. In Ford's description,

> the long, melancholy and sinister figure of the Duke of Norfolk stalked stiffly down among the yew trees powdered with frost. The furs from round his neck fluttered about his knees like the wings of a crow, and he dug his Earl Marshall's golden staff viciously into the ground. He waved his jewelled cap and stood still at a little distance. Cromwell regarded him with a sinister and watchful amusement; he looked back at Privy Seal with a black malignancy that hardened his yellow features, his hooked nose and pursed lips into the likeness of a mask representing hatred.[2]

In all, Henry, Cromwell, Anne of Cleves, Princess Mary, the young Edward, Henry Howard and Thomas Wriothesley are based, in appearance and characteristics, on the Holbein sketches and portraits. Significantly, it is only in the case of Katharine, whom Holbein also painted, that Ford departs from the portrait.

The Katharine who first arrives at Henry's court,

---

1. The Fifth Queen, p.213.
2. Ibid., p.41.

then, is an uncomplicated girl most certain of her devotion to the Old Faith. Through her beauty and outspokenness she wins the attention and respect of Henry, and thus becomes the object of a struggle for possession between the Catholic group, led by Norfolk and Bishop Gardiner, and Cromwell. Choice is not for her as simple as it seems, for she soon discovers that Gardiner is a weak and treacherous man and that Norfolk and the Catholic nobles have profited far too greatly by the spoiling of the monasteries to agree to their restoration. At the hands of the sinister Throckmorton, who loves Katharine and serves her with cynical devotion, she receives her education in the ways of intrigue and perceives about her "a world of men who did one thing in order that something very different might happen a long time afterwards."[1] Throckmorton warns her that "it is folly to be too proud to fight the world with the world's weapons,"[2] and though she scorns his advice she finds herself slowly drawn into the web of intrigue. She justifies her means by the nobility of her end, but this self-justification is an aspect of the self-deception which, over the question of her relationship with Culpepper, is to cause her fall. Thus in order to bring about her plans, she finds it necessary to effect a reconciliation between Henry and Mary, daughter of Katharine of Aragon, whom he has proclaimed bastard and who now hates and despises him.

---

1. Ibid., p.186
2. Ibid., p.154.

We find Katharine, therefore, pleading on her knees with Mary to adopt a policy of deception towards the ambassadors from the Spanish and French princes who come seeking her hand. Plotting has its effect on Katharine, however: "It subdued her, it seemed to age her, it was as if she had parted with some virtue."[1]

It is Katharine's more subtly ambiguous attitude towards Culpepper that brings about her end. The whole aim of Ford's treatment of this relationship is to leave an impression of doubt as to her motives, which, as Wiley notices, "without blurring her character or making uncertain her innocence of adultery, leaves her not only in the company of James's Maisie but also of Richardson's Clarissa."[2] Thus the last words of the historical Katharine on the block were, "I die a Queen, but I would rather die the wife of Culpepper."[3] In accordance with Ford's inclination towards indirection and muted effects, Katharine's execution is not described; but in her last speech to Henry she says far less definitely, "I die a Queen, but I would rather have died the wife of my cousin Culpepper or any other simple lout that loved me as he did, without regard, without thought and without falter."[4] Culpepper's passion for Katharine is his one motivating force and to some extent deranges him. Thus one cannot take at face value his incessant talk of the

---

1. Ibid., p.196
2. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.110
3. Hackett, Henry VIII, p.479
4. The Fifth Queen, p.591.

nights they spent together in Lincolnshire. On her side, Katharine regards him with sincere affection, indulging his mad moods, but she never denies or admits their intimacy. Culpepper's invasion of her bedroom and her subsequent refusal to turn on him even after his execution are the direct cause of her death, but once again her motive balances delicately between a deeper affection for him than she cares to admit and a revulsion against the accepted practice of lying and betrayal. Testified against by tortured and suborned witnesses at her trial, she makes no attempt to defend herself:

> 'If you will have it adultery before marriage, it shall be so. If it be to be falseness to my Lord's bed, it shall be so; if it be both, in the name of God, be it both, and where you will and how. If you will have it spoken, here I speak it. If you will have it written, I will write out such words as you shall bid me write. I pray you leave my poor women be, especially them that be sick, for there are none that do not love me, and I do think that my death is all that you need.'[1]

Having made this confession, she knows that not even Henry, frenzied now at the thought of her death can save her:

> 'And so, now I am cast for death, and I am very glad of it. For, if I had not so ensured and made it fated, I might later have wavered. For I am a weak woman, and strong men have taken dishonourable means to escape death when it came near. Now I am assured of death, and know that no means of yours can save me, nor no prayers nor yielding of mine. I came to you for that you might give this realm again to God. Now I see you will not — for not ever will you do it if it must abate you a jot of your sovereignty, and you never will do it without that abatement. So it is in vain that I have sinned.'[2]

---

1. Ibid., p.585
2. Ibid., p.589

And she leaves Henry to the torments of doubt and jealousy:

> 'Aye, there the shoe pinches!' she said. 'Think upon it. Most times you shall not believe it, for you know me. But I have made confession of it before your Council. So it may be true. For I hope some truth cometh to the fore even in Councils.'[1]

For the key to Henry, as Ford sees him, is indecision. And, though Katharine is the subject of the trilogy, Henry is its pivotal character, for no one acts save through him. Ford's Henry is a compellingly complex and sympathetic person, with a suggestion about him of hidden depths that makes him ultimately convincing as both king and man; as Ford himself wrote,

> I amassed a great deal of information about Henry VIII and wrote three long novels about the Defender of the Faith. But I really know — so delusive are reported facts — nothing whatever. Not one single thing! Should I have found him affable, or terrifying, or seductive, or royal, or courageous? There are so many contradictory facts; there are so many reported interviews, each contradicting the other, so that really all that I know about this king could be reported in the words of Maupassant ... introducing one of his characters. ... "C'etait un monsieur à favoris rouges qui entrait toujours le premier." And that is all I know about Henry VIII — that he was a gentleman with red whiskers who always went first through the door.[2]

Throckmorton, cynical but clear-sighted, sees most clearly the mysterious mass of self-contradictions and doubts that Ford's Henry is:

> His Highness ... is a great and formidable club. His Highness is a most great and most majestic bull. He is a thunderbolt and a glorious light; he is a storm of hail and a beneficent sun. There are few men more certain than he

---

1. Ibid., p.592.
2. "On Impressionism," Poetry and Drama, June, 1914.

> when he is certain. There is no one so full of doubts when he doubteth. There is no wind so mighty as he when he is inspired to blow; but God alone, who directeth the wind in its flight, knoweth when he will storm through the world. His Highness is a balance of a pair of scales. Now he is up, now he is down.[1]

But Throckmorton's view of Henry is circumscribed. He does not see what Katharine alone sees, a man guilty, weary, troubled and in need of love. As Henry says to her, "This world goes very wearily with me. I am upon a make of husbandry that bringeth little joy. I have no rest, no music, no corner to hide in ... save in thy converse and the regard of thy countenance."[2] Katharine's response to him is both filial and maternal:

> 'His Highness distilleth from his person a make of majesty; there is no other such a man in Christendom. His Highness culleth from one's heart a make of pity — for, for sure, there is not in Christendom a man more tried or more calling to be led Godwards. The Greek writers had a myth, that the two wings of Love were made of Awe and Pity. Flaws I may find in him; but hot anger rises in my heart if I hear him miscalled. I will not perjure myself at his bidding; but being with him, I will kneel to him unbidden.[3]

Her effect on Henry is wholly beneficial: The Fifth Queen Crowned opens fifteen months after their marriage and shows Henry content with his wife and at peace within himself, "like a husbandman who sat beneath his vine and knew his harvesting prosper."[4] The picture of himself as husbandman is one Henry repeatedly uses to reflect his satisfaction; the last occasion on which he uses it is,

---

1. The Fifth Queen, p.174.
2. Ibid., p.231.
3. Ibid., p.349.
4. Ibid., p.402.

ironically, on the night on which Culpepper invades Katharine's rooms. "Now," says Henry, "I will have such peace in land as cometh to the husbandman. He hath ingarnered his grain; he hath barned his fodder and straw; his sheep are in the byres and in the stalls his oxen. So, sitteth he by his fireside with wife and child, and hath no fear of winter. Such a man am I, your King, who in the years to come shall rest in peace."[1]

By making Katharine, Henry and Cromwell the chief figures in the trilogy, Ford, as Meixner points out, "rejected the safer tradition of historical narrative, that which derives from Scott and which subordinates figures of history — kings, queens, ministers of state, and military heroes — and centers upon invented characters of lower rank. Instead, he essayed the more challenging task, concentrating after the Shakespearian example on the chiefs of the realm."[2] The structure of the trilogy is, too, one of a number of large, set scenes. This tends to give it a static, pictorial quality, which is emphasized by the slow-moving, formal speech with which Ford has endowed his characters and by his concentration on the colour and detail of their surroundings. The whole can be seen as one of Ford's attempts to resolve, along the lines of Jamesian scenic devision, what Graham Greene penetratingly analyses as "his inability to write

---

1. Ibid., p.552
2. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.45.

... along the line of time."[1]

With large scenes, then, worked out in fine detail, Ford carries the narrative forward in a series of blocks. What occurs between these scenes becomes a property of memory, the memory either of the narrating intelligence, speaking a rather chronicle-like language, or of the character through whose mind the story is being told: this is most often Katharine, but almost every important character is used at some stage in this way. The notable exceptions are Henry and Mary, who are more pivots of the action than actors: battles are fought for their support, but they remain figures of enigma, holding the entire court in tension. Indeed, Meixner uses the illuminating image of cat's cradle as the symbol of the entire world of Ford's trilogy: "It is a world of complexly structured tensions held momentarily in poise to reveal meaning and motive, and before our eyes, as one or another pressure in the system is adjusted, shifting into new configurations and exposures. Its perfect symbol is the children's game of cat's cradle, which Ford has Katharine play in a key scene in Privy Seal."[2]

By and large, however, the chronology and narrative method of the trilogy are straightforward. Creative energy has gone less into technical experiment than into the making of a world that will seem scrupulously authentic. Largely because of Ford's researches, his Tudor world has

---

1. "The Dark Backward," London Mercury, Oct.,1935.
2. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.49.

an authority and solidity greater than that of any of his other historical fiction. But his precision is far from pedantry — indeed, much of Ford's "authoritative" detail is of his own invention. From this point of view his recreation, typified by the following description of Henry's stables is more strictly historical Impressionism than historically accurate reconstruction.

> Horse-boys in grey with double roses worked on their chests were spreading sand in the great quadrangle, fenced in with white palings, between the buildings where the chargers were trained to the manage. Each wing of the buildings was a quarter of a mile long, of grey stone thatched with rushwork that came from the great beds all along the river and rose into curious peaks like bushes along each gable. On the right were the mares, the riding jennets for the women and their saddle rooms; on the left the pack animals, mules for priests and the places for their housings: in the centre, on each side of a vast barn, that held the provender, were the stables of the coursers and stallions that the King himself rode or favoured; of these huge beasts there were two hundred: each in a cage within the houses — for many were savage tearers both of men and of each other. On the door of each cage there was written the name of the horse, as Sir Brian, Sir Bors, or Old Leo, — and the sign of the constellation under which each was born, the months in which, in consequence it was propitious or dangerous to ride them, and pentagons that should prevent witches, warlocks or evil spirits from casting spells upon the great beasts. Their housings and their stall armour, covered with grease to keep the rust from them, hung upon pulleys before each stall, and their polished neck armours branched out from the walls in a long file, waving over the gateways right into the distance, the face-pieces with the shining spikes in the foreheads hanging at the ends, the eyeholes carved out and the nostril places left vacant, so that they resembled an arcade of the skeletons of unicorns' heads.[1]

---

1. The Fifth Queen, p.157-8.

More effective than even the richness of detail, however, in creating the illusion of authenticity, is the language itself. In the narrative sections this is mainly modern English adjusted to Tudor rhythms, with the occasional Tudor locution used rather than its modern equivalent. In the dialogue, however, Ford has made an attempt to imitate Tudor speech, using its vocabulary, syntax and rhythms. The attempt suffers from inaccuracy and from a certain preciousness, but it justifies itself in such long scenes as the last meeting of Katharine and Cromwell, Katharine's interview with Anne of Cleves and Katharine's speech before her accusers, where its formality lends it dignity, where its rhetorical quality is in place and where it gains authority from its echoes of Tudor chronicle, and even of Malory:

> 'And so, now I am cast for death, and I am very glad of it. For, if I had not so ensured and made it fated, I might later have wavered. For I am a weak woman, and strong men have taken dishonourable means to escape death when it came near. Now I am assured of death, and know that no means of yours can save me, nor no prayers nor yielding of mine.[1]

In the end, however, the vividness of the backdrops is not enough to raise the trilogy from historical recreation to imaginative fiction in its own right. It is no doubt with this distinction in mind that Joseph Conrad wrote to Galsworthy, "The whole cycle is a noble conception — the swan song of Historical Romance — and

---

1. The Fifth Queen, p.589

frankly I am glad to have heard it."[1] For Ford is ultimately unable to provide his background with entirely believable actors, and his heroine, in particular, becomes more and more the embodiment of an ideal rather than a living woman as the trilogy progresses. In the first book Katharine is a strong-willed, decisive and serious woman mature beyond her years and engaged in a complex psychological struggle with Cromwell. By the last book she has become Doomed Innocence hounded by foes, the chief of whom is Lascelles, Cranmer's secretary and, as a creation, an unworthy successor to Cromwell: the motive behind his treachery is never explored and he is conceived entirely from the outside as the "blond fox." The Katharine who finds herself propelled from an obscure Lincolnshire girlhood into the confusing and dangerous world of court intrigue Ford deals with sympathetically, complexly, and with an occasional saving irony that lends perspective to her picture. Thus, in the interview between Katharine and Anne of Cleves, Katharine protests, "If I will be Queen, it is that God may bless this realm and King with the old faith again. ... Anne's eyelids narrowed. "It is best known to yourself why you will be Queen," she said. "It is best known to God what faith he will have in this your realm. I know not what faith he liketh best, nor yet what side of a queen's functions most commendeth itself unto you."[2] And, though Katharine has not established

---

1. Letter dated Feb.20,1908. Jean-Aubry, Life and Letters, v.2, p.67.
2. The Fifth Queen, p.368.

to her own satisfaction that the marriage between Henry and Anne was not consummated, "she itched to be Queen — on the morrow or next day; she desired to have the King for her own, to wear fair gowns and a crown; to be beloved of the poor people and beloved of the saints."[1] The Katharine of The Fifth Queen Crowned is a more remote and perfect figure than this; if Ford does not present Henry as "a Protestant hero of incredible immaculateness," he does end by presenting Katharine as a Catholic heroine of incredible purity.

Indeed, The Fifth Queen Crowned marks a considerable slowing down in narrative. This is understandable, as the book deals mainly with the resolution of issues raised earlier; but its decrease in tempo is in conflict with Ford's doctrine of progression d'effet. The reason for its failure is basically that Ford had in it too much matter to treat. In particular he finds it necessary to deal with Katharine's childhood association with Derham, and with Lascelles' twisting of the facts of the relationship. Thus the reader finds himself on a journey into the countryside to Lascelles' sister, once a maidservant in the service of Katharine's grandmother, and has to hear her history, which "justifies" her treachery to Katharine in terms of psychological cause and effect, but which interrupts the progress of the story drastically.

---

1. Ibid., p.197.

The integration of the subplots into the main plot provides another problem not satisfactorily solved by Ford. The three subplots, centring about the lascivious scholar Nicholas Udal, the family of Katharine's maidservant Margaret Poins, and Culpepper, serve several valuable purposes. Introducing such topics as the impact of the New Learning on England, internal religious strife and Anglo-French relationships, they provide the trilogy with a sense of historical and social panorama. All of them advance the action significantly: Udal's theft of documents carried by a German envoy causes the fall of Cromwell and his seduction of Margaret Poins causes her replacement by the faithless Mary Lascelles. Hal Poins acts as the tool of Lascelles, while his Lutheran printer uncle conducts a libellous campaign against Katherine and causes rumours to reach Henry's ears. Culpepper is the direct cause of Katharine's fall. But these minor characters are conceived very much in terms of humours: Udal is "lean, humorous, lascivious" and very little else; the youth Hal Poins is "a flash of red." None of these minor characters is adequately fleshed out to justify the space devoted to him. The amours of Udal, in particular, make tedious reading. And the drawing of the strands from these subplots into the main narrative in The Fifth Queen Crowned is too long stretched out a process to enable the sense of inevitability to be sustained. The building of the trilogy out of a central plot and several subplots converging on the climax of the action fails because the

links between plots are too complicated: there has, at crucial moments, to be too great a volume of explanation: attention is drawn from Katharine herself, and the tension slackens.

"A magnificent bravura piece," writes Graham Greene. The Katharine Howard trilogy demonstrates how well Ford could write in 1908, on the level of writing alone. It stands in his oeuvre as Salammbô does in Flaubert's — as a masterpiece of imaginative reconstruction and style. A contemporary review in the Revue des Deux Mondes lauded Ford's "érudition, ... scrupuleuse conscience et ... talent poetique;"[1] and his writing in the trilogy does, every now and again, rise effortlessly to poetry: Katharine speaks to Henry:

> "I could not remember the speech the Bishop of Winchester set me to say. I warned him I have no memory for the Italian, and my fright muddled my wits."
>
> Internal laughter shook him, and once again he set his feet far apart, as if that aided him to look at her.
>
> "Your fright!" he said.
>
> "I am even now so frightened," she uttered, "that it is as if another spoke with my throat."
>
> His great mouth relaxed as if he accepted as his due a piece of skilful flattery. Suddenly she sank down upon her knees, her hands extended and her red lips parted as the beak of a bird opens with terror.[2]

But there is nothing new about the trilogy: it is

---

1. T. de Wyzewa, "Le Roman Anglais en 1907," Revue des Deux Mondes, Dec.15,1907.
2. The Fifth Queen, p.163.

a work of consolidation but not of experiment, a tour de force. It is the best of Ford's historical fiction, but it is nevertheless not as interesting as his better novels of contemporary life, partly because he was engaged more fully in the latter than he could ever be in the former, partly because, as Ford himself said, "a historical novel even at the best is nothing more than a tour-de-force, a fake more or less genuine in inspiration and workmanship, but none the less a fake. Even Salammbô is that."[1] Ford must have the last word.

The 'Half Moon'

In 1909 Ford published another historical novel, The 'Half Moon', set in the early seventeenth century. It appears that The 'Half Moon' was written several years before its publication — at the latest before Privy Seal: a letter from Ford's publishers dated Sept. 26, 1906 mentions The 'Half Moon' under an earlier title, Hendrick Hudson.[2] It was originally intended as part of a trilogy, Three Ships, to be published in New York to commemorate the tricentenary of Hudson's landing: the "Half Moon" was Hudson's ship. The other two novels were not written.

At first glance merely a romance of adventure, with witchcraft, hidden treasure, voyages of discovery and battles with savages, The 'Half Moon' justifies its claim

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.175.
2. See Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.29.

to being historical romance by its basically serious opposition of the New and Old Worlds: its theme is the corruption of the Old World and the carrying over of this corruption to the New. The epigraph to the novel thus reads, ironically, "Come: let us take ship and sail unto that Avalon where there is no longer any ill." For to that Avalon the voyagers bring evil.

The central character is not Hudson but a shipwright from Rye named Edward Colman whose ambition it is to make Rye once more a great port: it is at this time less a port than the centre of a dissenting sect of Dutch weavers, the Knipperdollincks.[1] Colman loves a daughter of one of the weavers, and repeatedly rejects the advances of the passionate and sinister Anne Jeal, a woman of considerable influence in Rye. Anne takes her revenge on him first by persecuting him and driving him from Rye to Holland, and then by attempting to kill him by black magic. In Amsterdam Colman joins Henry Hudson as interpreter to his Dutch crew on a voyage to what is now New York. Anne's witchcraft persues him over the seas, however, and he is afflicted with strange illnesses and pains as she melts and stabs a wax effigy of him. In a final fit of jealousy she stabs the image with an

---

1. Ford's intimate acquaintance with the ways of this sect arises from his researches into the Anabaptists in England for a projected novel in collaboration with Conrad. See letter from David S. Meldrum to William Blackwood dated Feb.2,1899: "Conrad is going to work with [Ford] on a great novel about the Ana Baptists, of which sect Hueffer ... has great masses of information. (This Conrad told me in the strictest confidence.)" Joseph Conrad, Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum, (London,1958), p.44.

Indian knife; and at the same instant Colman is killed by an Indian arrow.

But, however wanton this murder may be on Anne's part, it is not wanton on the part of the Indians: it is a retaliation for the slaughter caused by a Dutch sailor firing into a peaceful procession that came to meet the ship. Colman is killed, the Indians return the sailor insane to his mates, and Hudson, mad with grief and rage, sets sail once more for Europe at the head of a mutinous crew. "So they sailed away up that broad stream."[1]

The 'Half Moon' is obviously not easily credible in realistic terms. Its failing, indeed, is that it is more a sketch for a novel than a fully developed novel: its meaning is easily interpreted in terms of allegory, but as a rendering of life it is fantastic. Thus Edward escapes from an Old World torn with religious strife (seen in the bitter sectarianism of Rye) and governed by fools (the ridiculous Rye authorities and the ineffectual James I) to an Avalon where there is reputed to be no ill. But he cannot escape from his European heritage of corruption and evil (his sickness and death at the hands of the witch Anne), and to Avalon (America) Hudson succeeds in bringing only destruction and death.

Despite its unfinished feel, however, The 'Half Moon' is disturbingly powerful. The climactic last

---

1. The 'Half Moon' (London, 1909), p.346.

chapters are worked out with greater detail and care than the rest of the book, and are lent additional force by the progression d'effet technique which Ford applies to the voyage: he shifts back and forth across the Atlantic from Anne Jeal to Hudson and Colman, developing an ever-growing tension of mystery, doom and icy silences. And Anne herself moves through the pages with an impressive force of rage, hatred and jealousy: in her passion for Colman and her lust to torment him she crudely prefigures Sylvia Tietjens. Hudson, hardy, cunning and ambitious, is powerfully drawn. There are passages, often pages in length, of brilliantly vivid descriptive writing, equal to the best of the Katharine Howard trilogy. Here, for example, are King James and his cronies: Anne Jeal is seeking his favour in her persecution of Colman:

> He had a hooked nose, that crooked over to one side, a little moustachio that turned upwards, and little, tired, beady bright eyes that had many wrinkles beneath them. His voice was monotonous and haughty and at the same time querulous. ... They moved from the great window all in a mass, with slow pacings as if they were a machine pushed forward from behind. Five of them were dark and wore chin-beards that fell down upon their ruffs, and they maintained airs of great gravity and were clothed in black. But the sixth was a fair youth with high eyebrows; he tittered often, and was habited in a suit of red, very slender about the waist and sewn all over, right down to his red stockings and shoes with large pearls. Later on he leaned over the King's shoulder and made faces at Anne Jeal, kissing his fingertips and rubbing the jacket above his heart till the pearls came unsewn and slipped on to the dark floor.[1]

But however powerful isolated passages of writing

---

1. Ibid., p.210.

may be, the novel fails as a whole because it fails to body forth its theme adequately and credibly. Thus Wiley's summary of this theme refers less to the novel as it stands than to what one feels the intention behind it to be:

> Ford tries with his foreground situation of Anne Jeal's destructive passion for Coleman to offer a compressed statement of the psychological forces at work in an era of disintegrating faith and territorial expansion, so that the interwoven themes of sorcery and New World voyaging suggest that the same underlying state of mind drives Anne to satisfaction in the practice of black arts and Hudson to seek fame in egotistical exploits of navigation. Both characters express the breakdown of faith into sterile will to power and demand for new excitements.[1]

Mr. Apollo.

The first novel Ford wrote after completing the Katharine Howard trilogy shows a remarkable swing back from historical romance to satirical fantasy. Mr. Apollo (1908) stands closer to The Inheritors than to any other of Ford's novels. Like The Inheritors, it uses the supernatural as a vehicle for an attack on contemporary society. It is not, however, politics that Mr. Apollo satirises, but religion in various forms, from blind atheism, through superstition, to "muscular Christianity." Ford claimed that "Conrad used to say that this was my best book;"[2] it is difficult to believe this, for the

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.114.
2. Inscription, dated 1927, to a presentation copy. See Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.28.

book is conventional in structure and suffers greatly from overt didacticism. Its main value would seem to be biographical: it reveals some of Ford's religious attitudes and evinces a surprising intensity of feeling about contemporary social questions.[1]

The device about which the novel is built is a familiar one, the descent of a god to earth to live among mortal beings. The god is Phoebus Apollo, who appears in London to learn about the modern world. He visits three distinct groups of people, representing three different outlooks on the supernatural. The first consists of Mr. Todd, a Methodist clergyman working in the East End, and his family. Todd is a selfish, materialistic and authoritarian "muscular Christian;" Mr. Apollo punishes his meanness towards his family by turning him into a tree. In response to his wife's pleas he restores him to life, but only as an eternal babe in arms.

The second group consists of Lord Aldington, a press magnate, and his board of directors. Apollo convinces Aldington, by fulfilling his request for a miracle, that he is a god, and Aldington asks him to announce himself to the world through the medium of his newspapers. Apollo writes his proclamation, but it is never published: its place is taken, at the last minute, by a report on a mind-reading performance given in a London music-hall.

---

1. There does not seem adequate justification, however, for reading Mr. Apollo as as personal an account of Ford's religious experiences as Meixner does. See Ford Madox Ford's Novels, pp.114-5.

Apollo's deepest and most serious contact, however, is with a discussion group which meets weekly and has for chief members Mr. Clarges, an old and intractable atheist, Mr. Carver, an anti-Catholic liberal, and Mr. and Mrs. Milne, agnostics. Apollo joins in their discussions. Clarges is routed but refuses to recant — "Shall I have been denying God for forty years to eat my words now?"[1] Carver is made to see the validity of some points of Catholic doctrine. On the Milnes Apollo's influence is more personal: their progress has been from outright atheism to weary agnosticism when the novel opens; Apollo brings them to belief in the Godhead.

The Milnes are the only fully rounded characters in the novel. Apollo is not human, and is not intended to be. The other characters are humours only, embodiments of institutions and points of view that Mr. Apollo satirises. But through the action of Apollo upon the Milnes Ford presents a substitute for what his satire attempts to destroy. The Milnes are schoolteachers living on meagre salaries and unable to escape from the oppression of London to the country; Alfred Milne is sickly. At first deeply attracted towards Apollo and recognising something supernatural in him, they are appalled by what they consider the vulgarity of the proclamation he writes for Aldington's newspapers — "I am God! I am immortal! I am omniscient! I was,

---

1. Mr. Apollo (London, 1908), p.112.

and I shall be!"[1] They cannot believe it literally and flee from him. Alfred Milne's illness worsens, however, to the extent that his wife fears for his life. His doctor prescribes fresh air and quiet, which their slum flat never gives them. In desperation Frances Milne calls on God and Apollo appears. She offers herself and her husband in his service, and in an act of miraculous devastation Apollo destroys the houses and people around the Milnes to provide their fresh air and quiet. The novel ends with "the sound of happy voices on the stairs."[2]

"Ford Maddox Hueffer is the author of a book called 'Mr. Apollo'," wrote Frank Harris to Arnold Bennett, "which I hardly know how to review. He has brought a god down to earth without any mist, and the deity is wholly unconvincing, not to say ludicrous, for he talks as if he were painfully translating from a dialogue of Plato ... His representation of the god has something of the insolence of ability in it, though I do not think it has come off."[3] Mr. Apollo has had the effect of puzzling and disturbing more than one critic, not so much by its matter as by the tone in which it is related. There appears to be some deeply personal reason behind the anguished religious debate and intense soul-searching of the novel which

---

1. Ibid., p.297.
2. Ibid., p.310.
3. Letter dated Jan.4,1909. Quoted by Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.530, from Frank Harris to Arnold Bennett: Fifty-Eight Letters 1908-1910, privately printed.

it only inadequately bodies forth: at its most powerful the novel assumes the tone of sermon or spiritual diary rather than of fiction. Meixner is thus entirely justified in speaking of its "unmistakable quality of the personal;" he has fewer grounds for claiming that "it stands apart [from Ford's historical fiction and novels of social satire] in its intensity of feeling, excitement of vision, and narrative skill."[1] Its intensity of feeling is a quality one feels in the mind behind the novel, not in the novel itself; its vision is exciting only in that it opens to the doubting Milnes the possibilities of faith; and its technique is competent but unadventurous. Even as satire Mr. Apollo lacks stature: there is a certain monotony both in the characters it satirises — Aldington, Clarges and Todd are little but caricatures — and in its description of the grey, cramped and dreary metropolis: London and its crowds are conceived in terms that are in themselves flat and lack creative freshness, and its symbolic destruction at the end of the novel seems no very terrible act:

> Girls slapped young men hard blows on the back, and screamed half, half laughed; men burdened with babies melancholily pushed perambulators against their hips; women bore before them distended string bags ... The long canal stretched away into the distance a slate-grey surface with little patches of thin vapour arising beneath the translucent haze, between slate-grey and undistinguished houses and spindly trees whose foliage had no shimmer because of the film of soot that covered each leaf. ... The crowd ..., serried and jostling, in the narrow space between the traffic and the house-fronts, appeared like a section of dark and troubled fluid in a test-tube.[2]

---

1. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.114.
2. Mr. Apollo, p.38.

And Mr. Apollo himself, the stranger who is to present what the modern world lacks, is too rootless and too casual. He is a magician rather than a god; as Wiley observes, "the fault ... is in the inadequacy of Apollo to draw authority from any vital mythical context."[1]

The main interest of Mr. Apollo, then, lies in what it reveals of Ford — of his obvious involvement in questions of faith at the time of writing the novel, and of the religious attitudes he expresses through Apollo. Apollo's contacts with Todd, the Methodist, and his debates with Carver, who is hotly anti-Catholic, reveal in him sympathy, though not enthusiasm, towards the Catholic Church. Protestantism is seen as inadequate and without a sense of God's mystery. The position Apollo upholds is, however, more all-embracing than Catholicism: faith and humility before the mystery of the Godhead are essential, but the universe has place for a variety of gods — "for so many," he says, "that though the God of each man were a different God, yet for each man there would be a God attuned to him."[2]

Religious faith is never in the rest of Ford's work dealt with as openly as here. Even in later novels in which religion is of central importance — The Good Soldier and Parade's End — its importance is confined to its social implications and matters of morals. It would seem, therefore, that Mr. Apollo is the embodiment of a preoccupation of Ford's that was only temporary.

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, pp.152-3.
2. Mr. Apollo, p.193.

IV

1909-1913

In December, 1908 the first number of the English Review was published under Ford's editorship. The contents page read as follows:

Thomas Hardy ..... A Sunday Morning Tragedy
Henry James ..... The Jolly Corner
Joseph Conrad ..... Some Reminiscences
John Galsworthy ..... A Fisher of Men
W.H. Hudson ..... Stonehenge
Tolstoy ..... The Raid, trans. Constance Garnett
H.G. Wells ..... Tono-Bungay, Book I

Cunninghame Graham, W.H. Davies and Arthur Harwood on Unemployment
Reviews by Joseph Conrad and Levin Schücking

The first number was the most brilliant, but during the period of Ford's editorship — December, 1908 to February, 1910 — the standard of the Review never dropped far below the level of this number. "It may be taken as a paradigm," wrote Ezra Pound. "It was ... the most brilliant piece of editing I have known."[1]

The idea of founding a publication which would be the organ of the significant writing of his day had been at the back of Ford's mind for a long time, and he had behind him the examples of The Yellow Book and Savoy. A letter written to Edward Garnett, then a publisher's reader, while Ford was still collaborating with Conrad, proposes that a series of books be published "conceived

---

1. "Small Magazines," English Journal, Nov.,1930.

on the broad general idea of making manifest, to the most unintelligent, how great writers get their effects. As distinct from the general line of tub-thumping about moral purposes, the number of feet in a verse, or the noble and amiable ideas entertained, by said Great Writers, of Elevating and of making the world a better place. ... Why couldn't one make some sort of nucleus, just some little attempt at forming a small heap on which people could stand and get a point of view with their heads a few inches above the moral atmosphere of these Islands."[1]

What gave him the actual impetus to start a review, Ford claims, was the refusal of the Cornhill Magazine to print Hardy's poem "A Sunday Morning Tragedy," which deals with an abortion. His friend Arthur Marwood proposed that he print it — "He was of the opinion that the rest of the world must guffaw if it heard that Hardy could not find a publisher in England."[2] But another reason was undoubtedly a desire to reassert himself in an editorial capacity after his dismissal from the staff of Daily Mail Books, with whose editor he had quarrelled. Ford and Marwood put up the money, Ford £2,800 and Marwood £2,200. Each held a two-fifths share in the Review; the remaining one-fifth share was reserved for contributors who did not ask for payment.[3] Conrad and Wells, both

---

1. Quoted by Frank MacShane, "The English Review," South Atlantic Quarterly, Summer, 1961.
2. Return to Yesterday, p.385.
3. See unpublished letter to Wells, dated Apr.2,1910; quoted by Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, pp.161-2.

extremely shrewd in money matters, gave Ford their moral support but invested nothing. Support was also promised by C.F.G. Masterman, the rising young Liberal Member of Parliament. Much of the editing of the first number was done at Joseph Conrad's home, and the manifesto with which it opens was concocted by Ford and Conrad. It is magnificently un-commercial:

> The only qualification for admission to the pages of the Review will be — in the view of the Editors — either distinction of individuality or force of conviction, either literary gifts or earnestness of purpose, whatever the purpose may be — the criteria of inclusion being the clarity of diction, the force or the illuminative value of the views expressed. ...

The first trouble came when Lord Alfred Douglas and T.W.H. Crosland, editors of an earlier and defunct English Review, threatened to sue Ford and Marwood for using their title. They were appeased; but by August, 1909 the Review had run into financial difficulties. Ford's inability to manage finance was much to blame for this. He had enormous talent as a literary impresario, but as his sub-editor Douglas Goldring recalls, "in regard to such things as 'office management' and running any sort of establishment he was more childishly incapable than any man I have ever met."[1] On the one hand he did much of his editing from a box in a Shepherd's Bush music-hall[2] and appeared to lose manuscripts;[3] on the other he entertained

---

1. Douglas Goldring, South Lodge (London, 1943), p.22.
2. Ibid., p.32
3. See D.H. Lawrence, letter to Edward Garnett dated Nov.7,1911, in which he claims that Ford lost the manuscripts of two of his plays. Letters, ed. Huxley (London, 1956), p.13.

lavishly and paid contributors what they asked. As Goldring observes, Ford "felt, very keenly, that the English Review was so clearly, so self-evidently a non-commercial undertaking that writers should automatically rally to its support by not exacting their commercial 'price per thou.'"[1]

In August, 1909, then, their £5,000 spent, Ford and Marwood decided to suspend the Review. At this point, however, Ford's brother-in-law Dr. Soskice, the head of a Russian Law Bureau, undertook to form a syndicate that would continue the Review without interfering with editorial policy and at the same time pay Ford a salary as editor. Ford agreed to this, but the arrangement proved unsatisfactory: his salary was never paid, and once, returning from a short journey, he found Galsworthy appointed editor and installed in his office. Galsworthy resigned, but Ford's position was becoming intolerable. It became necessary to sell out, and at the beginning of 1910 Violet Hunt found a speculator, the politician Sir Alfred Mond, ready to take over the Review. The February number was the last over which Ford had control. The section devoted to current affairs is expanded to the same length as that devoted to belles-lettres, and the political writing all follows a Liberal line. Ford resigned; as he wrote to R.A. Scott-James, "Mr. Mond has now ejected me from the

---

1. Douglas Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite (London, 1948), p.144

editorial chair because he is a liberal which no one could accuse me of being."[1] Austin Harrison became editor. The March, 1910 number includes a contribution from Edmund Gosse, Ford's arch literary foe.[2]

The consistently high standard Ford maintained in the thirteen numbers he edited would have made the English Review a remarkable enough venture. But even more important is the range of writers he published. There are, first of all, the accepted masters of his day — James, Hudson, Meredith, Hardy, Anatole France, Gerhardt Hauptmann. Then there are the established authors — Conrad, Galsworthy, Wells, Bennett, Belloc, Cunninghame Graham, Yeats, Granville Barker, Emile Verhaeren, Violet Hunt, Chesterton, W.H. Davies. Finally there are les jounes — Norman Douglas, Ezra Pound, Stephen Reynolds, Wyndham Lewis, E.M. Forster, Rupert Brooke, D.H. Lawrence, H.M. Tomlinson. By covering this wide range Ford kept a sound balance which conferred rank on the young and gave a sense of being "in touch" to the old. As Malcolm Bradbury writes, "It was in this interest of Hueffer's in 'les jeunes', in his whole effort to make his paper a kind of collaboration of all the literary great, that the strength of the review lay; its collapse after Hueffer was ousted from editorship shows that it was his gift as impresario that carried the paper. ...

---

1. "Ford Madox Ford when He Was Hueffer," South Atlantic Quarterly, Spring, 1958.
2. See Archibald Marshall, Out and About (London, 1933), pp.131-2: "One writer Gosse wouldn't have at any price, and that was Ford Madox Hueffer." Gosse was at this time editor of Daily Mail Books.

What had been needed had been the support [to writers] of a respectable review not given over entirely to revolution, and this is what Hueffer had provided. ... Certainly he should serve as a model for editors of literary periodicals."[1]

Ford's unbusinesslike management of the Review is not enough, however, to explain its collapse. For despite its high quality, its circulation hardly ever rose above a thousand copies a month.[2] The Review sold at half-a-crown. Richard Aldington goes so far as to attribute its failure to "the stupidity and genuine hatred of culture displayed by our countrymen."[3] "What happened," says Frank MacShane, "was that many of the old guard, finding their positions under attack by the young, adopted a hostile attitude towards the Review, while the incompetents clubbed together to cry it down."[4] Reviews of early numbers in Academy, one of the organs of the literary Establishment, seem in some measure to confirm this:

> The first number is before us, and if we see the twelfth we will endeavour to get somebody to eat it. To all intents and purposes it may be counted as a fat Socialist monthly ... Anybody with anchequc-book could have done what Mr. Hueffer has done with respect to No. 1 or the English Review number two ...[5]
>
> The English Review has already and most palpably cast in its lot with a group of authors and journalists who delight, we believe, in being

---

1. "The English Review," London Magazine, Aug.,1958.
2. Frank MacShane, "The English Review," South Atlantic Review, Summer,1961.
3. Letter to Frank MacShane dated May17,1954. See ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Academy, Nov.1908.

> known generally as 'intellectuals' and who appear to us to be engaged ... in the flagrant obscuration of literary opinion and the 'tarnishing of public information' upon literary matters at the source. ...[1]

In the end, however, though Ford's editorship brought him to the foreground of literary affairs, its effect on his career was unfortunate. Had he not undertaken it, he might have anticipated a relatively calm future in the Edwardian world of letters. But the venture destroyed his security: as Edgar Jepson observes,

> He hurt the feelings of those [the English] critics badly when, as editor of the English Review, he found their writing below the standard he demanded for that organ, and returned their articles with polite and plainly sincere expressions of regret. They were able therefore in his long-drawn-out dispute with a literary friend[2] to take the side of the friend with good consciences, and for years his novels were ignored by them in a conspiracy of silence or, at the best, were received with faint praise.[3]

On the other hand, Ford's position enabled him to meet and help several young writers and led, eventually, to his embroilment in Imagism and Vorticism. Ezra Pound arrived, led by May Sinclair, and soon took over the management of Ford's Thursday afternoon gatherings. Norman Douglas arrived with an introduction from Conrad, and Ford published his "Isle of Typhoeus." Wyndham Lewis arrived, unannounced, and forced his way into Ford's bathroom. Ford published his sketch, "The Pole." "Through Hueffer," Lewis laterwrote, "I became acquainted

---

1. Academy, Mar.6,1909.
2. Presumably Conrad's widow.
3. Memories of an Edwardian (London, 1938), p.133.

with Ezra Pound, through whom in due course I became acquainted with T.S. Eliot, Gaudier Brzeska, Dolmetsch, H.D., Aldington and many others."[1]

Ford's most important contact among the younger writers, however, was with D.H. Lawrence, to whom his assistance was invaluable: Richard Aldington goes so far as to claim that Ford "was the only English editor of the time who would have sponsored Lawrence."[2] Lawrence did not in fact himself approach Ford: manuscripts of his stories and poems were sent to Ford by Jessie Chambers, and Ford invited Lawrence and Jessie to London. Ford made several unavailing attempts to have Lawrence's schoolteaching duties lightened. On one occasion he visited Lawrence at his parents' home in Nottingham and was impressed by the atmosphere of rooted culture in a working-class environment.[3] He published Lawrence's "Odour of Chrysanthemums" and several poems, recognizing Lawrence's talent immediately: as early as 1913 he was saying that "I do really consider him to be one of the remarkable geniuses of our time."[4]

Ford was not, however, by temperament sympathetic to Lawrence's subject, and Lawrence was too independent by nature and too different from Ford in his aims to

---

1. P. Wyndham Lewis, Rude Assignment (London, 1951), p.121
2. Richard Aldington, Portrait of a Genius, But ... , (London, 1950), p.70.
3. Return to Yesterday, pp.392 ff.
4. "The Product of it All," Outlook, Jul.3,1913.

join his "school:" he later alleged that "the Hueffer-Pound faction seems inclined to lead me round a little as one of their show-dogs."[1] Ford read an early version of The Trespasser entitled The Saga of Siegmund and, in Lawrence's report, remarked that it was " a rotten work of genius. It has no construction or form — it is execrably bad art, being all variations on a theme. Also it is erotic — not that I, personally, mind that, but an erotic work must be good art, which this is not." Lawrence decided not to publish the book in that form, and Ford commended him: "You are quite right not to publish that book — it would damage your reputation perhaps permanently."[2] After this encounter, Ford never saw Lawrence again "to talk to" and believed he had hurt him deeply. But he recognised that he could teach Lawrence nothing in the way of form "for his sort of long book," and that "the rest of his gift was outside my reach. ... He is quite good enough as he is — rich and coloured and startling like a mediaeval manuscript."[3]

Ford's main use to Lawrence was practical. He gave a start to a young man who, in his own disarming words, "knew nothing of the publishing of books,"[4] and showed him innumerable kindnesses. Ford's kindness to him was, in fact, a quality to which Lawrence again and

---

1. Letter to Edward Garnett, Dec.30,1913, Letters, ed. Huxley, p.172.
2. Letter to Edward Garnett, Dec.18,1911, ibid., p.15.
3. Quoted from Portraits from Life (1936) in Harry T. Moore, The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence (London, 1951), p.84.
4. Letter to William Heinemann, Dec.15,1909, Letters, ed. Huxley, p.1.

again testified: "Hueffer ... was very kind to me, and was the first man I ever met who had a real and true feeling for literature;"[1] to Violet Hunt he spoke of Ford's "dove-grey kindliness."[2] And finally Ford passed Lawrence to Edward Garnett, who was able to help him in his writing more than Ford.

Another embroilment into which Ford's association with the English Review drew him was one which was to profoundly affect his life between 1909 and 1915 and to leave its mark on his writing: it was his lamentable affair with Violet Hunt which, before it was finally broken off in 1919, impoverished him, made him persona non grata socially and caused further periods of mental depression. Its most immediate effect on his writing was that it compelled him to write potboilers: between 1910 and 1915 he published nine novels (two of them pseudonymous), two volumes of criticism, two volumes of essays, a volume of reminiscences and two collaborations with Violet Hunt, besides weekly articles for Outlook. But the deeper effect was to deepen the elements of self-justification and self-pity in his work, and to add to his repertoire of fictional characters the cold and rapacious woman best personified by Sylvia Tietjens.

Violet Hunt had passed her childhood in the same

---

1. D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, ed. McDonald (London,1936), p.254.
2. The Flurried Years, p.158.

circles as Ford, but being eleven years his senior had not come into much contact with him until 1908, when, on the advice of H.G. Wells, she submitted some stories for the English Review: her story "The Coach" was printed in March, 1909. She had by this time a considerable reputation as a novelist: Douglas Goldring calls her "one of the outstanding woman writers of the period."[1] "She was regarded as the English Colette ... Popular rumour credited her with being very French and fast, a fashionable and faintly vicious bluestocking. ... Violet was never notable for emotional reticence ..."[2] David Garnett recalls her as "a thin and viperish-looking beauty with a long pointed chin and deep-set, burning brown eyes under hooded lids. There was a driving force within her, which I afterwards recognized as insatiable ambition."[3]

Since 1907, for reasons gone into by Goldring,[4] Ford and his wife had been living apart, and the possibility of a divorce existed. He began an affair with Violet Hunt; he was depressed over the ill fortunes of the English Review and, Violet says, threatening suicide; her attitude was "not of love, but of loving-kindness."[5] Goldring, who knew her intimately, claims that her motive was "an overmastering ambition to be married and made

---

1. South Lodge, p.78.
2. Ibid., p.42.
3. David Garnett, The Golden Echo, p.183.
4. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.153 ff.
5. The Flurried Years, p.66.

respectable."[1] Ford asked his wife to divorce him, and in January, 1910 was served with divorce papers. Before the decree became absolute, however, his wife changed her mind, mainly for the sakes of the children. Rather than obey the court order, Ford went to Brixton Gaol for ten days, "as a gesture." By this time he was virtually penniless, and Violet Hunt took out a bill of sale on his furniture and pictures. Ford removed to Violet's home, nominally as a paying guest.

His next move was disastrous. Following the example of Holman Hunt, who had gone to Holland in order to marry under Dutch law his deceased wife's sister, Ford went to Germany, proposing to apply for German citizenship, obtain a divorce — apparently feasible under German law — and marry Violet. He established himself in Giessen and waited for his naturalisation to go through. But the legal problems became more and more complicated, and he and Violet decided to return to London, pretending that the divorce had gone through and that they were married. They set up house as Mr. and Mrs. Ford Madox Hueffer. The climax of their troubles came when Violet published The Governess, a novel begun by her mother. A publicity paragraph was inserted in the paper Throne of 3rd April, 1912 mentioning her as "Mrs. Hueffer." Ford's wife brought a case against Throne for libel and won it with £300 damages. The social position of Ford and Violet became precarious.

---

1. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.155.

Violet made matters worse by adopting a course of hysterical self-justification. She lost many of her friends, including Henry James, who wrote to her that the affair "effects me as painfully unedifying, and ... compels me to regard all agreeable or unembarrassed communications between us as impossible."[1] Ford's line of defence was haughty silence.

Under these circumstances, Ford and Violet were cast very much into the company of the bohemian young, and in particular of the group from the "Rebel Art Centre" of Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound. Here Ford was told that "his Impressionism was dead, [but] was at least permitted to take a benevolent interest in his supplanters and to become an honorary vorticist."[2] The Good Soldier first saw light as a serial in Blast.

But, for obvious reasons, Ford and Violet did a lot of Continental travel, mostly in Germany. Ford went through a "German" phase, of which his poems High Germany (1911) and the book of sketches of German life written in collaboration with Violet Hunt, The Desirable Alien, are the most direct products.[3] But, as Goldring observes, "Of all Ford's numerous 'personae' the Teutonic one was, paradoxically, the least convincing."[4] When war broke out, Ford had little trouble in executing a

---

1. Letter quoted by Goldring, South Lodge, p.91.
2. Ibid., p.65.
3. They also appear to have been writing a novel, The Dark Forest, together. It remains unpublished. See Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.118.
4. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.168.

sudden volte face.

The strain of living with the intense and exacting Violet, however, served to prolong Ford's nervous troubles. The affair lost its savour, but he did not escape from her until August, 1915, when he left for the Front: even there he was pursued with letters full of recriminations. After the War, till 1919, they entertained together but lived apart. Nor did the story end in 1919: in 1926 Violet published The Flurried Years, a piece of self-justification in places hysterical and pathetic.

The period 1908-1915 was for Ford, then, one of continual stress, which on occasion caused him to reveal himself in his writings, imaginative and occasional, more than his normal reticence would have allowed. Thus we have the bitter Dedication to Ancient Lights (1911) addressed to his daughters, the paranoic outburst in "Süssmund's Address to an Unknown God" (in High Germany) and his "farewell to literature" in 1914: "Writing up to my own standards is such an intolerable labour and such a thankless job, since it can't give me the one thing in the world that I desire — that for my part I am determined to drop creative writing for good and all."[1] We have, in fact, the beginnings of the self-dramatising tendency that mars his later writings, particularly his memoirs.

---

1. "On Impressionism," Poetry and Drama, Dec.,1914.

The period is characterized by extremes in all fields. Among the novels we have on the one hand pot-boilers like The Panel (1912) and The Young Lovell (1913), on the other The Good Soldier (1915), his finest achievement. His satire ranges from the tedious Simple Life Limited (1911) to the mordant Mr. Fleight (1913). His poems of this period include his best and his worst.

A Call

Ford published two of his fictional works in the English Review — The Nature of a Crime and A Call. The latter appeared in four instalments towards the end of 1909. Its subtle and complex structure seems to have aroused adverse criticism, for when it appeared in book form in 1910 it was with an "Epistolatory Epilogue" complaining that "all the moderately quick-minded, moderately sane persons who had read the book in its original form failed entirely to appreciate what to me appeared as plain as a pikestaff" and that he was not a Thackeray to tie up all his conclusions neatly: his "sole ambition was to render a little episode — a small 'affair' affecting a little circle of people — exactly as it would have happened."[1] Besides the epilogue, the book adds to the text about seven pages serving the purpose of clarifying the motives of characters. One of these additions states explicitly the principal theme:

---

1. A Call (London, 1910), pp.303-4.

> "We haven't learned wisdom: we've only learned how to behave. We cannot avoid tragedies. ...
>
> "Tragedies! Yes, in our day and in our class we don't allow ourselves easygoing things like daggers and poison bowls. It's all more difficult. It's all more difficult because it goes on and goes on. ..."[1]

The action of A Call represents an ironic toning down of the action of tragedy: the impulse that sets the action in motion is jealousy, but jealousy concealed till the last pages from the reader; the instrument that brings about the climax of the action is not a knife but a telephone;[2] the suffering of the victim takes the form of silence and neurotic paralysis; and the punishment of the villain consists of deprivation. And, as Wiley observes, "an important feature of A Call and a presage of The Good Soldier is its evidence of Ford's increasing grasp of a form distinct from that of heroic tragedy and adapted to the restraints of an unheroic world."[3] Set against an upper-class background "of deep idleness, of high feeling, and of want of occupation ... [a] world where, since no man had need of anything to do, there were so many things to feel,"[4] the form which A Call takes is web-like. From a comparatively trivial incident there radiate lines of force which profoundly change the lives of the characters; and from the periphery of the web, from the most external of observations, the novel proceeds in revelation and analysis to the

---

1. Ibid., p.273.
2. See ibid., p.284: "As [Grimshaw] clasped the instrument to him he appeared, as it were, a Shylock who clutched to his breast his knife ... "
3. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.158.
4. A Call, pp.46-7.

heart of the Affair. Thus A Call begins with description of the main character:

> It was once said of Mr. Robert Grimshaw: "That chap is like a seal" — and the simile was a singularly just one. He was like a seal who is thrusting his head and shoulders out of the water, and, with deep, dark eyes and sensitive nostrils, is on the watch. All that could be known of him seemed to be known; all that could be known of the rest of the world that he moved in he seemed to know. He carried about with him usually, in the crook of his arm, a polished, light brown dachshund that had very large feet, and eyes as large, as brown, and as luminous as those of his master.[1]

"All that could be known of him seemed to be known:" by the end of the novel we shall recognise how little his world knew of him — and indeed how little he knew of himself; for the central incident of the novel, the telephone call from which it takes its name, is committed by Grimshaw acting on an irrational impulse.

Robert Grimshaw is thirty-five, half Greek, unmarried and a gentleman of considerable fortune. He identifies himself so closely with the interests of his class that he impulsively arranges a marriage between Pauline Lucas, whom he loves and who represents to him "tenderness, fidelity, pretty grace, quaintness and, above all, worship,"[2] and his closest friend Dudley Leicester, a member by birth of the ruling class, harmless, idle, someone to whom "a man was a man, a woman a woman; the leader in the newspaper ... a series of convincing facts, of satisfying views, and of final ideals."[3]

---

1. Ibid., p.3.
2. Ibid., p.17.
3. Ibid., p.46.

He hopes that Pauline will pull Dudley together and start him on a political career. As Grimshaw later says, trying in retrospect to justify his action,

> Englishmen haven't any sense of responsibility. Perhaps it's bad for them to have it aroused in them. They can work; they can fight; they can do things; but it's for themselves alone. They're individualists. But there is a class that's got the sense of duty to the whole. They've got a rudimentary sense of it — a tradition, at least, if not a sense. And Leicester comes of that class. ... I would have sworn he had it in him to do it with careful nursing. And Pauline had it in her — the sense of the whole, of the clan, the class, the county and all the rest of it.[1]

But, though he does not admit it to himself, Grimshaw has not acted entirely altruistically. He experiences pangs of jealousy on the wedding day, but the marriage gives him opportunities for continuing his emotional involvement with Pauline — Dudley will notice nothing:

> The minute jealousies, the very deep hatreds, and the strong passions that swelled in his particular world — Dudley perceived absolutely nothing, no complexities, no mixed relationships.[2]

What Grimshaw tells himself is that he is looking after Pauline while keeping himself for his dark and passionate Greek cousin Katya Lascarides. The two had been engaged years before; when Grimshaw had broken the engagement, Katya had suffered a nervous breakdown, and had since then become a professional psychiatrist. The reason for the broken engagement had been Katya's insistence that they should live together unmarried as her parents had done: her mother had "wanted to be my father's chattel,

---

1. Ibid., p.179.
2. Ibid., p.46.

and to trust him absolutely ... Isn't that the perfect relationship?"[1]

In this complex of hidden tensions occurs the accident that precipitates the catastrophe. Dudley goes to a dinner while Pauline is away in the country and is forced to escort home the siren Lady Hudson, with whom he had had an affair before her marriage. She maliciously entices him into her darkened house. Grimshaw happens to be passing by in the street unobserved, walks home and in a fit of spite telephones. Dudley answers the call and hears the words, "Isn't that Dudley Leicester speaking?" Disturbed by fright, Dudley answers, "Yes," and hangs up, not recognising Grimshaw's voice.

Dudley spends the next weeks in a state of dread; he has violent outbursts, and his normal hypochondria is exaggerated to such an extent that Pauline, who has picked up a hint from Grimshaw that there is another woman, attempts to cure him by telling him that she "knows all about it." The shock of this plunges him into a catatonic state. Pauline and Grimshaw keep his condition secret; Pauline lives up to the code of her class by maintaining her usual social schedule and ensuring that they will not be "talked about." In the end, however, she cannot stand the strain and decides that she and Grimshaw must make their sacrifices. He must ask Katya to attend Dudley. Her place is with Dudley: "I

---

1. Ibid., p.122.

mean to do what's right," she says, "and I mean to make you."[1] This interview between Pauline and Grimshaw is one of Ford's later insertions; it is less indirect than the rest of A Call, and serves to make explicit what the original version told in hints. Pauline speaks about the façade she has had to keep up with the invalid Dudley: "We can make a day and a class and rules for them, but we can't keep any of the rules except the gross ones like not making scandals. ... We haven't learned wisdom: we've only learned how to behave. ... You do not love Katya Lascarides: you are as cold to her as a stone. You love me, and you have ruined all our lives. But it doesn't end, it goes on. ..."[2]

Katya agrees to treat Dudley, but first extracts from Grimshaw the confession that it was he who had telephoned and forces him to agree to have her on her own terms. She cures Dudley, but seeing signs of a continuing emotional bond between Grimshaw and Pauline, declares that after all Grimshaw must marry her. "So that you get me both ways," Grimshaw says unhappily. "Everyway and altogether," she replies. As her sister had warned Grimshaw earlier, Katya has the "determination of a tiger; she has been play-acting from the first, and she has meant to have you since you were in your cradles together. But she's meant to have you humbled and submissive, and tied utterly hand and foot."[3]

---

1. Ibid., p.230.
2. Ibid., pp.272-5.
3. Ibid., p.261.

A Call is, as Wiley says, "an air-tight display of nearly every Impressionist resource — swift opening, gradual revelation of character, justification, progression d'effet."[1] No doubt, serializing it in the English Review, Ford wanted to produce a novel strictly conformable with the critical theories he was propounding in his editorials (and later collected as The Critical Attitude (1911)). And, granted a social group capable of operating at the level of subtlety in their personal contacts he portrays, Ford's performance in A Call is faultless. It is, in fact, a full dress rehearsal for The Good Soldier: Dowell, Leonora and Ashburnham are present in embryo in Grimshaw, Pauline and Dudley. As for the objections to the social realism of A Call, they are most unambiguously voiced by Arnold Bennett:

> I may say that I consider "A Call" to be profoundly and hopelessly untrue to life. It treats of the lazy rich. ... Mr. Hueffer endows these persons with a comprehensive fineness of perception, and a skill in verbal expression, which it is absolutely impossible that they, living the life they do live, could possess.[2]

Bennett's objections are based mainly on prejudice, but they are valid insofar as they point to a weakness of the novel, the failure of Ford's indirect method to give full expression to the stronger and less subtle emotions of his characters. This is particularly apparent in Katya, who is, compared with Pauline and Grimshaw, an emotionally straightforward person, ruled by desire for

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.153.
2. "Books and Persons," New Age, Mar.17,1910.

Grimshaw. But the weakness is seen over the whole novel; the allusiveness of the dialogue and the absence of action (but for the incident of the call) create a world in which the characters float above the ground, having contact with each other but no real contact with the world. A Call is, in fact, less a novel than a perfect blueprint for a novel; there is little meat to it. It can be seen as a halfway stage between The Benefactor and The Good Soldier. The three books share a central character weak, sensitive, acted upon rather than acting, and self-deceiving. Each book deals with an Affair through which this character attains self-knowledge and suffers deprivation. A Call develops the low-voiced narrative tone to near-perfection. The Good Soldier deepens the emotional power of the complex scheme of the Affair, giving to jealousy and loss the force of anguish, and does this mainly by giving the final twist to the screw of technique — by making the novel the construction of the self-deceiving narrator.

If A Call marks a halfway stage, however, it also marks a turning-point in the development of the Moffat-Grimshaw-Dowell figure. For one of the characteristics of this figure is his reluctance to descend to physical terms with women. In The Benefactor Moffat's anxiety and reluctance are justified in terms of conscience. In The Good Soldier Dowell's failure to assume his rights over his wife is criticised, though implicitly. In A Call Grimshaw shows a similar reluctance, with both Katya

and Pauline. Although Grimshaw believes he wants "physical possession" of Katya, he refuses her in their most passionate scene. Katya makes all the advances, pulling his face down on hers, rising to embrace him, whispering, "Oh, take me! Take me! Now!" Despite the "silent nirvana of passion" that falls on Grimshaw, he reiterates his demand for a wedding ceremony first. To her soft "I'll give you myself," he replies wearily: "No! No! ... It's no good."[1] As for Pauline, Grimshaw says: "I don't want to touch her ... I want to watch her ... I should like to cry over her. ... I should like to kneel down and put my face on her lap and cry, and cry, and cry."[2] The context of Grimshaw's words seems to indicate that in the first case Ford accepts Grimshaw's rationalisations and that in the second he finds evidence of emotional sensitivity. Grimshaw continues Moffat. But in the exaggeration of "cry, and cry, and cry," there is a hint of impatience with weakness of this sort; and in the subsequently written epilogue Ford proposes an interpretation of Grimshaw's character which is in its bluntness out of touch with the novel. In the epilogue to An English Girl he had asserted the nobility of his hero; in the epilogue to A Call he classifies Grimshaw as a "muddlesome and inwardly conceited fool" who should have left Katya and married Pauline. This interpretation contradicts his generally sympathetic portrayal of Grim-

---

1. A Call, p.250 ff.
2. Ibid., p.151.

shaw, but it bodes well, implying as it does a growing realisation of the limitations of his hero. In the farce The Panel (1912) Ford goes further and explores satirically the sexual timidity of his hero. The ground is being cleared for The Good Soldier.

The Portrait

The Portrait (1910) is a brilliant but, compared with A Call, superficial performance. Set in the eighteenth century and written in an imitation of contemporary style, it is based on an absurd plot which serves to take the hero on a tour of English society from the inhabitants of manor-houses to those of prisons, and enables Ford to make some perceptive observations about eighteenth-century England. The central character is Mr. Bettesworth, a proud, omniscient and unsmiling man of good birth, who impulsively wagers £20,000 at the Dilettantes' Club that he will marry the model for a portrait about which all his friends are talking but which he has never seen. The portrait is immediately purchased by a rival and locked away; and the rest of the novel traces the fortunes of Bettesworth on his quest, to which he is kept by his code of honour. It ends with his discovery that the model is the widowed Lady Eshetsford, whom he secretly already loves.

The Bettesworth who is united with Lady Eshetsford is not, however, the supercilious and anti-social man

who began the search, for during its course he has been falsely imprisoned at the instigation of a rival. In the common cell he has seen human beings at the lowest level of degradation and has heard from a Methodist preacher of the evils of the country of which he had been oblivious. The prison scene stands out from the rest of the novel in power, and, as Wiley points out,[1] owes much to Hogarth: the preacher moralizing to Bettesworth about a dying prostitute is in fact a rendering of Hogarth:

> For here, but that the fair seemliness of the surface is neither visible nor in evidence, you have an epitome of all this land. In this harlot, with the death-rattle in her throat, having been beaten at the cart-tail and lying in filth, you have personified all the cruel lusts of the land, which, in spite of all premonitions, persist unto death itself, amidst foul stenches and filthy garbage, unto eternal torture.[2]

Ford uses Hogarth in his portrayal of low life here to the same extent that he had used Holbein in his portrayal of the court of Henry VIII in the Katharine Howard trilogy.

Evil exists not only in the lower strata of society, however, but, as Bettesworth finds, ramifies everywhere, being densest where luxury is deepest. As Wiley observes, Ford chooses to display this evil mainly by concentrating on description of the luxury of domestic architecture: "The extended descriptions of country houses indicate that behind these elaborate façades are

---

1. The Portrait (London, 1910), p.205.
2. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.119.

not only the remains of earlier layers of history but also traces of the evil necessarily attendant upon such accumulations of luxury."[1] Thus we have a description of Lady Eshetsford's stately manor-house followed with a discreet account of the spoiling of monasteries and pandering to royal favour of her ancestors that had given the house its present magnificence.

It is with this deepened perception of the woe and darkness of the world that Bettesworth comes to Lady Eshetsford; and their union is correspondingly muted:

> "But I," Mr. Bettesworth said, "you have played with me as if I were a fish upon a hair line, and here I am!"
>
> "Oh, my friend," Lady Eshetsford answered, "take your laurels and wear them and do not enquire too closely what hand holds the knife that cut them. For I think most great victories are like this and most victors if you could search their hearts are much as you are; for it is nine parts fortune and one of merit, and so the world goes round."[2]

The Portrait is a sound enough piece of fiction, but at best only a tour de force, a piece of virtuoso writing. Its most interesting aspect is perhaps the figure of Bettesworth himself: in his wide erudition, his strict code of honour, his restraint and his aristocracy of temperament he marks the first occurrence of the type to be developed, through Mr. Luscombe in The Simple Life Limited, Count Macdonald in The New Humpty Dumpty and Mr. Blood in Mr. Fleight, into Christopher Tietjens.

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.117.
2. The Portrait, p.307.

The Simple Life Limited

The Simple Life Limited (1911) is a topical satire on a small co-operative community living the simple life in the country along the lines prescribed by William Morris. The colonists start their new life full of lofty ideals, but are soon shown to be foolish and ineffectual, attempting to live in a way more picturesque than practical. Their socialism gives way to greed, and ultimately Horatio Gubb, one of the leaders, turns the community into a company called "The Simple Life Limited" catering for tourists; the company pays a fat dividend and brings prosperity to the surrounding landowners, whom Gubb joins. (Ford's satirical point here is interestingly similar to that of Orwell in Animal Farm.) The buildings of the community are providentially set afire by an insane Russian, and the community disbands. Only Hamnet Gubb, son of the leader, retires into the deeper woods to lead the true simple life alone, to "just live and see where you come out;" as he says, "We learn in suffering what we teach in parables."[1]

The satire of The Simple Life Limited is directed not only against current "simple life" theories, but more basically against the idea that communal simplicity can be organized and regulated when individual members have no personal discipline; in this it looks forward to the social theories Ford expressed in Provence (1935) and Great Trade Route (1937). But the satire has little depth; the main interest

---

1. The Simple Life Limited (London, 1911), p.380.

of the book is in its relation to Ford's life. It reflects Ford's repudiation, expressed also in Ancient Lights, of the "simple life" he had himself tried to live in the country following Morris's theories: Horatio Gubb is "a close disciple and friend of the late Mr. William Morris."[1] It contains, too, satiric portraits of Edward Garnett, Joseph Conrad and Frank Harris — a fact which suggests the reason why Ford chose to publish the novel under the pseudonym "Daniel Chaucer." Harris appears as the manager of a group of chorus girls, Garnett as Parment the critic and Conrad as Simon Bransdon, poet of the Celtic twilight:

> Upon the advice of Mr. Parment, Brandetski changed his name to Bransdon, and later he turned Simeon into Simon, thus becoming equipped with a name becomingly British for the title page of a book. His novel was published upon the day when he left the Hospital for Seamen. Mr. Parment set the note for the criticisms when he said that "Clotted Vapours" disclosed the coming of a new life-force in British Literature.[2]

Arthur Marwood appears, sympathetically portrayed, as the landowner Luscombe, "a blonde, rather heavy man of perhaps thirty-five or a little more, ... [with] a heavy jaw, a thick moustache and sagacious, rather dog-like eyes."[3]

In 1911 Ford also published Ancient Lights, the first of his volumes of reminiscences. He was at this

---

1. Ibid., p.77.
2. Ibid., p.75.
3. Ibid., p.5.

time thirty-seven. In a dedicatory preface to his two daughters he states that the book "sums up the impressions that I have received in a quarter of a century. For the reason ... that I have now discovered myself to have 'grown up,' it seems to me that it marks the end of an epoch, the closing of a door."[1] "It is with some ... idea in my head ... of analyzing for your benefit what my heredity had to bestow upon you that I began this book."[2] Ancient Lights expresses a sardonic view of Ford's late Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite forebears representing a remarkable shift from the attitude represented in such works as Rossetti and The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The book, and in particular the dedication, have a distinct tone of bitterness to them, and there seems little foundation beyond personal dislike for his attacks on such figures as Ruskin and Carlyle. Ford defends the inaccuracy of his reminiscences on the grounds of their accuracy to his childhood impressions:

> This book ... is full of inaccuracies as to facts, but its accuracy as to impressions is absolute. ... My business in life ... is to attempt to discover, and to try to let you see, where we stand. I don't really deal in facts, I have for facts a most profound contempt. I try to give you what I see to be the spirit of an age, of a town, of a movement. This can not be done with facts.[3]

Replying to Ford, Helen Rossetti Angeli warns that "if the childhood impressions are genuine and those of an intelligent and observant youngster — not evolved later for a set purpose — they have some value, besides making

---

1. Ancient Lights (London, 1911) p.x.
2. Ibid., p.vii.
3. Ibid., p.xv.

good reading. Otherwise they are worthless, misleading and often trashy."[1] The truth of the matter is that much of Ancient Lights is written to a set polemical-critical plan. Untrustworthy as biography, in its portrayal of Ford's childhood impressions and its summary of his attitudes towards his background in 1911 it provides a remarkable autobiography of his intellectual growth; its impressionistic method is developed in Ford's later memoirs Thus to Return (1921), Joseph Conrad (1924), Return to Yesterday (1931) and It Was the Nightingale (1933).

Ladies Whose Bright Eyes

The second novel Ford published in 1911 was Ladies Whose Bright Eyes. It proved remarkably successful, and was reissued in 1919 and (in a revised version) in 1935. Consisting as it largely does of a clear-sighted and unsentimental picture of mediaeval life, it possibly owed much of its popularity in young intellectual circles to the advocacy of Pound.[2] Its popularity is nowadays difficult to understand, for the book is somewhat clumsily put together and the writing is mannered: what in the Katharine Howard trilogy is style has settled into a habit and lacks life.

The basic plot device, the juxtaposition of a

---

1. Helen Rossetti Angeli, Pre-Raphaelite Twilight (London, 1954), p.144.
2. See Stella Bowen, Drawn from Life (London, 1941), p.55, where she describes having Ladies Whose Bright Eyes recommended to her by Pound. This was before she met Ford.

foreign world and an unfamiliar observer, is well-tried: we have seen Katharine Howard in the Tudor court, Eleanor Greville, the English girl, in New York, and Mr. Apollo in London. In Ladies Whose Bright Eyes the observer is William Sorrell, a commercially successful publisher, and the foreign world is that of fourteenth-century England. The parallel with Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court is obvious; and Ford admits that A Connecticut Yankee gave him the idea for his book: "It occurred to me to wonder what would really happen to a modern man thrown back into the Middle Ages."[1] Ladies Whose Bright Eyes is intended as a corrective to Mark Twain, whose work Ford disliked for "preaching down chivalric ideals to the tune of nineteenth-century morality."[2] Sorrell is catapulted back into the Middle Ages when the train in which he is travelling crashes and he is concussed. The moment before the accident he has been dreaming of the power he would have if he found himself in an earlier age:

> What would not he be able to do with those ignorant and superstitious people! He would invent for them the railway train, the electric telegraph, the flying machine, the motor-car, and the machine-gun. Above all the machine-gun. He would be the mightiest man in the world: he would have power, absolute and enormous power. He could take anything: he could do anything. No king could withstand him.

His dream has been suggested by the sight of a nun and the thought of a mediaeval crucifix made of gold that

---

1. Inscription in a presentation copy. See Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.34.
2. Rossetti, pp.48-9.
3. Ladies Whose Bright Eyes (London, 1911), p.11.

has been given to him as security for a loan; after the accident he finds himself wandering about Salisbury Plain carrying the crucifix. The year is 1326.

Sorrell is taken to the nearest castle, where he is regarded with some awe as a holy man. But he soon finds that his scientific knowledge is too superficial to give him the power he had dreamt of:

> I know nothing. ... I have been so in the habit of having all these things done for me that I am as useless as the grub in the honeycomb that the bees feed. It is no use my saying that I can do nothing because I have not the materials — that is an idle excuse. We might fit out ships to go to the end of the world to get rubber; but even if we did that I do not know where rubber comes from, nor if I knew should I know from what tree rubber is procured. Nor if I had the rubber, should I know what to do with it. And it is a condemnation of a whole civilization.[1]

At the same time he explores mediaeval life and finds himself becoming more and more sympathetic to chivalric ideals. He is made a knight, given a small castle, and is about to wed the woman of his choice, the Lady Dionissia, when he finds himself back in the twentieth century in a hospital room. At his bedside is a nurse, Dionissia Morant, who had read mediaeval chronicles while watching over him. They fall in love and plan to marry. Sorrell, newly knighted and at the head of a publishing house, finds his work distasteful:

> It doesn't need brains, courage, intelligence, or even common honesty. Nothing does here. The place is vulgar. The language is vulgar, the time is vulgar. The language we speak is vulgar. So are the thoughts we think. Everything is vulgar. Even the air![2]

---

1. Ibid., p.257.
2. Ibid., p.344.

He resolves to publish only poetry and moves with Dionissia to a restored castle in the countryside.

The main interest of Ladies Whose Bright Eyes lies in its depiction of mediaeval life. Compared on the one hand with Mark Twain's satiric exaggeration of the worst aspects of the Middle Ages and on the other with the romanticising of the more attractive aspects by the Pre-Raphaelites, Ford's view is an attempt to see the mediaeval world steadily and as a whole. Thus the first things Sorrell sees on Salisbury Plain are rotting corpses hanging from gibbets; and throughout the book Ford does not shirk the "cruelties, ... filth, ... stenches and ... avarice"[1] of mediaeval life. But its sordid side is more than compensated for for Sorrell by the more deep-lying characteristics of the mediaeval temper, principally its ability for passionate and direct response — its outspokenness, its impulsiveness, its acceptance of physical pleasure as a good in itself, and its idealism.

Returned to a modern world which he finds he detests, Sorrell takes the easy way out in an ending untypical of Ford in its sentimentalism. Meixner suggests that it shows the influence of Violet Hunt;[2] and it is interesting to note that in The Flurried Years she claimed to have given the book its title.[3] The conclusion Sorrell and Dionissia reach about his experiences is equally unconvincing — that all ages are as good and

---

1. Great Trade Route, p.170.
2. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.73.
3. The Flurried Years, p.102. The words of the title are from Milton's "L'Allegro."

as bad, that life goes on:

> She got down from the window and set her two hands on his shoulders.
>
> "It was the same then; it's the same now," she continued. "Don't you see? There are things we can't take precautions about. We have our glorious moments and, even if our lives go to pieces, if disasters come, and ruin, and death, we shall have had our glorious moment, and that's all there is in life, and that's all there ever was."[1]

The ending was, significantly, rewritten when Ford revised the novel in 1935. It is shortened to half its original length, the sentimental nonsense is omitted and the emphasis falls not on the retreat from the modern world but on the necessity for confronting it. Sorrell plans to leave with Dionissia for Russia, where he will become a mining engineer. "You must never go back," says Dionissia. "... What we have to do is to go forward — don't they say: over the graves?"[2] As Cassell remarks, "In 1911 Sorrell was not ready to confront the twentieth century because Ford was not;"[3] the 1935 version shows that, though Ford's belief in mediaeval ideals had become if anything stronger, he had recognised that they could not be transplanted into the modern world by a simple imitation of mediaeval forms of life: Provence and Great Trade Route propose a more realistic and responsible transference than the earlier Ladies Whose Bright Eyes.

Despite these changes, however, and the extensive

---

1. Ladies Whose Bright Eyes, p.361.
2. Ladies Whose Bright Eyes (Philadelphia, 1935), p.345, quoted by Cassell, Ford Madox Ford, p.97.
3. Cassell, Ford Madox Ford, p.95.

rewriting of other parts of the novel described by Cassell in his "The Two Sorrells of Ford Madox Ford,"[1] Ladies Whose Bright Eyes remains one of Ford's less convincing historical novels. This is due mainly to the clumsy shifts between modern and mediaeval worlds, tending with their element of the fantastic to destroy the illusion of authenticity Ford seeks to create with detailed descriptive writing. But even in the mediaeval scenes the inadequacy of the book as fiction is apparent, for most of Ford's attention has gone into the recreation of mediaeval customs for their own sake: the rôle of Sorrell is essentially one which enables these customs to be displayed in action. In the Middle Ages he is an instrument through which the reader observes; in the modern world he is a figure representative of the businessman's outlook; and as such he lacks individuality. As for the other characters, Dionissia is sentimentally portrayed, while the mediaeval characters are more or less vigorously animated humours. Ladies Whose Bright Eyes is another of Ford's brilliant performances, but its brilliance is superficial: lacking the spiritual motive of the Katharine Howard trilogy, it becomes a sterile tour de force.

---

1. Modern Philology, Nov.,1961.

The Young Lovell

The element of the fantastic is even stronger in The Young Lovell (1913), set in the Border country of 1486. The plot hinges on a spell cast on the young knight Lovell by a demon temptress. He is seen riding away with her, and fails to return; as one character says to Lovell's betrothed, "If you ask me what she is, I think she is a vampire, a courtesan or a demon from the East. And if you ask me where your lord is, I will say I think she has him captive amongst weary sedges and the bones of other knights, if they have been dead long enough to become bones. And there he sits enthralled by her and she preys upon his heart's blood."[1]

But after three months Lovell returns, to find his betrothed and his castle tricked away from him by his brother. Sick at heart and pining for his fairy mistress, he nevertheless undertakes to redress the wrongs his brother has committed: "A great sadness fell upon him at the thought that all this profited him nothing, for he desired none of these things for his intimate pleasure. It was all for decency and good order in his lands that he did it, and to punish evildoers. So he hung his head down and sat his horse like a dying man."[2] With the help of loyal yeomen he storms his brother's castle and takes it. But he is weary of the world: he immures himself in a hermit's cell and (it is implied) spends the

---

1. The Young Lovell (London, 1913), p.182.
2. Ibid., p.293.

rest of his days in a dream of fairy love.

Ford makes little attempt to give this fairy tale reality. His characters lack individuality: Lovell is, but for his characteristically Fordian disillusionment and weariness with the world, the conventional ideal of the knight and feudal lord, his brother the stock coward and villain, and his betrothed a sentimental creation. The temptress, with her "crooked and voluptuous mouth ⌈ and ⌋ mocking eyes a a shade of green," is, unlike the witch Anne Jeal in The Half Moon', not human. Ford gives the story some veracity by his usual method, that of detailed and precise descriptions of dress, architecture and other externalia, and therevare some brilliantly rendered scenes — the opening scene in particular is a piece of virtuoso writing — but the novel as a whole shows signs of careless plotting. Cassell lists three inconsistencies in the text,[1] and in one place Ford uses the time-shift to lose a month. The Young Lovell stands, in fact, as the slightest of Ford's historical novels.

The Panel

With The Panel (1912), a bedroom farce, Ford descends to perhaps his lowest depths. He appeared to recognize this: in a letter to his agent, J.B.

---

1. Ford Madox Ford, p.144-5.

Pinker dated June 3, 1912, he wrote: "You worried me in their interests [his publishers'] until I wrote the novel in about a month and induced a severe nervous breakdown;"[1] and to his American publishers he wrote: "I have no objection to Mr. Bobbs Merrill doing anything he likes with 'The Panel'. He may change the title, rewrite the dedication, alter the end into a Tragedy in which all the people stab each other. ..."[2]

Ford's attitude is justified, for The Panel reads like a script for a film comedy rather than a novel. The hero is Edward Brent Foster, youngest major in the British Army, who reads Henry James "to toughen the brain fibre" and who has had to retire because he has impaired his vision standing over alkali wells in Somaliland. He is engaged to Olympia Peabody, head of the Boston Society for the Suppression of Vice, of whom he walks in fear; he is pursued by Juliana Kerr Howe, a pulp novelist, and Flossie Delamare, a music hall star; he is in love with Lady Nancy Savylle but is too poor to marry her. Brent Foster visits his rich aunt in the country, unwillingly escorted by Olympia, Juliana and Flossie. He is given a bedroom which possesses a panel that pivots to allow access to the next room, and spends a miserable night warding off women hungry for "kisses". All ends happily, however: the aunt's attractive maid-servant turns out to be Nancy in disguise, the aunt leaves her her money and the couple are united.

---

1. Quoted by Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.36.
2. Letter dated May6,1913. Quoted by Harvey, ibid., p.37.

The only interesting aspect of the novel is the humorous light in which Ford views Brent Foster's sexual ineptitudes in the long bedroom scene, at the end of which Brent Foster remarks wryly to himself, "four women have asked me to kiss them this night, and not once have I brought it off."[1] For the first time Ford sees anxiety and ineptitude in his hero for what they are: this recognition bodes well for the future.

The New Humpty Dumpty

The New Humpty Dumpty (1912), Ford's longest novel, was also published pseudonymously, possibly because of its element of disguised autobiography: it contains a malicious portrait of a woman who refuses to divorce a husband she hates in order to keep him from the woman he loves. In itself the novel is of little value: it is tediously long and shoddily put together. Its main interest lies in its introduction of the theme of female sexual cruelty, to attain its strongest expression later in Sylvia Tietjens. In The New Humpty Dumpty it is embodied in Countess Macdonald, a woman of low birth who hates her husband for his virtues and pursues him with a fierce and vindictive passion. She is determined to keep him from Lady Aldington, whom he loves. "I want Sergius Mihailovitch [Count Macdonald] back," she says,

---

1. The Panel (London, 1912), p.208.

"if I don't get him, I'll ruin him, body and soul."[1] Macdonald himself is, as his name indicates, Russian, being descended from a Scot who went to Russia with Peter the Great. Living in England, he is an idealistic Tory, and the plot turns on his attempt to restore the monarchy in the tiny republican country of Galizia. His motive is to restore gaiety and charm to the country under the rule of the young exiled king, his protégé; but in reality the revolution is backed by the Grand Duke of Russia for solely commercial reasons. The revolution succeeds without bloodshed, the king is enthroned and Macdonald marries his Lady Aldington — his wife had driven him to divorce her by ukase from the Czar. Through the jealousy and bungling of his chief disciple Pett, however, a cockney Fabian whom he has converted by example to his quixotic brand of Toryism, Macdonald is murdered, and the story ends in gloom, with Pett heartbroken and Countess Macdonald exultant.

Despite its political framework, The New Humpty Dumpty is not a political novel. Pett follows Macdonald's eccentric Toryism because he admires Macdonald's personal qualities; as he says to Countess Macdonald after the murder, Macdonald is "fifty fathoms above the heads of you and me. We're the lower classes, that's what we are, because we haven't got in the whole of our compositions a spark of generosity."[2] The

---

1. The New Humpty Dumpty (London, 1912), p.215.
2. Ibid., p.427.

figure of Macdonald is of some interest, for in his altruism and aloofness he is a further development of Bettesworth of The Portrait towards Christopher Tietjens. His relationship with his wife is fundamentally that of Christopher with Sylvia; the effect she has upon him is, however, neurotic: "His wife's tongue, her mannerisms, the flow of her voice, acted with an enervating physical effect. It seemed at the same time to stop his heart, to set an immense weight upon his skull as if for many nights he had been deprived of sleep, and to render his limbs numb and heavy."[1] His wife is animated only by desire for his destruction; she looks "like one of the great caged cats waiting for the man whose presence she passionately desired, and whom she would overwhelm with outrages the moment he appeared."[2]

But the Macdonalds lack the reality of Christopher and Sylvia. Drawn in black and white only, they are the most intensely felt characters in the book, but their intensity is that of feelings recorded in a diary.

Mr. Fleight

The last novel Ford completed before beginning The Good Soldier was Mr. Fleight (1913). At first sight a cynical survey of party politics, Mr. Fleight reveals itself on narrower inspection as a detailed indictment

---

1. Ibid., p.93.
2. Ibid., p.205.

of Edwardian society. In its complexity and subtlety it stands out as the most accomplished of Ford's satiric novels; it retains the fantastic element of such works as Mr. Apollo, but gives the fantasy a macabre quality that makes it in the end almost believable.

Mr. Fleight is a Scottish Jew, Aaron Rothweil Fleight, a middle-aged soap manufacturer, wealthy, nervous and vain, who feels that, "Society being what it is, ... I ought to be a Prime Minister or a Privy Councillor at least."[1] He approaches Mr. Blood, an enigmatic person he knows to possess considerable political influence, and asks him the way to success. Blood adopts Fleight as his protégé, educates him in the ways of bribery, string-pulling and self-advertisement, finds him a large, blonde wife, and has him nominated to stand for a parliamentary seat. Fleight almost ruins his chances when a shopgirl with whom he has been sentimentally toying commits suicide in the grounds of his residence; but the opposition candidate providentially dies and Fleight, who has quite lost his taste for political life, is elected, a sadder and a wiser man.

The novel gains most of its weight from the presence of the powerful and disturbing figure of Blood,

> a singular and mysterious person to such of the world as had observed his existence. A hundred years ago he would have represented the Englishman and the gentleman ... He would have been a "character" when all the population were characters; he would not have cared a halfpenny

---

1. Mr. Fleight (London, 1913), p.3.

> whether the nation was going to ruin, just as today he cared even less. ...
>
> He was in fact an anachronism, and an inactive one at that. He hunted the fox, but seldom troubled to try to be in at the death; he was very wealthy, but he made not the least use of his wealth. He did not marry; he did not sit in Parliament. He hardly entertained at all.
>
> ... What attracted him ... was an avid curiosity. If he didn't in the least desire to do anything, he was possessed with an insatiable desire to know everything that there was to know. His rooms ... were lined with books ... about forestry, about seamanship, about the state of the army, about mining, about engineering, about the suppression of mutinies, political memoirs, social memoirs, memoirs of tramps and rogues like Carew, military biographies and the histories of theatrical touring companies. His books, in fact, were all about "things" — solid, real things or solid, real people. ...
>
> It was part of Mr. Blood's attitude absolutely to ignore the art, literature and furnishing of his day.[1]

Once Blood is involved in Fleight's career, however, his natural contempt of modern society is deepened into almost nihilistic disgust. "Doesn't it make you think that the whole thing is a disgusting affair," he cries out to Fleight's wife, "that life is more foul than it ever conceivably was, and that God has gone to sleep? If He hadn't He'd wash the whole unclean lot of us with one tidal wave into the Atlantic."[2] And behind Blood there is always whispered the story that he strangled a groom on Rhode Island for dragging a horse.

Blood stands, in fact, for the best blood of Edwardian society, which he himself despises and from

---

1. Ibid., pp.8-9.
2. Ibid., p.193.

which he has cut himself. As Wiley points out,[1] the decadent and luxurious surroundings of the newly rich who have supplanted Blood in society are described with continual reference to the colour pink, blood watered down: at one point Fleight's Cockney mistress, who calls herself a Baroness, sits at table in his Palatial Hall nibbling pink lobster flesh before a vase of pink flowers; her features are "very pink and white."[2]

But Blood, in his murderous rages and Lear-like disgust, also stands for a violence of passion that is foreign to a modern society which restricts itself to trivia; as he says to Fleight's wife,

> In general company you mustn't ever talk about marriage and its problems except in terms of the servants. And you mustn't ever talk about the servants except in terms of the lower classes. And you mustn't ever talk about the lower classes because they're poor. And you mustn't ever talk about the poor except in terms of the Bazaar at St. Mark's, Kilburn. And you must be very careful about St. Mark's, because St. Mark's has something to do with God, and God you must never mention at all.[3]

Paradoxically, however, Blood's self-exile dates from the time when society refused to punish him for being "an anachronism". For after strangling the groom on Rhode Island, Blood had given himself up to the authorities, who had hushed up the affair because of his birth and standing. Thus Blood stands further for the potential ruling class which has symbolically cut itself off

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.166.
2. Mr. Fleight, p.133.
3. Ibid., p.291.

because it is accepted by society only for the wrong reasons. And the whole of Mr. Fleight is a display of the power that Blood is cynically capable of wielding. Blood wields this power to create, through Fleight, a dramatisation of the supplanting of those fitted by birth and training to rule, by the newly rich. Thus within the world of Mr. Fleight Blood plays God, puppet-master and author; "It's the dirty comedy of life being unrolled before your eyes," he says to Fleight's wife. "It's the thing that modern life has become the disgusting thing that it has become. I'm trying to crush it up into a short period so as to make the affair all the more an object lesson — or, rather, all the more of a joke, because I don't care whether anybody learns anything from it or not."[1]

Set against this powerfully realised figure is the anti-hero Fleight. Fleight's main motive for entering politics is the desire to raise himself socially; but he also wishes, altruistically, to fulfil through himself the hopes that were held for Blood's success by his Oxford tutor, through whose hands Fleight later passed. Despite his vanity and listlessness, Fleight is seen sympathetically by Ford, and the distinguishing feature of the book is that its satiric points are ultimately made not through the cynical analyses of Blood but through the tribulations of Fleight. For as the action progresses and Fleight moves nearer and

---

1. Ibid., p.193.

nearer to power, he realises more and more clearly that what he wants is not to stand under chandeliers next to a large-bosomed wife who despises him for being Jewish and receive six thousand guests, but quiet domesticity and an affectionate, motherly wife. But these he cannot have. In the evenings he slips out to visit the shopgirl Gilda Leroy, of whom he is quietly fond, and occasionally he takes her for a drive in his motor-car. He finds himself assaulted by hooligans, however, for being rich and Jewish and walking unprotected in a poor neighbourhood; and when, after his arranged marriage, Gilda commits suicide, he learns that he cannot afford the scandal caused by an association with one of the lower classes. He must commit himself to an unhappy married life; as Blood comments, only a man whose life is founded on torment will drive himself on to the top of the muck-heap. So, sadly, Fleight enters upon his chosen career:

> For the rest of his life — there would be the palm plants, and the marble staircases, and the Christian wife he was only too sadly aware he had purchased, standing at the top of the stairs in white satin, whilst the invisible orchestra played the Preislied out of the "Meistersingers." He was standing quite alone; all the rest of them were crowding round Augusta. He shrugged his shoulders right up to his ears and let them slowly fall.[1]

The principal weakness of the novel is a failure of plotting at the end, where Ford lets himself into a logical impasse. On the one hand he has to make the

---

1. Ibid., p.299.

satiric point that association with the lower classes leads to political disaster; on the other he has to drive Fleight to his anti-tragic end and give him the political success he no longer wants. To resolve this difficulty, Ford uses a *deus ex machina* and kills off the rival candidate on the morning of the election. This is the one flaw in a book remarkable for its firm grasp of a narrative tone designed to carry the slightly banal tribulations of people no longer capable of heroic suffering. In this, and in the complexity of the irony which informs it, *Mr. Fleight* is an interesting precursor to *The Good Soldier*.

In 1913, perhaps to mark Henry James's seventieth birthday, Ford wrote a short study of this "greatest of living writers and in consequence, for me, ... greatest of living men."[1] His book contains some perceptive remarks about James's techniques and several *mots* ("the Prefaces, those wild debauches"[2]), but for the most part it consists of "my impressions of our author's works:"[3]

> Mr. James has carried the power of selection so far that he can create an impression with nothing at all. ... His characters will talk about rain, about the opera, about the moral aspects of selling Old Masters to the New Republic, and these conversations will convey to your mind that the quiet talkers are living in an atmosphere of horror, of bankruptcy, of passion hopeless as the Dies Irae![4]

---

1. *Henry James* (London, 1913), p.9.
2. *Ibid.*, p.135.
3. *Ibid.*, p.40.
4. *Ibid.*, p.152.

James, at this time completely estranged from Ford, did not read the book. "I am vaguely aware that the book is out," he wrote to Archibald Marshall on Jan. 18, 1914, "but he has at least had the tact not to send it to me, and as I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole nothing is simpler than for it not to exist for me."[1]

The years 1913-14 also mark a revival in Ford of interest in poetry, probably brought about by his association with Pound and the Imagists. His Collected Poems appeared in 1913, and in 1914 he published his best-known poem, "On Heaven". The year 1914 was by and large, however, given over to the composition of The Good Soldier. It is possible, in retrospect, to trace a development through Ford's earlier fiction to this high point; but no reader of even A Call could have foreseen from the viewpoint of 1914 what the next year would bring: as Thomas Moser comments, "How he really did it must remain a mystery."[2]

---

1. Archibald Marshall, Out and About (London, 1933), p.273.
2. "Towards The Good Soldier," Daedalus, Spring, 1963.

V

THE GOOD SOLDIER: 1914-1918

In the dedicatory letter to the 1927 edition of The Good Soldier, Ford gives the following account of his intentions in writing the novel:

> Until I sat down to write this book — on the 17th December, 1913, ... I had never really tried to put into any novel of mine all that I knew about writing. I had written rather desultorily a number of books — a great number — but they had all been in the nature of pastiches, of pieces of rather precious writing, or of tours de force. ... On the day I was forty I sat down to shew what I could do — and The Good Soldier resulted. I fully intended it to be my last book. I used to think ... that one book was enough for any man to write. ... As the Great Auk I considered that, having reached my allotted, I had laid my one egg and might as well die.[1]

Violet Hunt claims, however, that she found the manuscript in the dustbin "in a hundred pieces, and it took me a week to mend each one separately and send to a publisher." This was not unusual with Ford: "He always wanted to tear them up when they were done."[2]

The impression Ford's account gives is slightly misleading, for it is doubtful whether The Good Soldier could have existed but for Ford's experiments with its themes and methods in earlier novels. Nevertheless, evidence both internal and external shows that he devoted

---

1. The Good Soldier (London: Penguin, 1948), p.5. The dedicatory letter is not printed in the 1962 Bodley Head edition, edited by Graham Greene.
2. The Flurried Years, p.243.

for more skill and care to it than to his earlier work. And there does seem to have been the definite intention at the back of his mind to produce a novel that should "contain something quite unusual for him: there should be 'heart' in it."[1] Even before the first instalment (under the title The Saddest Story) appeared in Blast in June, 1914, Ford was in his weekly literary articles for Outlook letting drop hints of his intentions:

> What we need, what we should strive to produce, is a novel uniform in key, in tone, in progression, as hard in texture as a mosaic, as flawless in surface as a polished steel helmet of the fifteenth century.[2]
>
> The only thing that I can imagine as an ideal is a book so quiet in tone, so clearly and unobtrusively worded, that it should give the effect of a long monologue ...[3]

The germ of The Good Soldier had been growing in Ford's mind since before 1907, for in The Spirit of the People published in that year he recounts what formed the basis of the story of Nancy Rufford and Edward Ashburnham. Ford visited a married couple, friends of his, staying in the country:

> There was also living in the house a young girl, the ward of the husband, and between him and her — in another of those singularly expressive phrases — an attachment had grown up. P— had not merely never "spoken to" his ward; but his ward, I fancy, had spoken to Mrs. P—. At any rate the situation had grown impossible, and it was arranged that Miss W— should take a trip round the world in company with some friends who were making that excursion. It was all done in the nicest tranquillity. Miss W—'s luggage

---

1. Ibid., p.243.
2. "Literary Portraits — XX," Outlook, Jan.24,1914.
3. "Literary Portraits — XXIII," Outlook, Feb.7,1914.

> had been sent on in advance; P— was to drive her to the station himself in the dogcart. The only betrayal of any kind of suspicion that things were not of their ordinary train was that the night before the parting P— had said to me: "I wish you'd drive with us to the station to-morrow morning." He was, in short, afraid of a "scene."
>
> ... But the parting at the station was too surprising, too really superhuman not to give one, as the saying is, the jumps. For P— never even shook her by the hand; touching the flap of his cloth cap sufficed for leave-taking. Probably he was too badly choking to say even "Good-bye" — and she did not seem to ask it. ...
>
> What was most impressive in the otherwise commonplace affair was the silence of the parting. ... A silence so utter: a so demonstrative lack of tenderness, seems to me to be a manifestation of a national characteristic that is almost appalling.[1]

As important as this story to The Good Soldier are Ford's memories of his wanderings about the German spas in 1903 and later, when he was seeking a cure for his nervous illness: not only do the health resorts themselves feature prominently in The Good Soldier, but, more significantly, Ford's own agoraphobia is given to Dowell, the narrator: "To be at Nauheim gave me a sense — what shall I say? — a sense almost of nakedness — the nakedness that one feels on the sea-shore or in any great open space."[2] One of Ford's doctors attributed his illness to sexual abnormality. Ford appears to have resented this diagnosis deeply, claiming that his illness was due only to heart trouble.[3] The problem of relating these experiences precisely to The Good Soldier

---

1. The Spirit of the People (London, 1907), pp.52-3.
2. The Good Soldier (London, 1962), p.29. All page references hereafter are to this volume.
3. See Return to Yesterday, pp.267-9.

is obviously, even for the biographer, a difficult one. Nevertheless, though the relation is plainly not one of a simple transference of personal experience to Dowell, the importance of the spa background, invalidism, mental illness and heart disease to The Good Soldier to a far larger extent than to earlier novels seems to indicate prolonged reflection in Ford on his own experiences.

Whatever reservations one may have about Ford's 1927 dedication, however, The Good Soldier does stand so far above its predecessors as to justify a view of them as merely preparatory; for in it he found at once a vehicle for social and religious comment more efficient than his earlier method of satiric exaggeration, a form for the tragi-comedy of self-deception tighter and more powerful than that of A Call, and an objective correlative to his own problem of mental strain that raises the problem from the level of the merely clinical (in A Call) to that of the metaphysical and allows The Good Soldier to be approached solely on its own terms as a peculiarly modern development of tragedy.

But The Good Soldier brings together more strands than only those of Ford's earlier works. "I had in those days an ambition," he writes in the 1927 dedication, "... to do for the English novel what in Fort comme la Mort, Maupassant had done for the French." And the predicament of the Ashburnhams and Nancy in The Good Soldier, before Nancy's departure, is fundamentally that of the main characters in de Maupassant's novel. Here a painter named Bertin, fashionable but past his prime,

begins to fall in love with the daughter of his aristocratic mistress. Both he and his mistress are tormented, she by the perception of the growth of his love away from her towards her daughter, he by jealousy, by the frankness of the unsuspecting girl's affection for him, and by desire: "I belong to her as the burning house belongs to the fire," he cries. He and his mistress try to comfort each other in their agonised suffering, but at last, after a climactic interview with her, he rushes out into the night and is knocked over by a coach. Dying, he whispers to his mistress to fetch her daughter. She remains at his side, stroking his head.

Ford has obviously borrowed elements from de Maupassant's novel — the torments of Ashburnham, loving his almost-daughter to whose kisses he dare not respond, Leonora's tenderness and at the same time intense cruelty to Ashburnham, and the inevitable drift towards death of a man in the grips of a disastrous passion. But Ford has seen this tragic situation in an ironic mirror that makes The Good Soldier a more complexly realised work than Fort comme la Mort, for it enables Ford to see behind the suffering of Ashburnham as de Maupassant does not attempt with Bertin.

There are other, less direct influences. The story of Florence Dowell, her bright gaiety, her chatter, her adulteries, her suicide by poison, belong to Emma Bovary — The Good Soldier is in a sense Madame Bovary

told by Charles Bovary. The franker treatment of relations between the sexes in The Good Soldier than Ford's earlier novels may owe something to Violet Hunt, whose White Rose of Weary Leaf (1908) Ford admired.[1] The situation of Nancy, innocence trapped between warring passions, owes much to James's What Maisie Knew — indeed, Nancy uses the word "shuttlecock", insanely repeated, to describe the remembered feeling of being tossed between the Ashburnhams, where James's Maisie feels like "a little shuttlecock" between the Farranges. And Dowell is in some ways what Ford himself called Maisie, "a child moving amongst elemental passions that are veiled."[2]

Carrying echoes of so many of its predecessors, The Good Soldier has also had its successors, notably Glenway Westcott's The Pilgrim Hawk. But, like James's last novels, The Good Soldier is essentially too absolute in form to have advances made on it: The Pilgrim Hawk is a perfect but bloodless exercise in Ford's manner. Ford was correct when he prophesied that his novel was "something of a race that will have no successors;"[3] as Wiley observes, "at its highest levels The Good Soldier becomes an almost pure exercise in language, a notable example of a literary tradition reaching full self-awareness and hence the capacity for reflecting upon itself."[4]

It is only recently, however, that The Good Soldier

---

1. See "Literary Portraits — V," Outlook, Oct.11,1913.
2. No Enemy (London, 1929), p.178.
3. Dedicatory letter, p.7 (Penguin edition).
4. Novelist of Three Worlds, p 173.

has been granted the stature that it deserves, that of "one of the literary triumphs of the twentieth century."[1] There have been two very different reasons for this. The first is the plain ill luck of having been published at the wrong time. England in early 1915 was in no condition to welcome The Good Soldier, and reviews condemn the book for being "terribly long-winded and prosy"[2] or for having "a sordid theme".[3] The title proved misleading, and the book was in some cases read as a libel on the Army.[4] The title did, indeed, cause Ford some trouble: according to his account, his publisher "importuned" him to change the original title, The Saddest Story. Ford was at this time at a training camp.

> One day, when I was on parade, I received a final wire of appeal from Mr. Lane, and the telegraph being reply-paid, I seized the reply-form and wrote in hasty irony: "Dear Lane, why not The Good Soldier?" ... To my horror six months later the book appeared under that title. I have never ceased to regret it but, since the War, I have received so much evidence that the book has been read under that name that I hesitate to make a change for fear of causing confusion.[5]

The Saddest Story would appear to be a more suitable title, principally because the book deals less with a single character (Ashburnham, "the good soldier") than with the interrelationship of several characters, but

---

1. Meixner, Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.151.
2. Times Literary Supplement, Mar.25,1915.
3. Athenaeum, Apr.10,1915.
4. See "M.F.", letter to the editor, New Witness, Feb.10, 1916: "'The Perfect Stallion' would have been an appropriate title for a book which none of Mr. Hueffer's admirers can have read without wondering what necessity he saw, in this hour when men have so gloriously fought for and entered into their Kingdom, to portray them in such a despicable light."
5. Dedicatory letter, p.8 (Penguin edition).

also because, in its play on the continual and slightly banal "sadness" of Dowell the narrator, it illuminates him and hence the tone of his narration, while the present title provides only another reference to the "good" to which the novel continually refers ironically.

The second reason for the general failure to give the novel its proper place has been a failure to interpret it at all its levels and a consequent puzzlement about its genre. As Mark Schorer despairingly puts it, "For over twenty-five years, Henry James had been exploring the possibilities of the dramatized point of view in the novel, yet in 1915 The Good Soldier could still be read by critics as though the narrator were to be taken, if not indeed for the author himself, at least as seriously as the author."[1] Schorer classifies The Good Soldier as "a comedy of humour, and the humour is phlegm;"[2] and his essay, appearing in 1948, marked the first serious critical approach to the problem of point of view in The Good Soldier. Yet even his interpretation does not take into account all the complexities of Dowell's narration. The Good Soldier is the story of Edward Ashburnham, but it is also the story of the growth of Dowell's knowledge — or of his knowledge of his ignorance, which is also a kind of knowledge. Significantly, a recent essay on the novel is entitled "The Epistemology of The Good Soldier."[3]

---

1. Foreword, Critiques and Essays in Modern Fiction: 1921-1951, ed. Aldridge (N.Y., 1952), p.xii.
2. "The Good Novelist in The Good Soldier," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr.,1948.
3. By Samuel Hynes. Sewanee Review, Spring,1961.

John Dowell, the narrator, is a wealthy Philadelphian with no apparent duties except those of a nursemaid to his wife Florence, who has heart trouble. He has never slept with her. Her aunts, with whom she had lived, had advised him against marrying her, and the couple had had to elope to Europe. On the first night on board ship, Dowell had been told by Florence's doctor that any excitement might cause her death. He thus accompanies her docilely from one Continental watering-place to another.

In 1904, three years after leaving America, they meet at Nauheim an English couple, Captain and Mrs. Ashburnham, who own a country estate in Hampshire. Dowell learns that Ashburnham has had to retire from the Indian Army because of heart trouble. The Dowells and Ashburnhams become close friends and meet often over a period of nine years. These uneventful years are broken only by the unfortunate death of heart failure of Maisie Maidan, the wife of a young Indian Army officer, generously brought to Nauheim by Leonora, for the sake of her health, Dowell understands.

In 1913, however, Florence suddenly dies, also of heart failure, before Dowell has a chance to decide whether or not to confront her with his discovery that she had had an affair with a man named Jimmy before marrying him. With Florence gone, Dowell finds that he has secretly wanted to marry Nancy Rufford, the twenty-two year old ward of the Ashburnhams. Before speaking to her, he goes to America for a while, for business reasons. While

there he receives cables from both the Ashburnhams asking him to return. When he arrives at their estate, all is perfectly calm, but he finds that Nancy is to be sent back to her father in India. The night before she leaves, Ashburnham admits to Dowell that he is in love with her. Her departure is a very decorous affair. From Brindisi she sends Ashburnham a telegram saying that she is having "a rattling good time." After reading it he commits suicide.

After the funeral Leonora informs Dowell of several facts he had not known: that the Ashburnhams had not spoken together in private for years; that Florence had carried on her affair with Jimmy after her marriage; that Ashburnham had put a stop to it and taken Florence for his own mistress; that Ashburnham's past affairs had brought him and Leonora to the verge of bankruptcy and had made it necessary for them to live in India and on the Continent while they rented out their estate; that Leonora had procured Maisie Maidan from her husband for Ashburnham; that Maisie had died after overhearing Ashburnham tell Florence that she, Maisie, was "a poor little rat;" that together with Florence she had contrived to keep him, Dowell, in ignorance, while bringing Ashburnham close to moral ruin; and that Florence had committed suicide after overhearing Ashburnham tell Nancy that he loved her. Leonora tells Dowell in some detail about her last months with Ashburnham and Nancy. After a decent period she marries again. Dowell buys the

Ashburnham estate and brings back Nancy from India. She has gone mad on hearing of Ashburnham's death, and Dowell is left nursing her and writing his "saddest story."

Dowell's story begins, after a few oblique references to its principal themes, with a description of the first meeting of the Dowells and Ashburnhams at Nauheim, and continues for some time with an account of their lives together. But as the book proceeds, it becomes apparent that it is only partly the story of the Dowells and the Ashburnhams, that the fundamental trio is in fact that of Ashburnham, Leonora and Nancy. Dowell himself has never really been an actor, and in the end he is only an emotionally involved spectator. At one level, then, The Good Soldier is the story of three people, a trio like de Maupassant's, ruined by passion; at another, it is the story of Dowell's gaining of knowledge. But at both levels the narration of the story is complicated by the narrator's involvement: the meaning of the story cannot be understood until the narrator is understood.

But Dowell is not helpful here. He is incurious about himself: "I don't know that analysis of my own psychology matters at all to this story. I should say that it didn't ..."[1] Although he goes into detail

---

1. The Good Soldier, p.97.

about the backgrounds of the other characters, he does not say much about his own. All that the reader can do is to pick up hints and read between the lines. And, reading between the lines, he finds that one of Dowell's distinguishing traits is self-deception, and hence deception of his audience. James condemned Flaubert for using Emma Bovary and Frederic Moreau as media of consciousness in Madame Bovary and L'Education Sentimentale. He called Moreau an "abject human specimen" and wrote that "if he [Flaubert] imagined nothing better for his purpose than such a heroine and such a hero, both such limited reflectors and registers, we are forced to believe it to have been by a defect of his mind."[1] Ford, in Dowell, chose an even more abject specimen than Moreau. The slightly self-deprecatory words that Dowell uses about himself give a partial picture of him, even in his self-deprecation: he "drifts,"[2] he "trots,"[3] he is "natty, precise, well-brushed."[4] He counts his steps as he walks about Nauheim.[5] He thinks of his wife as "poor dear Florence."[6] At the moment of their first meeting, Leonora "looked at me as if I were an invalid — as any kind woman may look at a poor chap in a bath-chair. And, yes, from that day forward she always treated me and not Florence as if I were the invalid."[7]

---

1. The Art of Fiction (London, 1947), p.185.
2. The Good Soldier, p.24.
3. Ibid., p.220.
4. Ibid., p.31.
5. Ibid., p.30.
6. Ibid., p.18.
7. Ibid., p.39.

To Ashburnham he "appeared to be like a woman or a solicitor."[1] He never asserts his rights over Florence and seems quite content to act as lady's maid. About Florence and Jimmy he confesses that "if I had known that they really and passionately loved each other ... I would have united them, using ways and means as decent as I could. I believe that I should have given them money to live upon. ..."[2] Yet he identifies himself with Ashburnham: "I loved Edward Ashburnham — ... I love him because he was just myself."[3]

Dowell is, in fact, Ford's typically sexless American.[4] But he is more: in his moral relativism, his listlessness, his negativism and his ineffectuality he is dominated by what Schorer calls accidie,[5] Stephen Dedalus's "acedia — sickness of monks." He is a rootless American without tradition, without convictions, "a wanderer upon the face of public resorts,"[6] a moral eunuch. He is, as Meixner observes, "Prufrock before Prufrock."[7]

But if Dowell is listless he is also morbidly sensitive. He is incapable of action: his rôle is one of masochistically passive acceptance. (And this

---

1. Ibid., p.214.
2. Ibid., p.86.
3. Ibid., p.217.
4. See Women and Men (Paris, 1923), p.29: "In America where they have not begun to think about life but merely exhaust themselves in uplifting search after the dollar, the men are entirely emasculated."
5. "The Good Novelist in The Good Soldier," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr.,1948.
6. The Good Soldier, p.29.
7. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.159.

is only one of the ironic secondary meanings to the subtitle of the novel, "A Tale of Passion." For the tale is not only of Ashburnham's passion for Nancy, but of the passion of his martyrdom between Leonora and Nancy — Dowell imagines him standing "naked to the waist, his forearms shielding his eyes, and flesh hanging from him in rags."[1] Dowell's emotional sensitivity is confined to a narrow spectrum — to the perception of pain, in others and himself. His sensitivity is intensified by the shock of Leonora's revelations, so that the first chapter of his recollections shows him veering in baffled anguish from one extreme of interpretation to another; his language is heightened above its usual level:

> We were, if you will, one of those tall ships with the white sails upon a blue sea, one of those things that seem the proudest and the safest of all the beautiful and safe things that God has permitted the mind of man to frame. Where better could one take refuge? Where better?
>
> Permanence? Stability? I can't believe it's gone. I can't believe that that long, tranquil life, which was just stepping a minuet, vanished in four crashing days at the end of nine years and six weeks. Upon my word, yes, our intimacy was like a minuet, simply because on every possible occasion and in every possible circumstance we knew where to go, where to sit, which table we unanimously should choose; and we could rise and go, all four together, without a signal from any one of us, always to the music of the Kur orchestra, always in the temperate sunshine, or, if it rained, in discreet shelters. No, indeed, it can't be gone. You can't kill a minuet de la cour. You may shut up the music-book, close the harpsichord; in the cupboard and presses the rats may destroy the white satin favours. The mob may sack

---

1. The Good Soldier, p.206.

> Versailles; the Trianon may fall, but surely the minuet — the minuet itself is dancing itself away into the furthest stars, even as our minuet of the Hessian bathing places must be stepping itself still. Isn't there any heaven where old beautiful dances, old beautiful intimacies prolong themselves? Isn't there any Nirvana pervaded by the faint thrilling of instruments that have fallen into the dust of wormwood but that yet have frail, tremulous, and everlasting souls?
>
> No, by God, it is false! It wasn't a minuet that we stepped; it was a prison — a prison full of screaming hysterics, tied down so that they might not outsound the rolling of our carriage wheels as we went along the shaded avenues of the Taunus Wald.
>
> And yet I swear by the sacred name of my creator that it was true. It was true sunshine; the true music; the true splash of the fountains from the mouth of stone dolphins. For, if for me we were four people with the same tastes, with the same desires, acting — or, no, not acting — sitting there and here unanimously, isn't that the truth? If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that for nine years I possessed a goodly apple?[1]

Dowell's sensitivity to pain recalled is so intense that he feels the possibility of breakdown. "Forgive my writing of these monstrous things in this frivolous manner," he says at one point. "If I did not I should break down and cry."[2] His "frivolous manner" is an habitual irony, partly a defence against breakdown and partly the product of a natural resentment against Florence and Ashburnham for deceiving him and against Leonora, to whose hardness he is not sympathetic, for keeping him in ignorance of his wife's unfaithfulness.

---

1. Ibid., pp.17-18.
2. Ibid., p.61.

His ironic attitude constitutes, in fact, a spring which keeps the entire novel in tension: it holds Dowell himself back from emotional breakdown; it holds him back, on the other hand, from making final judgments on the Ashburnhams and even on Florence; and it gives his narrative tone a variety of hidden reservation and implication.

Irony is Dowell's only defence, a flimsy one. Having no code to live by as the Ashburnhams have — Edward his code of chivalry and Leonora her Catholic code — his reactions — for he is incapable of action — are dictated by emotions not always censored effectively (thus despite his efforts to be fair to Florence there is a malicious smugness in his relation of Florence's overhearing of Ashburnham tell Nancy that he loves her: "And that miserable woman must have got it in the face, good and strong. It must have been horrible for her. Horrible! Well, I suppose that she deserved all that she got."[1]) and by sentimentalism: by the end of the book his resentment of Ashburnham is to some extent dispelled and, the moment before Ashburnham kills himself, Dowell "wanted to say, 'God bless you,' for I also am a sentimentalist."[2]

It is through this weak and passionless self-deceiver, then, that "The Saddest Story" is told. "I call this the Saddest Story," he says, "rather than 'The

---

1. Ibid., p.102.
2. Ibid., p.220.

Ashburnham Tragedy,' just because it is so sad, just because there was no current to draw things along to a swift and inevitable end."[1] And, although "sadness" is his own slightly banal reaction to the events, he is right, Ashburnham's story misses tragedy. "There is about it none of the elevation that accompanies tragedy," he goes on; "there is about it no nemesis, no destiny." There is no grandeur in the fates of the participants. Ashburnham commits suicide by cutting his throat with a penknife: "So long, old man," he says to Dowell, "I must have a bit of rest, you know."[2] Leonora marries "a pleasant enough sort of sheep."[3] Nancy is insane but "utterly well-behaved as far as her knife and fork go."[4] The months that the three spend locked up together while Dowell is in America — months that form the climax of the progression d'effet of the novel — are devoted to an exhausting sexual feud, with hysterics, drunkenness and threats of suicide, all kept behind a façade of good manners. "It all goes on and goes on," says Pauline Lucas in A Call; and in The Good Soldier the "long silent duel with invisible weapons"[5] is seen stretching back in time to before the meeting of the Dowells and the Ashburnhams, back to the disastrous arranged marriage of Edward and Leonora, with the roots of their dissension in their traditions and upbringing:

---

1. Ibid., p.146.
2. Ibid., p.220.
3. Ibid., p.204.
4. Ibid., p.218.
5. Ibid., p.113.

Ashburnham is brought up according to the generous, idealistic and slightly sentimental values of "good" English landowning families, Leonora according to a strict Catholic code as the daughter of an impoverished English father in Ireland. Divorce is made impossible by her religion and his traditions. So they go "drifting down life, like fireships afloat on a lagoon and causing miseries, heartaches, agony of the mind, and death. And they themselves steadily deteriorated."[1] Leonora is caught between physical passion for a husband who does not want her and hatred of him for the tribulations he causes her, Ashburnham between a sentimental desire to search for the ultimately satisfying woman and a chivalrous urge to "preserve the virginity of his wife's thoughts."[2] So they drift down life, destroying Maisie Maidan, destroying Florence and finally destroying Nancy.

And Nancy herself is a figure not of tragedy but of pathos, though intense pathos. At first loving Ashburnham for "his good soldiering, for his saving lives at sea, for the excellent landlord that he was and good sportsman,"[3] she comes after his declaration to perceive the depth and intensity of her response to him. But the fear that Nancy will possess Ashburnham in a way that none of his previous mistresses have causes moral breakdown in Leonora. She shatters the girl by revealing Ashburnham's infidelities, and tells her that she must

---

1. Ibid., p.146.
2. Ibid., p.58.
3. Ibid., p.209.

give herself to Ashburnham to save his life, even if it means her damnation. Acting with a cruelty she does not understand, Nancy appears one night at his bedside. "She looked at him with her straight eyes of an unflinching cruelty and said: 'I am ready to belong to you — to save your life. ... I can never love you now I know the kind of man you are. I will belong to you to save your life. But I can never love you.'"[1] Ashburnham sends her away, but he has to exhaust himself working in order to let her alone, and she feels contamination in his presence. A figure of Destiny, in that she finally brings the Ashburnhams to the disaster towards which they have been drifting all their lives, Nancy is nevertheless, pathetically and helplessly, in the grip of Destiny.

"And they themselves steadily deteriorated," to ends without nobility, and in their deterioration mirror the deterioration of the traditions that formed them. Ashburnham, "the good soldier," is taken to India by his wife to keep him out of mischief and because living is cheap there. In India he is blackmailed by one officer, while Leonora virtually buys the wife of another. Back in England, Ashburnham, fastidious in dress to the point of dandyism, spends his time oiling the actions of guns he uses only at rifle-association meetings. He commits hara-kiri

---

1. Ibid., p.208.

with "a little neat pen-knife — quite a small pen-knife."[1] As Ashburnham represents the decline of the Imperial tradition, Leonora represents a decline of Catholicism into rigid and repressive decorum. As Wiley points out,[2] Ford distinguishes in Great Trade Route between the gaiety of true Catholicism and the gloomy cruelty of the branch originating in the Counter-Reformation which "still finds its expression in ... the pictures of flayings alive in the Flemish galleries."[3] Leonora, unlike Nancy, is distinguished by her coldness and lack of gaiety, and it seems no accident that Dowell on one occasion imagines Ashburnham flayed by Leonora.[4] When Ashburnham finally gives in to Leonora, he mutters, "Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean."[5]

While Leonora embodies a perversion of Catholicism, Florence represents an even more disastrous mutation. In a powerful scene near the beginning of the novel, her adulterous signal to Ashburnham and the Protestant split from the Church are placed in striking apposition. Towards the beginning of their stay at Nauheim, the Dowells and Ashburnhams visit the castle where the Luther protest was signed. As they look at the document, Florence says,

> "Don't you know that is why we were all called Protestants? That is the pencil draft of the Protest they drew up. You can see the signatures

---

1. Ibid., p.219.
2. Novelist of Three Worlds, p.201.
3. Great Trade Route, p.388.
4. The Good Soldier, p.206.
5. Ibid., p.216.

of Martin Luther, and Martin Bucer, and Zwingli, and Ludwig the Courageous ..."

... She continued, looking up into Captain Ashburnham's eyes: "It's because of that piece of paper that you're honest, sober, industrious, provident, and clean-lived. If it weren't for that piece of paper you'd be like the Irish or the Italians or the Poles, but particularly the Irish. ..."

And she laid one finger upon Captain Ashburnham's wrist.

I was aware of something treacherous, something frightful, something evil in the day. I can't define it and can't find a simile for it. It wasn't as if a snake had looked out of a hole. No, it was as if my heart had missed a beat. It was as if we were all going to run and cry out; all four of us in separate directions, averting our heads. In Ashburnham's face I know there was absolute panic. I was horribly frightened and then I discovered that the pain in my left wrist was caused by Leonora's clutching it:

"I can't stand this," she said with a most extraordinary passion; "I must get out of this."

I was horribly frightened. It came to me for a moment, though I hadn't time to think it, that she must be a madly jealous woman — jealous of Florence and Captain Ashburnham, of all the people in the world! And it was a panic in which we fled! We went right down the winding stairs, across the immense Rittersaal to a little terrace that overlooks the Lahn, the broad valley and the immense plain into which it opens out.

"Don't you see," she said, "don't you see what's going on?" The panic again stopped my heart. I muttered, I stuttered — I don't know how I got the words out:

"No! What's the matter? Whatever's the matter?"

She looked me straight in the eyes; and for a moment I had the feeling that those two blue discs were immense, were overwhelming, were like a wall of blue that shut me off from the rest of the world. I know it sounds absurd; but that is what I did feel like.

"Don't you see," she said, with a really horrible bitterness, with a really horrible lamentation in her voice. "Don't you see that that's the cause of the whole miserable affair; of the whole sorrow of the world? And of the eternal damnation of you and me and them. ..."

> ... She ran her hand with a singular clawing motion upwards over her forehead. Her eyes were enormously distended; her face was exactly that of a person looking into the pit of hell and seeing horrors there. And then suddenly she stopped. She was, most amazingly, just Mrs. Ashburnham again. Her face was perfectly clear, sharp, and defined; her hair was glorious in its golden coils. Her nostrils twitched with a sort of contempt. She appeared to look with interest at a gypsy caravan that was coming over a little bridge far below us.
>
> "Don't you know," she said, in her clear, hard voice, "don't you know that I'm an Irish Catholic?"[1]

Supported only by traditions that have deteriorated into false codes — Ashburnham's false sexual code of sentiment and chivalrous worship that makes a real relationship with a wife impossible, Leonora's false religious code of maintaining the appearance of a good Catholic marriage at all costs — they drift down life "like fireships afloat on a lagoon," victims victimising others. Not in itself tragic, then, the history of the Ashburnhams nevertheless becomes something like tragedy at the hands of its devious and neurotic American narrator.

Ford's first stroke of genius was in creating a first-person narrator at all, and in spite of James's ordinance, "The first person, in a long piece, is a form foredoomed to looseness."[2] For by doing so he rid himself of the chief problem posed by the Ashburnham history, that of suggesting the passing of time in an Affair that lasts from Dowell's elopement with Florence

---

1. Ibid., pp.48-50.
2. Quoted by Richard Lid, "Ford's Good Soldier," First Person, Fall,1960.

in 1901 to the present of 1914. Chronological sequence becomes unnecessary, and the time scheme of the novel depends solely upon the mental tactics of the narrator trying to establish the meaning — not the sequence — of facts held in his memory. The powerful devices of juxtaposition, of the stretching of a moment to accomodate psychological experience, and of the time-shift become habits of the roving mind. Thus Ford is able without difficulty to solve, for example, the problem of suggesting the lapse of nine years between the first meeting at Nauheim and Florence's death, a period during which, for Dowell, very little happens. Between the visit to the castle (pp. 45-59) and the death of Florence (pp. 94-5) there occur forty pages dealing with events after Florence's death shifted out of time-sequence (pp. 50-91) and two pages giving brief references to entries in Dowell's diaries for 1904-6 (pp. 92-3). And the psychological truth of Dowell's statement, "The death of Mrs. Maidan occurred on the 4th of August 1904. And then nothing happened until the 4th of August 1913,"[1] is established.

By providing the story with a narrator intensely engaged in unravelling the meanings of nuances, Ford also solved the problem of making valid the complex and labyrinthine type of plot he had experimented with in A Call. The difficulty there had been one of not allowing characters to be overwhelmed by plot by making it apparent that an omniscient author was leading them

---

1. The Good Soldier, p.75.

through the maze; and, measured by the standards of The Good Soldier, A Call fails in this respect. Dowell, on the other hand, shapes and validates the labyrinth of The Good Soldier because the labyrinth is his own mental reconstruction. Dowell uses this image himself when he confesses, "I have, I am aware, told this story in a very rambling way so that it may be difficult for anyone to find his path through what may be a sort of maze."[1] At another level, too, the medium of the duped narrator is the most effective for the Ashburnham history. For insofar as the subject of the novel is "that appearances have their reality,"[2] the mind of a narrator groping behind the all-too-solid screens of convention which have shielded him from knowledge of deceit, cruelty and suffering, and continually being shocked by what he finds, ensures the emotional continuity of his narration.

But Ford's second, and greater stroke of genius was in entrusting the narrative to so apparently untrustworthy a narrator. For peevish, finical, blind and neurotic as he is, Dowell is a creature of both pathos and comedy.[3] His one defence against the knowledge that has destroyed his vegetable existence is irony; and irony, "which makes no absolute commitments and can thus enjoy the advantage of many ambi-

---

1. Ibid., p.161.
2. Mark Schorer, "The Good Novelist in The Good Soldier," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr.,1948.
3. Schorer proceeds from a reading of Dowell in this light to call The Good Soldier "a comedy of humour and ... the humour is phlegm." (Ibid.) But this seems a needlessly literal transference of characteristics of Dowell to the whole novel, which is greater than the sum of its parts.

guities of meaning and endless complexities of situation, i. at the same time an evaluative mood, and, in a master, a sharp one,"[1] informs his narrative, qualifying its emotional excesses and giving to its banalities a sense of a mind reluctant to express fully the tensions underlying the muted words. Again, the moral inertia that makes Dowell so negative a person ensures that he will not pass judgment on or misrepresent the subjects of his narrative on the basis of moral preconceptions. His masochism allows him, by its nature, to reflect in detachment on the pain he is undergoing. His rootlessness and superficiality make him attentive to the manners and conventions the deceptiveness of which he is in retrospect to learn. His finical precision makes him attentive to narrative detail.

The technical triumph of the novel is, in fact, the conviction that it creates that it could have been told by no other means than through Dowell: his very language turns out to be a fitting medium, ranging from American English more colloquial than Ford had used in previous novels to a powerfully poetic language that justifies itself on the grounds of Dowell's impassioned search for words to describe the depth of his experience.

But if Dowell is "up to" narrating the story, he is not up to finding its meaning, for its meaning must include him. He tells himself that he can find no meaning to it: "It is all a darkness," he finds at the

---

1. Ibid.

beginning;[1] and at the end, wearily, "I don't know. I know nothing. I am very tired."[2] But this shrugging off is to some extent self-deception. Dowell does attach a meaning to Ashburnham's fate, and this meaning is fundamentally an heroic and tragic one which is not inherent in it. The reason why Dowell should do this becomes apparent only in his strange attempt to identify himself with Ashburnham ("I love him because he was just myself."[3] "I guess that I myself, in my fainter way, come into the category of the passionate, of the headstrong, of the too truthful."[4]) and to take over Nancy after the death of Ashburnham (his "large older brother."[5]) Parts Two, Three and Four of the novel can be read as an attempt on Dowell's part to build up a picture of Ashburnham as a tragic hero, culminating in the image of Ashburnham "naked and reclining amidst darkness, upon cold rocks, like one of the ancient Greek damned, in Tartarus or wherever it was."[6] Side by side with this train of development go continual references to "poor Edward" and Edward's "sentimentalism," touches of disparaging resentment carried over from Part One.

This vicarious self-aggrandizement has deceived

---

1. The Good Soldier, p.22.
2. Ibid., p.211.
3. Ibid., p.217.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.218.
6. Ibid., p.217.

one critic, Samuel Hynes, into believing that Dowell "learns the reality of Passion ... [and] in the end identifies himself unconditionally with Passion."[1] Similarly, Dowell's intense but sentimental feelings for Nancy and their pathetic plight at the end of the novel, a moral eunuch and a moral innocent destroyed by passion, have misled John A. Meixner into speaking of Dowell's "deep love for ... Nancy"[2] and thus reading the end of the novel at a more tragic level than it justifies; a truer reading of the Ashburnham history should take account of the motive of self-deception in Dowell's narrative.

Bound in by traditions which have died and rigidified, held from contact with each other by sexual-religious dissension, the Ashburnhams force each other to moral self-betrayal and to death. Edward Ashburnham, the good soldier of slightly decadent elegance, "descended, as you would probably expect, from the Ashburnham who accompanied Charles I to the scaffold,"[3] cuts his throat in his stables; the moment before he does it "he just looked up to the roof of the stable, as if he were looking to Heaven, and whispered something that I did not catch."[4] Leonora marries a man she looks down on. Their country estate is taken over by a spiritually

---

1. "The Epistemology of The Good Soldier," Sewanee Review, Spring, 1961.
2. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.160.
3. The Good Soldier, p.16.
4. Ibid., p.219.

impotent American. Ashburnham's suicide is nihilistic in its implications, but this does not mean that in The Good Soldier Ford turned on the gentleman of honour portrayed in Ashburnham and, earlier, in Macdonald, Luscombe and Bettesworth. For his authorial attitude in The Good Soldier, distinct from Dowell's and breathing through the very prose, is one of intense sympathy towards not only Ashburnham but also Dowell, Nancy and Leonora, who is indeed a compassionately portrayed development of the coldly passionate and domineering woman he had drawn with some malice in Countess Macdonald. Able to face the powers that crush Ashburnham with nothing but the force of his sympathy, Ford does not create tragedy out of this saddest story not inherently tragic; led to this nihilistic impasse, there is no way in which he, as serious historian of modern life, can turn. It is in this light that his farewells to literature[1] should be read. The death of Ashburnham, like the later retirement of Christopher Tietjens, carries its message of despair, faced unflinchingly here as it is not in Parade's End.

---

1. See "On Impressionism," Poetry and Drama, Dec.,1914, Dedicatory Letter to 1927 edition of The Good Soldier.

Early in 1914 Ford published his longest and best-known poem, "On Heaven." In August war broke out, and he found himself facing new difficulties caused by his German surname and by the German sympathies he had expressed during his troubles with his wife.[1] In 1915 he and Violet Hunt published Zeppelin Nights, a collection of historical sketches ostensibly narrated by a writer named Serapion Hunter, Decameron-style, during London blackouts. The book brought about the most malicious of the attacks made on Ford during this period, a review by a certain J.K. Prothero in New Witness. (Prothero happens also to confuse the parts written by Ford and Violet.)

> There are flashes of Miss Hunt's genius dispersed throughout the volume, and one is sensible that she has made a heroic attempt to leaven the mass of Mr. Hueffer's dull offensiveness. But the fugitive gleams of patriotism supplied by the lady are not sufficient to redeem the ponderous panic of the co-author. It is generally supposed that Mr. Hueffer is not exactly of pure European extraction, and this book seems certainly to confirm such impression. ... The writer's fear of bodily hurt is more acute than one associates with men of our blood.[2]

J.M. Barrie[3] and H.G. Wells[4] rushed outraged to Ford's defence; but the review is typical enough of attitudes towards Ford in some quarters to justify the feelings of victimisation that caused him to change his name in 1919.

---

1. Goldring records that on one occasion Ford found himself interrogated by the police on a golf course before some friends. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.175.
2. New Witness, Jan.6,1916.
3. Letter to the editor, New Witness, Jan.13,1916.
4. See letter to G.K. Chesterton, whose brother edited New Witness, in Maisie Ward's G.K. Chesterton (London, 1944), p.359.

Zeppelin Nights ends with a tearfully emotional account of the coronation of George V, after which Serapion Hunter tells his audience that, though over the age for military service, he has enlisted. In August, 1915, at the age of forty-one, Ford himself received his commission as Second Lieutenant in the Welch Regiment. He had attempted unsuccessfully to find a post in Military Intelligence, and had written two books commissioned by Wellington House, an officially sponsored propaganda organization. These were When Blood Is Their Argument, an acute and intelligent attack on Prussian Kultur, and Between St. Denis and St. George, a sympathetic appreciation of French culture which won Ford considerable prestige in France and which remains highly readable.

Until January, 1919, Ford remained with the Army, undergoing periods of front assignment in France and Flanders. The rôles he played were not heroic, being mainly those of lecturing to trainees, organizing labour battalions and guarding German prisoners. He suffered shell-shock and amnesia, and his lungs were seriously injured by gas. He wrote some poetry, collected in On Heaven and Other Poems (1918), but no fiction. The profound effect of the War on his writing began to be apparent only in the middle 1920's.

VI

AFTER THE WAR: 1919-1928

In May, 1919, five months after his discharge from the Army, Ford moved into a country cottage in West Sussex with Stella Bowen, a young Australian painter he had met through Ezra Pound in 1918. The move to the country was Ford's idea: he "wanted to dig potatoes and raise pigs and never write another book. Wanted to start a new home. Wanted a child."[1] He severed relations with Violet Hunt and, for the few months before the sale of the film rights of Romance, "lived ... as a jobbing gardener."[2] He also changed his name to Ford: "I would not do this, out of obstinacy, while the war was still on," he wrote to C.F.G. Masterman, "but I see now no longer any reason to continue to put up with the inconvenience that a Teutonic patronymic causes in the rather humble sphere of life that I now adorn."[3]

Stella Bowen appears to have given Ford much that he needed to put him on his feet again after the War — domestic security, a daughter (in 1920), and reassurance: "He needed more reassurance than anyone I have ever met,"[4] she later wrote. They soon moved to a more comfortable

---

1. Stella Bowen, Drawn from Life (London, 1941), p.61.
2. Letter to C.F.G. Masterman dated Jun.28,1919. Quoted by Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.207.
3. Ibid.
4. Drawn from Life, p.80.

smallholding; as Goldring writes, "The 'persona' of the small-producer had received its fullest gratification. He had his typical smallholder's cottage, his child, his companion, his animals — 'two litters of pigs, thirty hens, twenty ducks, three goats and the old mare, not to mention a cat and dog' — and ten acres to play with."[1] And "at last I persuaded him to begin another book," writes Stella.[2]

Ford appears in fact to have undergone considerable difficulty after the War both in settling down to his writing and in finding a publisher: Goldring quotes Gerald Duckworth, most faithful of Ford's publishers, as confessing in 1924 that "the trouble is, we can't sell the old boy."[3] Between the end of the War and his departure for France at the end of 1922, Ford published no fiction at all: his publications consist only of the long poem A House (1920) and of Thus to Revisit (1921), a collection of essays, some new, some rewritten from articles in Dial and the English Review,[4] masquerading as reminiscences and constituting in reality a penetrating analysis of the state of English letters between 1898 and 1914.

During this period Ford also attempted four fictional works, completing three. The earliest begun was No Enemy, "written as to one chapter, in the front line, and as to

---

1. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.211.
2. Drawn from Life, p.67.
3. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.216.
4. See Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.222.

the rest just after peace was declared."[1] Ford sent the complete manuscript to his agent in October, 1919,[2] but he apparently could not find a publisher.[3] It was finally published in 1929. Ford claims that "I thought at the time [1919] that it was too personal to publish at once and determined to keep it for ten years."[4] The second project, a novel entitled The Wheels of the Plough, was apparently completed about July, 1920.[5] It remains unpublished; Ford reworked it in 1928 under the title That Same Poor Man, but made only half-hearted attempts to have it published — "It isn't an ignoble book but I just do not like it," he wrote to Pinker.[6] Of the third novel he attempted, True Love and a General Court Martial, only 106 manuscript pages were completed.[7] The fourth, The Marsden Case, was published, after initial difficulties, in 1923.

No Enemy

No Enemy is an autobiographical work only thinly disguised as fiction: the central character is a poet, ex-soldier and expert cook who has retired to a small-holding in Sussex; the text includes several of Ford's war poems. In the first half of the book the poet,

---

1. Ford, letter to J.B. Pinker dated Sep.11,1929, quoted by Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.74.
2. Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.109.
3. Ibid., p.74.
4. See note (1) above.
5. Ford, letter to J.B. Pinker dated Jul,15,1920, quoted by Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.118.
6. Letter dated Sep.11,1929, quoted ibid., p.119.
7. Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.118.

Gringoire, speaks through a narrator, an unnamed compiler of Gringoire's war reminiscences, who visits him in his cottage; in the second Gringoire speaks for himself. The book becomes a "long lay sermon,"[1] but also, as its title states, "A Tale of Reconstruction:" "the main points of his harangue were to the effect that humanity might be saved — if it was to be saved — by good cooking, intensive horti-, as opposed to agriculture. And of course by abstract thinking and the arts. And the avoidance of waste. Above all by the avoidance of waste."[2] The art of cookery is seen as at the farthest remove from the dual barbarities of industrialism and war. The book closes with Gringoire and his friends gathering for an evening meal interspersed with poetry.

No Enemy lays its small claim to fictional status by its employment of fictional techniques: the didactic element is submerged by a constant interweaving of narrative, digression and anecdote based on the time-shift, and in the description of war scenes emphasis is placed less on action than on the reactions of Gringoire, the participant and sensitive Impressionist observer. In its combination of "credo with a concern for distinction in style," Wiley compares No Enemy with Conrad's Mirror of the Sea: it "should stand with ... The Mirror of the Sea as, in final effect, an almost pure demonstration of Impressionist prose and one that, in its rhythms of memory, outlasts

---

1. No Enemy (London, 1929), p.107.
2. Ibid., p.98.

its temporal bearings and continues to appeal to a taste for this art of overtone."[1] Nevertheless, in Parade's End Ford was to find a more thoroughgoing fictional method of conveying his post-war message.

The Marsden Case

The Marsden Case (1923), though specifically post-war, is of all Ford's novels the closest in tone to The Good Soldier. It uses a first-person narrator who is emotionally involved in the action he is describing and who, like Dowell, creates a labyrinthine structure: "When a man tells his story," he says, "and the story is very complicated, to be plain, he must emphasize points in advance, go back to others, advance, go back again, and so on."[2] The method here has not quite the justification it has in The Good Soldier, however, for the narrator, Jessup, is by no means as devious in his make-up as Dowell. At the time of its completion Ford thought the novel "as to 'treatment' the best thing I've done — but the subject is not a very good one."[3] The Marsden Case marks in fact one of Ford's seductions by technique, and the elaborate "treatment" tends in the end to obscure rather than emphasize the main lines.

The novel, apparently based on a real "case" ("the story of Ralston, the first translator of Turgenev — a

---

1. Novelist of Three Worlds, pp.243,246.
2. The Marsden Case (London, 1923), p.261.
3. Letter to Edgar Jepson, May8,1923, quoted by Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.223.

man I like very much," wrote Ford[1]), concerns George Heimann, a "magnificent young animal ... [with a] quite good, generous, commonplace mind",[2] who translates modern German epics for a living but is not interested in the arts. He is the son of Earl Marsden, Postmaster-General under Gladstone, who had been disgraced over a petty scandal and had retired to Germany to brood, giving his children his dead wife's name, Hijmann. The children, George and Marie Elizabeth, grow up obsessed with fears of illegitimacy; these fears come to a head when an unscrupulous publisher with whom George involves himself in litigation organizes a campaign of innuendo against him. On the outbreak of the war the father commits suicide and Marie Elizabeth demands recognition by his executors. George opposes this, both because it brings them into conflict with a beloved aunt and because he feels that there is no place for private squabbles in time of war. Because of his German associations, however, he is denounced by the press as a German agent, and the mental strain he is undergoing leads him to attempt a suicide in precise imitation of his father's. All ends happily, however (the novel is subtitled "A Romance"): George serves in the Guards, drops his objections, becomes Earl Marsden and marries his beloved, an actress named Clarice Honeywill.

Jessup is accidentally drawn into the story by seeing the beginning of the quarrel between George and

---

1. Ibid.
2. The Marsden Case (London, 1923), p.206.

his publisher, and his involvement deepens when he too falls in love with Clarice. Stronger and simpler in character than Dowell, he tells the story in retrospect from after the War and gives it a tone of elegy by his occasional grimly casual "He's dead now."

But the slightly contrived complexity of Jessup's narrative is only a reflection of the slightly contrived air of the whole book, which stands uneasily half-way between The Good Soldier and Parade's End. Its themes of the burden of mental strain loaded by society on its scapegoats and of the conflict between the altruism of George, willing to withdraw his personal claims in the interests of the nation, and the social irresponsibility of his sister, belong to Parade's End; but its tendency towards compression, and in particular its use of a single narrative consciousness, belong to The Good Soldier. The results are on the one hand a comparative sketchiness in the treatment of the broader national themes and on the other an impression created of technique acting in vacuo on inadequate material. What Parade's End was to bring to the treatment of similar themes was a breadth and variety of design and an analysis from several viewpoints that The Marsden Case lacks.

In November, 1922, Ford and Stella left for France; Ford was not to return to England again except for brief visits. As he wrote to Edgar Jepson on May 8, 1923,

"Living is really so relatively cheap in France and I find I can work so well ... that I shouldn't wonder if we settled down here for good. Besides, the French make much of me — which at my age is inspiring."[1] Ford and Stella oscillated between Ford's beloved Provence and Paris, which, as Goldring observes, "supplied him with everything he wanted,"[2] specifically the recognition he missed in England. He found himself one of the centres of the Left Bank literary world, receiving homage in particular from young American expatriate writers. Van Wyck Brooks writes that "never before had Americans known such teachers [Pound, Gertrude Stein and Ford] of the literary art;"[3] but "I do not think [Ford] was a good diet for the young Western boys, fresh from the prairie, who came under his influence in Paris. ... [He] provided a diet of nightingales' tongues for boys who knew nothing of beef and potatoes; and the maternal Miss Stein and the fatherly Ford appealed to their filial instincts also — which made the authority of these writers all the more compelling."[4]

What brought Ford to the forefront of Paris artistic life was his editorship of the transatlantic review, lasting from its inception in January, 1924, to its death at the end of the same year. Ford was introduced by his brother Oliver to a group proposing

---

1. Quoted by Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.224.
2. Ibid., p.229
3. The Confident Years (London, 1952), p.334.
4. Opinions of Oliver Allston (New York, 1941), p.240.

to start a new review; when these backers fell away, Ezra Pound persuaded John Quinn to put up half the capital needed. Despite the lesson of his losses on the English Review, Ford put up the other half, and within a year lost it. The cause of the failure of the magazine was basically financial; and Frank MacShane concludes, in a study of the fortunes of the transatlantic review, that "much of the mismanagement of the finances of the magazine must be blamed on Ford."[1] The review was lively and informal; but, published in New York, London and Paris, it lacked general appeal, confining itself almost exclusively to writers living in Paris. Paris being the centre of the world of the arts, however, the transatlantic review printed much remarkable work, most notably sections of Joyce's Finnegans Wake under Ford's title, "Work in Progress." Other contributors included E.E. Cummings, A.E. Coppard, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Gertrude Stein, Djuna Barnes, Ford himself (sections of Some Do Not) and Ernest Hemingway. As D.H. Lawrence had been the main "discovery" of the English Review, so Hemingway was of the transatlantic review. Introduced to Ford by Pound, he became assistant editor and, while Ford was away in New York, edited one of the last numbers himself. An attack Hemingway made on T.S. Eliot in this number caused the break between him and Ford: Ford apologized for the attack in the editorial columns, and Hemingway walked out,[2] later

---

1. "The Transatlantic Review," London Magazine, Dec.,1960.
2. See Burton Rascoe, We Were Interrupted (New York,1947), pp.184-6.

making several derogatory assertions about Ford's editorship.[1] Nevertheless, as Carlos Baker observes, Hemingway's "year with the transatlantic review, corvée or no, probably helped as much as any of his other serious literary activities to get [his] name and fame into general circulation around Paris ... It offered him a focus, a kind of responsibility, and a sounding board such as he had not had up to that time."[2] And in his novels Hemingway was later to borrow extensively from Ford's Parade's End.[3]

Ford found life in France conducive to work, and at the end of 1922 began Some Do Not. Editing the transatlantic review he "really enjoyed himself superbly," recalls Stella Bowen: "he survived all the troubles and setbacks which ordinarily would have bowled him over with an amazing buoyancy, so deep was his pleasure in the enterprise."[4] He published Mister Bosphorus and the Muses (1923), a long satirical poem, and Women and Men (1923), "another volume of reminiscences,"[5] a slight but biographically illuminating analysis, with anecdotes, of the love-relationship. A few months after Conrad's death he published Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance. A sincerely affectionate tribute and a penetrating Impressionist study of Conrad as artist and man, this

---

1. See letter from Hemingway to Carlos Baker, 1951: "Ford asked me to read Mss. for him.. [I] would make an annotation of what Ford was to say in refusal. ... Ford, without reading the stories would write the authors beautiful letters encouraging them on their literary careers." Carlos Baker, Hemingway, (Princeton, 1952), p.22.
2. Ibid., p.24.
3. For an extended discussion of this, see John McCormick, Catastrophe and Imagination (London, 1957), p.217 ff.
4. Drawn from Life, p.117.
5. Women and Men (privately printed, 1923), p.i.

book brought down the wrath of the reviewers upon Ford's head for its unfortunate mixture of patronising of Conrad and self-deprecation. Ford's claims to have assisted Conrad with other works than the acknowledged collaborations, in particular, evoked from Conrad's widow a letter of abuse of Ford in the Times Literary Supplement.[1]

Parade's End

Towards the end of 1922 Ford began Some Do Not; it was published in 1924, and was followed by No More Parades (1925), A Man Could Stand Up (1926) and Last Post (1928). In 1930 he suggested to a correspondent the name Parade's End: The Tietjens Saga for a collected edition, stating at the same time that he "strongly wished" to omit Last Post: "I do not like the book and have never liked it and always intended the series to end with A Man Could Stand Up."[2]

In the dedicatory prefaces to the second, third and fourth volumes and in It Was the Nightingale (1933) Ford goes in some detail into the genesis and purpose of Parade's End. These remarks constitute his sole published examination of his aims and methods, and thus, though most of them are retrospective, are worth examination.

The death of Proust made a deep impression on Ford:

---

1. Times Literary Supplement, Dec.4,1924. See also Appendix A of this essay.
2. Paul A. Bartlett, "Letters of Ford Madox Ford," Saturday Review of Literature, Aug.2,1941.

"Proust was dead," he wrote, "and I did not see anyone else who was carrying on the ponderous work that seemed to be needed by the world. ... I wanted the Novelist ... to appear in his really proud position as historian of his own time."[1] The subjects which Ford had already attempted to deal with in No Enemy and The Marsden Case — the war itself, escape from industrial barbarism to a simpler life, civilian irresponsibility during the war — were to be drawn into a larger picture of "the public events of a decade."[2] In Parade's End the decade is 1912-1921. Ideally, Ford felt, what was needed was an "immense novel" dealing not with individual beings but with "great masses of people — or interests. You would have Interest A, remorselessly and under the stress of blind necessities, slowly or cataclysmically overwhelming Interest Z, without the attraction of sympathy for a picturesque or upright individual."[3] This novel Ford could not write — "I knew I should have to fall back on the old device of the world seen through the eyes of a central observer."[4]

"Casting about, then, for a medium," he continued, " ... I thought of a man — by then dead — with whom I had been very intimate and with whom ... I had at one time discussed most things under the sun. He was the English Tory. Even then — it must have been in September,

---

1. It Was the Nightingale (London, 1934), pp.194-5,180.
2. Ibid., p.187.
3. Ibid., p.195.
4. Ibid.

1916, ... I said to myself: 'How would this look in the eyes of X ... — already dead, along with all English Tories? For, as a medium through which to view struggles that are after all in the end mostly emotional struggles — ... what could be better than the sceptical, not ungenerous, not cold, not unconvincible eyes of an extinct frame of mind? For, by the time of my relative youth when I knew X ... so intimately, Toryism had gone beyond the region of any practising political party. It said for a year or two: A plague on all your houses, and so expired."[1]

X is, of course, Arthur Marwood, in Ford's eyes "the last English Tory, omniscient, slightly contemptuous — and sentimental in his human contacts,"[2] and Christopher Tietjens takes on the characteristics of Marwood, "the heavy Yorkshire squire with his dark hair startlingly silver in places, his keen blue eyes, his florid complexion, his immense expressive hands and his great shapelessness. ... There he was, large — an 'elephant built out of meal-sacks ... He was physically very strong and enduring. And he was, beneath the surface, extraordinarily passionate — with an abiding passion for the sort of truth that makes for intellectual accuracy in the public service."[3]

For the "observer" he was building up, Ford found

---

1. Dedicatory letter to No More Parades.
2. Dedicatory letter to Last Post.
3. It Was the Nightingale, pp.188,202.

it necessary to discover a "lasting tribulation, ... a permanent shackle and ball on his leg. ... Something of a moral order and something inscrutable."[1] He found this in a story Marwood told him of a friend who "picked up a bitch on a train between Calais and Paris. She persuaded him he had got her with child ... He felt he had to marry her ... Then he found out that the child might be another man's, as well as his. ... She was as unfaithful to him as a street-walker ... but he couldn't divorce. He held that a decent man could never divorce a woman. The woman, on the other hand, would not divorce him because she was a Roman Catholic."[2] Ford compounded this with another story of "a wealthy American who had married a wrong 'un. She had been unfaithful to him before and after marriage. ... At last she eloped with a ship steward. ... After a year or so, he had conceived an overwhelming passion for another woman and the wife had returned."[3]

Being sceptical and omniscient, the observer Ford was building up would play a critical rôle. "He was to be aware that in all places where they managed things from Whitehall down to brigade headquarters a number of things would be badly managed. ... When it seemed to be his duty he would criticise. That would get him, even at the Front, into many and elaborate messes ..."[4] In order to have his criticisms heard he had to belong

---

1. Ibid., p.189.
2. Ibid., p.190.
3. Ibid., pp.200-1.
4. Ibid., p.198.

to the Ruling Classes, "separated from and absolutely above the mere gentlemanly class, ... permanent unless they come personal croppers over a woman, or through over-intelligence or on account of financial disasters."[1] His tribulations had to be sufficient to "carry the reader through his observations of the crumbling world," and had to be borne with strength of mind: "No one else could have supported at once the tremendous pressure of the war and private troubles of a very dire description."[2] And the main pressure of the war was to be not horror or fear of death, but worry: "You may become callous at the thought of all the horror of 'more than a million dead': fear itself in the end comes to rest ... But worry feeds on itself and in the end so destroys the morale that less than a grasshopper becomes a burden. It is without predictable terms; it is as menacing as the eye of the serpent; it causes unspeakable fatigue even as, remorselessly, it banishes rest. And it seemed to me that if the world could be got to see the war from that angle, there would be no more wars ... "[3]

For the "immense novel" was to have a didactic purpose, "the obviating of all future wars ...: I have always had the greatest contempt for novels written with a purpose ... But the desperation and horror that were caused to other people impressed me with such mass and such vividness that I was ready to put my principles behind me."[4]

---

1. Ibid., p.195.
2. Ibid., pp.195-6.
3. Ibid., p.206.
4. Ibid., p.205.

Ford's outline has its omissions. It does not say why it was that he "needed someone, some character, in lasting tribulation." It implies that Christopher is the first projection of Ford's "omniscient, slightly contemptuous" English Tory, neglecting Tietjens's long line of descent. It ignores the strong elements of Ford's own character in Tietjens, particularly as he appears in A Man Could Stand Up.[1] But what the outline claims as the purpose behind Parade's End — that of "obviating all future wars" — links it with Flaubert's Education Sentimentale, which Ford considered the greatest novel ever written and which, he thought, had it been read carefully could have obviated the débâcle of 1870.[2] It draws into question Ford's claim in 1927 to have "laid his Great Auk's egg" in The Good Soldier, and suggests — as the text itself confirms — that his greatest (though not necessarily most intense) creative effort went into Parade's End. Parade's End thus becomes a novel in the line of Don Quixote and L'Education Sentimentale, "which, because they are great works of art, put their fingers upon the disease spots of nations or describe the diseases of civilizations."[3] Its

---

1. For a study of these autobiographical elements, see Elliott B. Gose, Jr., "From Reality to Romance," College English, May,1956.
2. "For, during the period before 1870, France had drifted for a time into the same happy-go-lucky frame of mind that has always existed in England. And so exactly did Flaubert depict this frame of mind ..., that could France have set itself seriously to the task of reading and pondering upon it, undoubtedly some tightening of her national character must have taken place. France, however, amiably ignored the masterpiece ..." The Critical Attitude (London, 1911), pp.29-30.
3. Ford, "The Nigger," Outlook, Jul.24,1915.

diagnosis of social ills would be effected through the hero, who "when it seemed his duty, ... would criticise." And society, recognising in him the standards it has betrayed, makes him its scapegoat and forces him into exile. Parade's End thus continues the analysis of society of Ford's satiric novels, from The Inheritors to Mr. Fleight, but achieves its analytic aims without recourse to satirical exaggeration. Not a satire but an elegy, it laments the passing of the old order while diagnosing the disease that killed it. It is only peripherally a war novel; its concern is not with the war itself so much as with the causes of the war. It is a work begun at the age of forty-nine by a man who had cleared the ground for it in three widely differing novels and who had been possibly the only combatant to have written a discourse on Prussian militarism before joining up. Neither discourse nor detached analysis, however, it is a work of profound engagement and sympathy.

Together with a new-found simplicity and directness of emotion comes a return to unambiguous portrayal of character, often through third-person narration, that makes Parade's End the most "English" of Ford's major novels. There is none of the shifting of outline as the narrative extends that marks The Good Soldier. Instead we have "characters", and in Christopher Tietjens a character as large as life.

The youngest son of a wealthy Yorkshire squire, Christopher Tietjens is a brilliant statistician in the

Civil Service, but is bound to a Catholic wife, Sylvia, the "bitch" of Marwood's anecdote, who when Some Do Not opens is demanding that Christopher take her back after one of her affairs. For the sake of a son who may not be his he agrees, though he finds himself falling in love with Valentine Wannop, a tomboy and a suffragette whose mother knows Christopher's father well. He and Valentine do not speak to each other of their love, but in spite of this become victims of malicious gossip. Christopher's decline in the eyes of society begins. At the same time the rise to favour of his protégé Vincent Macmaster, a middle-class opportunist whom Christopher had helped in his career, begins. Macmaster begins an adulterous affair with Edith Ethel Duchemin, wife of an insane clergyman; it remains undetected.

The first half of Some Do Not takes place in 1912, the second during the War. Christopher, who has enlisted, returns home with amnesia brought on by shell-shock to face a campaign of slander run by the jealous Edith Ethel, now Mrs. Macmaster, and by Sylvia, who wishes to break his spirit in order to possess him wholly. The War Office asks him to produce faked statistics which will enable them to withdraw troops from the Western Front to the defence of Britain's Near Eastern interests. He refuses and is discredited. Escaping from Sylvia to Valentine, he throws aside his conventional restraints and asks her to become his mistress before he leaves for the front the next day. She agrees,

but that night they cannot bring themselves to it. Some do not.

No More Parades opens with Christopher in France immersed in his rather drab base line job. He is burdened with neurotic officers and men who keep bringing their domestic troubles to him. He is also plagued by Sylvia, who has used the fact that General Campion is Christopher's godfather to bluff her way to her husband. Her plans to have Christopher again are upset when a drunken officer at whom she had made eyes bursts into their hotel bedroom. Christopher throws him out and is arrested. Despite the poor state of his health he is sent by Campion to the trenches as a face-saving move.

Christopher survives service in the front line — described in A Man Could Stand Up — and at Sylvia's request is returned to the base line to guard prisoners. Three weeks before the Armistice he is discharged. Sick and penniless, he returns to London to a house from which Sylvia has removed all the furniture. He realises that his sanity can be saved only by Valentine, to whom he has never written from the front. Valentine appears on Armistice Day, and, though Sylvia makes a last desperate attempt to keep them apart, they spend the night together in the empty house.

Last Post is set several years later. Christopher is living with Valentine in Sussex. She is pregnant and

he makes a living selling second-hand furniture. Christopher does not appear, however, except for a moment at the end of the book. The central character is his half-brother Mark, a prominent civil servant who willed himself into paralysis on hearing that the Allies were not to advance into German territory. Sylvia forces her way into their sanctuary, but meeting Valentine breaks down and agrees to divorce Christopher. Christopher appears with the news that the American to whom Sylvia has leased Groby, the Tietjens estate, has cut down Groby Great Tree. Mark speaks and dies.

Christopher is the greatest of Ford's gentlemen of honour, a feudalist, altruistic, generous, reserved and rock-like. He is also the last Tory, "omniscient, slightly contemptuous — and sentimental in his human contacts." He stands for the England of the eighteenth century; and in his final search for peace he moves even farther back:

> What had become of the seventeenth century? And Herbert and Donne and Crashaw and Vaughan, the Silurist? ... Sweet day so cool, so calm, so bright, the bridal of the earth and sky! ... The only satisfactory age in England! ... Yet what chance had it to-day? Or, still more, to-morrow? ... What chance had quiet fields, Anglican sainthood, accuracy of thought, heavy-leaved, timbered hedgerows, slowly creeping plough-lands moving up the slopes? ... The name Bemerton came suddenly on to his tongue. Yes, Bemerton, Bemerton, Bemerton was George Herbert's parsonage, Bemerton, outside Salisbury. ... The cradle of our race as far as our race was worth thinking about. He imagined himself standing on a little hill, a lean contemplative parson, looking at the land sloping down to Salisbury spire. A large, clumsily bound

> seventeenth-century testament, Greek, beneath his elbow. ... Imagine standing up on a hill! It was the unthinkable thing there![1]

As Christopher ironically realises, he has taken the ideals of his education seriously: hating him because he is the very symbol of the ideal they have betrayed, his own people, the recreant Ruling Class, persecute him. As he says to Campion,

> It is not good to have taken one's public-school's ethical system seriously. I am really, sir, the English public schoolboy. That's an eighteenth-century product. What with the love of truth that — God help me! — they rammed into me at Clifton and the belief Arnold forced upon Rugby that the vilest of sins — the vilest of all sins — is to peach to the head master! That's me, sir. Other men get over their schooling. I never have. I remain adolescent. These things are obsessions with me. Complexes, sir![2]

Not caring to "peach" on Macmaster, who has risen to success by poaching Christopher's calculations, he is superseded by him. Too disdainful to contradict the rumours that make Edith Ethel his mistress and imply that he sells his wife for personal advancement, he finds himself sent to the front line, in his words to Campion, "so that the morals of the troops under your command may not be contaminated by the contemplation of my marital infelicities."[3] One of the Ruling Classes "permanent unless they come personal croppers over a woman, or through over-intelligence or on account of financial disasters," he commits all of these crimes.

---

1. A Man Could Stand Up (London, 1948), pp.83-5.
2. No More Parades (London, 1948), p.231.
3. Ibid., p.231.

Made a pariah by a ruling class which he sees as corrupt, malicious and luxurious, in which an officer victimises a subordinate or a banker does not honour a client's cheques because he covets his wife, Christopher retreats first into the performance of his obscure army duties and later, with Valentine, into the countryside. The war itself, he knows, is only the final symptom of social degeneracy and marks the death of the old order, symbolised in the disbanding ceremonial:

> "The end of the show was to be: the adjutant would stand the battalion at ease: the band would play Land of Hope and Glory, and then the adjutant would say: There will be no more parades ... Don't you see how symbolical it was: the band playing Land of Hope and Glory, and then the adjutant saying There will be no more parades? ... For there won't. There won't there damn well won't ...No more Hope, no more Glory, no more parades for you and me any more. Nor for the country ... Nor for the world, I dare say ... None ... Gone ... No poo, finny! No ... more ... parades!"[1]

In the army, in his relationship with the "other ranks," he is able to rediscover his feudal self in the combination of paternalistic authority and unselfish service. But his class allegiance is weakened by an incident which makes a profound impression on him. One of his men, a Welsh private named Morgan, asks for leave to return home to settle his affairs. Christopher refuses it, knowing that the man's wife is living with a prizefighter who will kill him. Shortly afterwards Morgan is struck by a shell and killed. Christopher holds the dead man

---

1. Ibid., p.19.

in his arms:

> The red viscousness welled across the floor; you sometimes so see fresh water bubbling up in sand. It astonished Tietjens to see that a human body could be so lavish of blood. ... He hoped he would not get his hands all over blood, because blood is very sticky. It makes your fingers stick together impotently. But there might not be any blood in the darkness under the fellow's back where he was putting his hand. There was, however: it was very wet.[1]

The blood is something he never forgets: Morgan becomes to him "Your dead ... yours ... your own. As if joined to your identity by a black cord."[2] And after the nightmare of Sylvia's persecution, the irruption into the hotel bedroom, his arrest and his cross-questioning by Campion, when he feels himself going insane, the memory recurs:

> Panic came over Tietjens. He knew it would be his last panic of that interview. No brain could stand more. Fragments of scenes of fighting, voices, names, went before his eyes and ears. Elaborate problems. ... The whole map of the embattled world ran out in front of him — as large as a field. An embossed map in greenish papier mâché — a ten-acre field of embossed papier mâché: with the blood of O_3Nine Morgan blurring luminously over it.[3]

His participation in Morgan's death and his unadmitted acceptance of guilt for it take Christopher one step nearer alienation from his own people.

But it is Sylvia who brings about his final alienation. In her resentment of her virtues, in

---

1. Ibid., p.20
2. Ibid.,p.78
3. Ibid., p.233

her persecution of him and in her coldly passionate desire to possess him and reduce him to her own level, she represents to him his own degenerate class. He does not dislike her for having deceived him into marriage: in his eyes that is part of the war between men and women. In a way he respects her, "for sheer efficiency in killing ... If you wanted something killed you'd go to Sylvia Tietjens in the sure faith that she would kill it: emotion, hope, ideal: kill it quick and sure."[1] But he cannot forgive her for carrying on her sexual feud with him in public. Her indiscretions are to him like scenes made before servants. When the lower classes become accustomed to such scenes, he feels, aristocracy loses its sanctity and thereby its right to power. He therefore resigns his birthright, seeking his personal salvation elsewhere, in "quiet fields, Anglican sainthood, accuracy of thought."

What binds Christopher and Sylvia together is a marriage which, in view of his notion of honour and her Catholicism, is indissoluble: her agreement to divorce him in Last Post is the measure of her not entirely artistically convincing defeat. The Tietjens are thus bound as the Ashburnhams were bound. But Sylvia is a very different woman from Leonora Ashburnham. Whereas Leonora was a good though harsh woman driven to moral self-betrayal, Sylvia is a figure of tragedy caught in an overmastering passion and riding herself to destruction:

---

1. Some Do Not, p.139.

significantly, she is usually thought of in connection with horses: she reminds Christopher of a thoroughbred "as full of blood and as cruel as the usual degenerate Derby winner."[1] Mark's final words on her are, "Poor bitch! Poor bitch! The riding had done it."[2] She is at heart lonely: she is isolated by her Catholicism, her mother is remote and tired, and she gropes towards a father in the Irish priest Consett, whom she imagines sanctified after his execution for treason. Compared with Christopher, her lovers bore her, and she is unfaithful only to maintain her self-assurance. The Tietjens family does not accept her, though her son will inherit the estate. Her assaults on Christopher are partly an attempt at forcing "that greyish lump"[3] to recognize her existence. Her passion for him is cold and destructive, but in its very intensity she recognises love; as she ironically admits to one of her lovers, if Christopher "would throw his handkerchief to me, I would follow him round the world in my shift."[4] But she dare not face her love. In one scene Christopher mentions casually that

> "I've worried out some of the words of that song. It runs:
>
> 'Somewhere or other there must surely be
> The face not seen: the voice not heard ... '
>
> Probably it's 'the voice not ever heard' to make up the metre. ... I don't know the writer's name. But I hope I'll worry it all out during the day."
>
> Sylvia had gone absolutely white.

---

1. Some Do Not (London, 1948), p.132.
2. Last Post (London,1948), p.199.
3. Some Do Not, p.177.
4. No More Parades, p.111.

> "Don't!" she said. "Oh ... don't." She added coldly: "Don't take the trouble," and wiped her tiny handkerchief across her lips as Tietjens went away.
>
> She had heard the song at a charity concert and had cried as she heard it. She had read, afterwards, the words in the programme and had almost cried again. But she had lost the programme and had never come across the words again. The echo of them remained with her like something terrible and alluring: like a knife she would some day take out and with which she would stab herself.[1]

Related to Sylvia in her sexual depravity is Mrs. Duchemin. Sylvia has recurrent fantasies connected with the night of her seduction by Drake, possibly the father of her child:

> She had only involuntarily to think of that night and she would stop dead, speaking or walking, drive her nails into her palms and groan slightly . ... She had to invent a chronic stitch in her heart to account for this groan, which ended in a mumble and seemed to herself to degrade her. ...
>
> The miserable memory would come, ghost-like, at any time, anywhere. She would see Drake's face, dark against the white things; she would feel the thin night-gown ripping off her shoulder; but most of all she would seem, in darkness that excluded the light of any room in which she might be, to be transfused by the mental agony that there she had felt: the longing for the brute who had mangled her: the dreadful pain of the mind. ... She had, nevertheless, longing, but she knew it was longing merely to experience again that dreadful feeling. And not with Drake.[2]

About Mrs. Duchemin there is an atmosphere of uncleanness. She begins her affair with Macmaster in Pre-Raphaelite "passion and mournfulness amongst dim objects half seen."[3] But she later shocks Valentine by asking her how to get

---

1. Some Do Not, p.214.
2. Ibid., p.161.
3. Ibid., p.114.

rid of a baby and by indulging in a furious outburst of Billingsgate against her lover. To Valentine

> Mrs. Duchemin had revealed the fact that her circumspect, continent and suavely aesthetic personality was doubled by another at least as coarse as, and infinitely more incisive in expression than, that of the drunken cook. The language that she had used about her lover — calling him always 'that oaf" or "that beast"! — had seemed literally to pain the girl internally, as if it had caused so many fallings away of internal supports at each two or three words. ...
>
> And she had never heard what had become of Mrs. Duchemin's baby. Next day Mrs. Duchemin had been as suave, as circumspect and as collected as ever. Never a word more had passed between them on the subject. This left in Valentine Wannop's mind a dark patch — as it were of murder — at which she must never look.[1]

As Macmaster, obsequious and discreet, and his wife rise, Christopher and Valentine fall. Christopher realises that by going off to live with the daughter of his father's closest friend he is betraying his social code; but since society has disintegrated its members must find their salvation individually. Hell, for Christopher, consists in mental collapse, as Sylvia realises when, suffering from amnesia, he agonizingly struggles to recall everyday facts. His greatest fear at the front is that the incessant strain of worry about matters at home, together with the relentless noise of bombardment, will cause his insanity: Sylvia's arrival at the front nearly precipitates this. Valentine represents to him salvation from insanity — "she was, in effect, the only person in the world that he wanted

---

1. Ibid., p.280.

to hear speak. Certainly the only person in the world that he wanted to talk to. The only clear intelligence! ... The repose that his mind needed from the crackling of thorns under all the pots of the world."[1] As he realises, "You seduced a young woman in order to be able to finish your talks with her. You could not live with her without seducing her; but that was the by-product."[2] Valentine represents a purity of mind and body: she is a Latinist and a gymnast. Christopher's escape with her to the country is, as the symbolic overtones of Last Post suggest, the escape to a new Eden: their unborn child bears the promise of the new world. As E.V. Walter points out, Christopher is "in many ways ... like the Slavophil narodnik, sensitive to social anxiety and apocalyptic dread... "[3]

In its extensive use of symbolism Last Post stands apart from the other three books. Ford, as mentioned before, expressed in 1930 a wish that the book be excluded from the cycle; and even in the dedicatory letter, dated October 13, 1927, to Isabel Paterson, writer for the New York Herald Tribune literary supplement, he says somewhat petulantly that "But for you, this book would only nebularly have existed ... Save ... for your stern, contemptuous and almost virulent insistence on knowing 'what became of Tietjens' I should never have conducted this

---

1. A Man Could Stand Up, p.128.
2. Ibid., p.156.
3. "The Political Sense of Ford Madox Ford," New Republic, Mar.26,1956.

chronicle to the stage it has now reached." And Isabel Paterson herself wrote a smug little article dated November 21, 1926, in which she said that Ford "was pleasantly indulgent to our demand for further particulars concerning the ultimate fate of Christopher Tietjens ... All will be revealed in two or three years, when the fourth volume appears."[1] These statements have led Morton Dauwen Zabel to censure Ford's "self-esteem which ... could tempt disaster for the Tietjens chronicle by yielding to a New York lady-editor's plea for a fourth volume."[2] This criticism, frequently made, ignores the dedicatory letters to the second and third volumes. That to No More Parades, dated May 25, 1925, states that "Some Do Not ... showed you the Tory at home during war-time; this shows you the Tory going up the line. If I am vouchsafed health and intelligence for long enough I propose to show you the same man in the line and in the process of being reconstructed." That to A Man Could Stand Up, dated May 18, 1926, describes the book as "the third and penultimate of the series. As Isabel Paterson's article begins, "And so at last we met Ford Madox Ford," it is obvious that she had little to do with the plan for the fourth volume. What seems the most likely explanation is that Ford lost interest in the fourth part before completing A Man Could Stand Up: it is interesting to note that

---

1. "Turns with a Bookworm," New York Herald Tribune Books, Nov.21,1926.
2. Craft and Character in Modern Fiction (London, 1957), p.255.

A Man Could Stand Up is dated as having been completed on July 21, 1926, two months before the dedicatory letter. Violet Hunt had already observed that "as far as his books, Joseph Leopold [Ford] knew perfectly well the place, as it were, where they broke their backs, where he lost touch with his idea or went off at a tangent and began to hurry up because he was tired of it;"[1] and the action of Last Post is largely a matter of tying up loose ends. Sylvia's son is noticed to have Christopher's habit of goggling and so becomes Christopher's child; it is decided that Christopher's father did not after all commit suicide; and although the American tenant has chopped down Groby Great Tree, she has thereby relieved the Tietjens family of its curse. Sylvia leaves off persecuting Christopher. Mark delivers his prophecy of the rebirth of the world and dies:

> "Now I must speak," Mark said.
>
> He said:
>
> "Did ye ever hear tell o' t' Yorkshireman ... On Mount Ara ... Ara ... "
>
> He had not spoken for so long. His tongue appeared to fill his mouth; his mouth to be twisted to one side. It was growing dark. He said:
>
> "Put your ear close to my mouth. ..." She cried out. He whispered:
>
> "'Twas the mid o' the night and the barnies grat
> And the mither beneath the maild heard that. ..'
>
> An old song. My nurse sang it. ... Never thou let thy child weep for thy sharp tongue to thy good man. ... A good man! Groby Great Tree is down. ..." He said: "Hold my hand!"
>
> She inserted her hand beneath the sheet and his hand closed on hers. Then it relaxed.[2]

---

1. The Flurried Years, p.243.
2. Last Post, pp.205-6.

Christopher escapes being tied up with the rest only by being removed to an auction sale.

The failure of Last Post to convince at any but a symbolic level, the arbitrariness of its message of promise, point to the flaw in the major design of Parade's End, whether read as trilogy or as tetralogy. Christopher can at the front yearn for "quiet fields, Anglican sainthood, accuracy of thought," but Ford is not capable of presenting this ideal realised: it is through knowledge of his limitations that he does not present Christopher in Last Post: we do not see him "in process of being reconstructed" because such reconstruction is to Ford artistically unrealisable. Read as a trilogy, Parade's End describes the death of nineteenth-century England and promises only a ruined world to wake to after Armistice Day; read as a tetralogy it carries an unconvincing message of hope. Its final position is no less optimistic than that of The Good Soldier, perhaps more courageous but perhaps slightly less honest.

At the other extreme from reading Parade's End as a tetralogy stands Meixner, who claims that "the Tietjens cycle as a whole will not stand importantly to Ford's credit as a novelist. The true achievement of the Tietjens creations is the first volume, Some Do Not."[1] He supports his claim by citing Ford's

---

1. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.221.

own hints about the quality of his writing deteriorating when, after finishing Some Do Not, writer's cramp forced him to use a typewriter,[1] and by noting weaknesses in Ford's use of the interior monologue in the later volumes[2] — words are put into a character's mind in order to explain earlier happenings, thoughts are repeated in the minds of different characters, mannerisms of phrasing are used indifferently. Some of these observations are just, but against them must be set the fact that Ford does not use the interior monologue as frequently in Some Do Not as in the later novels, as Some Do Not is largely expository in function. Meixner continues to argue that deterioration is basically due to two events which "crucially undermined Ford's self-confidence"[3] — Jessie Conrad's letter to the Times Literary Supplement condemning Ford's Joseph Conrad, and Violet Hunt's malicious attack on him in The Flurried Years (1926).[4]

---

1. It Was the Nightingale, pp.218-222.
2. "Interior monologue" is here distinct from "stream of consciousness". See John McCormick, Catastrophe and Imagination, p.60, where he expounds the difference between these two terms using Robert Humphrey's definitions: "In stream-of-consciousness proper, the novelist places first emphasis on the exploration of 'pre-speech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily, of revealing the psychic beings of his characters.' The novelist is concerned not with formulated thought but with the margins of thought. Interior monologue, direct or indirect, is most frequently confused with stream-of-consciousness ...: interior monologue, indirect when the author guides us through the character's mind, direct when the author effaces himself, is 'the technique ... for representing the psychic content and processes of character, partly or entirely unuttered, just as these processes exist at various levels of conscious control before they are formulated for deliberate speech."
3. Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.230.
4. Cassell (Ford Madox Ford, p.276, note 6) prints an unpublished letter from Violet Hunt admitting that she thought Ford drew her in Sylvia.

Meixner appears to favour the more traditional narrative method of Some Do Not — a method which can produce as direct an authorial intrusion as the following:

> It has been remarked that the peculiarly English habit of self-suppression in matters of emotion puts the Englishman at a great disadvantage in moments of unusual stresses. In the smaller matters of the general run of life he will be impeccable and not to be moved; but in sudden confrontations of anything but physical dangers he is apt — he is, indeed, almost certain — to go to pieces very badly. This, at least, was the view of Christopher Tietjens, and he very much dreaded his interview with Lord Port Scatho — because he feared that he must be near breaking point.[1]

As Meixner's criticisms (though when looked at individually seem to be niggling) are basically strictures on Ford's use of the interior monologue, it is as well to examine Ford's technique of narration in the cycle.

Though the cycle covers a period of ten years, the total time presented in narrative is very short. Some Do Not covers periods of two days and three hours, No More Parades about three days, A Man Could Stand Up Armistice (with a flashback to a few hours of Christopher's life in the trenches) and Last Post a few hours. Working through one of his characters from within one of these short time-spaces, Ford ranges backward and forward in time, using the time-shift, to give the narrative the breadth that "the public events of a decade" require. While the time-shift is thus a means of arranging events to form the overall pattern of the novel, the interior

---

1. Some Do Not, pp.190-1.

monologue is a reflection of the time-shift on the scale of the character through whom the story is narrated, and arranges events in the pattern of their meaning for the narrator. Ford had used the time-shift extensively in his earlier novels; the wide use of the interior monologue in Parade's End is, however, a new feature.[1] This may have been due to the vogue for Joyce, whom Ford admired, but this explanation seems unlikely, since Parade's End shows little Joycean influence. Ford's method is closer to that of James, of which it is a logical development:[2] where James uses a central intelligence thinking associatively, Ford uses either an unseen narrator or one of his characters thinking or talking associatively. The unseen narrator presents the material in a way which is apparently rambling but is really only a rearrangement from chronological order to the design of the novel. He presents elements from the present, which are taken up by the characters either in dialogue or associatively in thought. Exposition is carried out mainly by this third-person narrator, speaking in the traditionally omniscient manner ("The two young men — they were of the English public official class — sat in the perfectly appointed railway carriage"[3]): this authorial exposition, though causing a certain remoteness between reader and character, is necessitated by the large and socially representative group of characters

---

1. Dowell's narrative in The Good Soldier differs from the interior monologue of Parade's End in that, being ostensibly written by Dowell, it is more consciously "literary".
2. It is interesting to note that Ford claims that in 1916 "I lost myself in working out an imaginary war novel on the lines of What Maisie Knew." It Was the Nightingale, p.144.
3. Some Do Not, p.11.

all having to be "justified;" it disappears almost wholly after Some Do Not, and exposition is effected through the consciousness of one or other of the characters, usually Christopher, Sylvia, Valentine or Mark.

The result of this disrupting of chronology on every level is that events in themselves have very little dramatic significance: their entire significance rests in their impact on the consciousness viewing them. This is of course basic to Impressionism, and is reflected in the fact that the most powerful scene of action in A Man Could Stand Up, in which Christopher is thrown over and buried by mud hurled up by an exploding shell, is narrated in the same way as is the explosion on board the Judaea in Conrad's "Youth":

> ... There was so much noise that it seemed to grow dark. It was mental darkness. You could not think. A Dark Age! The earth moved.
>
> He was looking at Aranjuez from a considerable height. He was enjoying a considerable view. Aranjuez's face had a rapt expression — like that of a man composing poetry. Long dollops of liquid mud surrounded them in the air. Like black pancakes being tossed. He thought: "Thank God I did not write to her. We are being blown up!" The earth turned like a weary hippopotamus. It settled down slowly over the face of Lance-Corporal Duckett who lay on his side, and went on in a slow wave.
>
> It was slow, slow, slow ... like a slowed down movie. The earth manoeuvred for an infinite time. He remained suspended in space. As if he were suspended as he had wanted to be in front of that cockscomb in whitewash. Coincidence!
>
> The earth sucked slowly and composedly at his feet.
>
> It assimilated his calves, his thighs. It

> imprisoned him above the waist. His arms being free, he resembled a man in a lifebuoy. The earth moved him slowly. It was solidish.
>
> Below him, down a mound, the face of the little Aranjuez, brown, with immense black eyes in bluish whites, looked at him. Out of viscous mud. A head on a charger! He could see the imploring lips form the words: "Save me, Captain!" He said: "I've got to save myself first!" He could not hear his own words. The noise was incredible.[1]

The loss of dramatic tension caused by disruption of chronological sequence is compensated for by progression d'effet, which is developed by juxtaposing images, words and ideas to create psychological tension. This occurs on both large and small scales, within single scenes and over the whole cycle. In this light the entire movement of the cycle can be seen as reaching its climax in the immense Armistice Night celebration that closes A Man Could Stand Up, while Last Post (if included) can be read as a meditative coda saved from anticlimax by a shift in narrative point of view from Christopher to Mark.[2] The smaller progressive blocks that constitute the whole are linked by recurrent motifs, of which the titles of the books are the best examples.

Meixner's objections, outlined above, to the last three books can thus be seen as based on a misunderstanding of the rôle of Some Do Not in the cycle and perhaps on a preference for traditional authorial presentation rather than the more convoluted presentation

---

1. A Man Could Stand Up, p.165.
2. Ford himself justifies the musical analogy — after the climax, he says, "you might have what in music is called your Coda." Return to Yesterday, p.210.

resulting from the use of the interior monologue at all levels. He ignores the classic compactness the method gives to No More Parades and the intricate structure it allows A Man Could Stand Up: the failure of Last Post to create conviction is more a matter of Ford's apparent determination to create an at least hopeful ending than of technical shortcomings.

The vast and complex scheme Ford created for his cycle is, however, entirely subservient to the overall conception, which requires such varied tasks as the recreation of a social milieu, the creation in depth of the members of the basic triangle, and an impression of the totality of the war. These requirements of panoramic breadth and psychological depth are met through the use of techniques resting upon the basic artistic method of juxtaposition, upon which "the whole fabric of modern art depends."[1] The meaning of an event is its meaning to an observer; and the meaning of the decade which is the subject matter of the cycle is ultimately its meaning to Christopher Tietjens: "How would this look in the eyes of X ... — already dead, along with all English Tories?"

Traditional England is dead; "what chance had quiet fields, Anglican sainthood, accuracy of thought, heavy-leaved, timbered hedgerows, slowly creeping

---

1. The March of Literature, p.804.

plough-lands moving up the slopes?" Parade's End is the swan-song of this world, and the elegiac note it strikes is its most profound, even if it is, in the end, a little romantic, a little soft, backward-looking in spite of its technical modernism. In essence it shares an outlook with The Good Soldier; and because it is not as pure or as honest a novel, it must finally be placed below The Good Soldier. Its great achievement is to have caught and held the spirit of the world that was ending. As Hugh Kenner writes,

> The point at which a writer defines something, whether one moral term — "wise passiveness" — or an entire civilization — Cummings' Eimi — is the point at which he drives his peg into the cliff. That was the work Ford undertook for the values of gentlemanly England. ... [His] felt and realised sense of a flexible, scrupulous order cannot be illustrated by quotation ... Progression d'effet — the reliance of every word on all the words that have come before — has hardly been carried so far in English. A scrupulous lexicography working by the exact reproductions of the tones of numerous speaking voices invests the numb counters of "right," "wrong," "honour" and "gentleman" with the context of sensitive values informing the best minds of Edwardian England. ... To have registered a code in which "admirable" denotes a definite, complex congeries of values is a technical feat sufficiently astonishing.[1]

A Little Less than Gods

A few months after completing Last Post, Ford set about "a straight narrative novel about the execution

---

1. "Remember that I have Remembered," Hudson Review, Winter, 1951.

of Ney — to stretch my arms a little!"[1] Ford had picked up the idea for the novel on his first visit to the United States in 1906: an old lady had told him that Marshal Ney had not been executed, but had escaped to New Orleans. He had recounted the story to Conrad, who had been "enormously seized with it as a subject."[2] Their projected collaboration was never begun. At the time of his death in 1924, Conrad was working on a long Napoleonic novel, Suspense, but this was to have ended with Napoleon's departure from Elba.[3] As Ford's "straight narrative novel," A Little Less than Gods (1928) opens on Elba shortly before Napoleon's departure, it is in a way a continuation of Suspense, but from the dissimilarity of the two novels it is obvious that Jessie Conrad's veiled charges that Ford had poached plot material[4] are unfounded. Conrad had himself in 1921 outlined the plot of Suspense to Ford and ended with the remark, "We can't possibly clash."[5] The root of Mrs. Conrad's displeasure seems to have been the fear that the theme of incest in A Little Less than Gods might be imputed to Conrad; this fear becomes justifiable in the light of Ford's remarks about Conrad's tale The Sisters,

---

1. Letter to Percival Hinton dated Feb.13,1928, quoted by Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.245.
2. Return to Yesterday, p.199.
3. See letter from Conrad to Ford dated Dec.15,1921, in Keating's A Conrad Memorial Library, p.349.
4. See Joseph Conrad and His Circle (London, 1935), p.221.
5. See note (3) above.

also unfinished:

> Incest as a subject seemed somehow predestined for treatment by Joseph Conrad. In Poland he had been brought into contact with a number of tragico-romantic instances of unconscious unions that were within the limits of Canon Law. And, curiously enough, The Inheritors, the first of our collaborations to be published, has a faint and fantastic suggestion of — unrequited — love between brother and sister. It was as much as anything because of this that Conrad fiercely — almost fanatically — insisted on collaborating in this book and interrupting the course of Romance upon which we had already been labouring for several years.
>
> The Sisters was an early try at the same thing ...[1]

The theme of incest is, however, so basic to A Little Less than Gods that it is difficult to imagine that it does not belong to the original conception.

The relationship which nearly becomes incestuous is that between Hélène de Frèjus, member of Napoleon's little court on Elba and wife of an international banker who is "poor man, no man,"[2] and George Feilding, an honourable, impetuous but rather stupid young Englishman who worships Napoleon and follows him about on parole during the Hundred Days. Hélène has never wished to be unfaithful to her husband, but she is shaken out of her retreat by a passion for Feilding which she fears but cannot resist. She tells her husband that she is leaving him; but when he, with

---

1. Introduction to The Sisters (New York, 1928), p.5. The Sisters is usually taken as a preliminary sketch for The Arrow of Gold; it is interesting to note that Ford claimed that Conrad told him these works had no connection. (See Ford, letter to the editor, Bookman (N.Y.), Oct.,1928).
2. A Little Less than Gods (London, 1928), p.96.

cynical bravery, allows himself after Waterloo to be arrested in place of Marshal Ney, whom he resembles, she delays giving herself to Feilding. The agony of unrequited passion becomes too intense, however, and after Feilding has been disgraced by a military court she and he plan to leave for America. At the last minute she is stopped by Feilding's father, who tells her that she is his daughter. Her husband dies in Ney's place, and in a climactic final scene she tells Feilding the truth and they tear themselves apart.

Paralleling this discovery of the lovers is their growing disillusionment in the noble figures they had once worshipped or respected — Napoleon, Ney, Czar Alexander, Wellington. They learn that war is not a matter of heroics, that destinies of nations are in reality controlled by bankers like Frèjus or men like Assheton Smith, "richest commoner in the world," that the victory of Wellington, with the wealth of England behind him, had been inevitable. Marshal Ney escapes dressed in his wife's clothes while Frèjus dies. In the end, Hélène finds,

> " ... We are all of us puppets in the game of this nabob [Assheton Smith], whose money is his sole means of illustriousness and whose heart is as dry and thin as last year's leaf!"
>
> "Why," Gatti answered, "are we not all in the end the puppets of the Gods?"
>
> "Ay, but the men at whose hands we suffer are a little less than Gods!" she answered bitterly.[1]

---

1. Ibid., p.255.

This disenchanted view of nineteenth-century Great Men and of history as a succession of pitched battles is reinforced by the drastic step Ford takes in omitting description of Waterloo. The omission allows him to make his indirect comment on the true nature of power while avoiding a specious climax in the middle of the novel and maintaining a steady progression d'effet leading to the separation of Feilding and Hélène. Their last interview in the Luxembourg Gardens a few minutes after the death of Frèjus thus contains the only eyewitness description of the battle, Hélène's memory of the troops drawing up, and as part of an irrecoverable past this is linked with her unattainable dream of life with Feilding:

> "There was not a sound, you remember," she said. "You said the very fowls of the air forgot their courtship in the boughs." They had stood on the edge of the forest knowing nothing of what was to come — on the edge of the forest very close to the road. Hand in hand in their breathlessness. The thunder of guns might burst from among the trees, or aligned horse or sullenly progressing lines of men in dark blue. One's heart became a paint
>
> Then there had come a jingle ... a little, little jingle from a distance behind. A roll of wheels: it went so quick, so quick.
>
> "Oh friend, friend, do you not see them still? Is it in truth all gone? That cannot be." She gripped his hand closely, closely. ... "A small clatter of hoofs. A carriage and a few hussars. And He and Bertrand and Druot. ... And down the hill with the rapidity of thought ... Don't you remember? ... The hussars stayed by us ... They were all alone under the eyes of a hundred thousand men arrayed to destroy them ... And the lines breaking up ... And the cries coming to us ... And now ... All gone. All that glory. All

> those demi-Gods!"
>
> His arms gripped her furiously; he was pouring kisses on her lips, her lids, her brows, her lips again. Bliss came down upon him. With his right hand behind her head, he forced her lips against his. They responded. Her cheeks were wet with tears. She lay in his arms ...
>
> And then ... It was unbelievable the force she exerted to push herself from him. She stood, her skirt all around on the ground, her hat pushed back, her hair dishevelled beneath the brim. Her eyes blazed at him as if they, too, possessed an electric force of repulsion. She stood, her mouth half open, panting for breath.
>
> "What have you done? What have you done?" she cried out. "Accursed, accursed, accursed that you are ... "
>
> The knowledge came to him hardly with her words; it had forced itself into him from her gestures and her eyes ... She had gone, wavering away, supporting herself by tree after tree before he again looked at the place where she had been.[1]

In its articulation of the anti-heroic theme of money as power, A Little Less than Gods is specifically post-War. Nevertheless, it marks a surprising return to the historical novel by Ford after a break of fifteen years. Intended as a "straight narrative novel," its narrative is "straight" (and rather tedious) until Napoleon's departure from Elba; thereafter Ford changes his method radically, introducing the time-shift extensively. The result is a growth of tension in the final two-thirds of the book that raises it to the level of the best of the Katharine Howard trilogy. In its hectic excitement it is somewhat larger than life, but it shows at his best Ford the romantic in full cry.

---

1. Ibid., pp.296-7.

Meanwhile, Ford's Paris ménage was breaking up. He had had an affair with the writer Jean Rhys (who later maliciously depicted him in two of her novels[1]), and after one of his trips to New York, in Goldring's words, "formed a sentimental attachment to an American lady whom he proposed to visit every year."[2] He and Stella Bowen separated early in 1928. Shortly afterwards he met and fell in love with the young Polish-American painter Janice Biala,[3] who became the companion of his last years.

An end was put to the easy life in France by the Wall Street slump, which "hit Ford heavily,"[4] and he turned more and more to the United States as the source of his income. He had visited New York every winter from 1926 to 1930 and had been lionized in literary society: as Goldring observes, "It was Ford's misfortune, after losing the English Review, ... that he failed to make lasting contact with the English minority which might have given him the encouragement he required. With the American minority, on the other hand, helped by a number of enthusiastic friends and aided rather than hindered by his capacity for self-dramatisation, his success, while it lasted, was everything that he could have desired. The

---

1. As Hugh Heidler in Postures (London, 1928) and as Mackenzie in After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie (London, 1931).
2. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.250.
3. Stella Bowen, Drawn from Life, p.190.
4. Douglas Goldring, The Nineteen-Twenties (London, 1945), p.216.

literary minority in the United States was much larger numerically (though not so in proportion to the population) than that of Great Britain. It was also much richer, so that the intelligent American bought what his equivalent in England only borrowed."[1] In his last period, then, Ford oriented himself to a principally American reading public.

---

1. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.243.

VII

LAST YEARS: 1929-1939

The bias in Ford's writings towards an American public can already be seen in the three volumes he published in New York in 1927 — *New Poems* (originally to have been called *New York Poems*[1]), *New York is Not America*, impressions of New York, and *New York Essays*, a slight collection of essays on food, national characteristics and American writers. *Last Post* was published in the United States before appearing in Britain. Ford did not expect to find an English publisher for *The English Novel*, published in Philadelphia in 1929;[2] and this short history, *Joseph Conrad* excepted Ford's most valuable piece of critical writing, having traced the course of the development of the novel "from Petronius Arbiter to ... Lope de Vega to ... Defoe and Richardson to ... Diderot, Stendhal and Flaubert — with side glances at ... Thackeray and Dickens and ... Turgenev, Dostoievsky and Tchekhov — and back again to ... Conrad, James and Crane," leaves the novel "with a bump and with

---

1. See Harvey, *Ford Madox Ford*, p.67
2. See "Author's Apology" to Hugh Walpole, who found an English publisher for the book, in the English edition (London,1930).

some regret at the gateway to the Middle-West — say at about Altoona. For it is there that the novel, throughout the Ages the poor Cinderella of the Arts, is nowadays erecting itself into the sole guide and monitor of the world."[1] Ford's third volume of reminiscences, Return to Yesterday (1931), though covering the years 1894 to 1914, is addressed to the American rather than the English reader."[2] The same is true of the fourth volume, It Was the Nightingale (1933), covering the years from 1918. Collected Poems (1936) was published in the United States only.

The four novels Ford wrote in the last decade of his life show a similar turning to American themes and settings. But it would be unfair to ascribe this only to courtship of an American public: Ford's picture of America is not flattering. His basic reason seems rather to have been to include America in the broadening historical-cultural world he was portraying. This intention comes out most clearly in his semi-didactic work Great Trade Route (1937), in which he envisages a world with free cultural and commercial intercourse carried on along the old trading routes — roughly along the fortieth parallel.

---

1. The English Novel (London, 1930), p.23.
2. See letter dated Feb.17,1931, from Victor Gollancz, English publisher of Return to Yesterday, to Ford about the manuscript: "It would be necessary, of course, to re-write the thing slightly here and there for the English market, as at present it is addressed to Americans." Quoted by Harvey, Ford Madox Ford, p.75.

And since the progress of Ford's interests in the 'thirties, despite the strange and beautiful novels The Rash Act (1933) and Henry for Hugh (1934), is towards his three discourses Provence (1935),[1] Great Trade Route and (to a slighter extent) The March of Literature (1938), it is as well to examine these before turning to his fiction. They show Ford in a radically changed rôle from that in his earlier sociological essays England and the English, in which he had appeared as analyst of society. He now prescribes remedies for the illnesses of society; and The Rash Act and Henry for Hugh show a similar shift away from analysis to the creation of a myth whereby mankind can live, a shift prefigured in No Enemy and Last Post.

Parade's End had shown the world as it ended in 1914. England had betrayed the cause of peace by compromising with Germany. Nordic tyranny had now taken over the world in the shape of business power and scientific weapons.

> Science has done more than anything — more than the Churches themselves — to break the faith in its imperial destinies, of humanity. ... For a generation before 1914 we were deafened by assertions of the benign services that Science would render to humanity ... and then when came the

---

1. Provence is in some details anticipated in A Mirror to France, a book of essays on French culture Ford published in 1926.

> day of humanity on its trial, just as the Albigenses saw that the first use to which Christianity was put was their extermination, so the first use of Science in the mass was to put an end to infinite millions of human lives.
>
> ... Science at once evolves the principles of eugenics, preserves the lives of infinite millions of the mentally and physically defective and enables millions of men to move about the world carrying cans of explosives and bacteria and other cans containing inferior, scientifically preserved foods, and so to destroy other millions of their fellows. In the meantime, with those same preserved, pasteurized, refrigerated, chemicalized and ersatz foods it lowers the vital and intellectual forces of whole continents and at the same time throws into hopeless confusion the markets of the universe.[1]

The Churches had condemned themselves by condoning the War —

> for the appalled soldiery saw all the churches of the world plunge into that hellish struggle with the enthusiasm of school boys at a rat hunt. Not a pulpit thundered that if you slay your fellow man your forehead will bear the brand of Cain. Great lights of the churches plunged into the whirlpool itself — and not armed only with maces, either.[2]

"Faith, in short, died after the War — every sort of Faith and it is time to get back to life."[3]

The first use to which the Albigensians saw Christianity put was to destroy them; and Ford makes a specific analogy between Albigensian indifferentism and modern despair: "The whole Western world once the war was finished plunged into a sort of Albigensism." And "the proper man to-day — the man of some culture

---

1. Provence (London, 1935), pp.334-5.
2. Ibid., p.298.
3. Ibid., p.308.

and reflection" has a religion, in fact,

> like that of the gentle people who were destroyed at the battle of Mount Muret ... rather one of negation than of any positiveness at all. It is a product of doubt coming after immense public catastrophe in which, as he sees it, all his leaders have been found wanting — of a doubt and languor that distinguish at once the populations of London as of New York.[1]

Rejecting Christianity, Ford also rejects Communism as a salvation, because it is basically industrial: "If Lenin had preferred to establish agricultural rather than industrial communities I should have been wholeheartedly in favour of them."[2] The Victorian ideals of courage, endurance and thrift are similarly rejected, for they are "virtue-vices ... all devoted to training us for acquisition." Paradoxically, what mankind needs is "degeneracy. We must become lazy, shiftless, languid, disloyal, cowardly, unadventurous, undisciplined."

> For it is certain that I think that the only things that can save the world are a certain Mediterranean brand of slackening off in every department of life — a slackening off in everything from conscious rectitude and its heathen sense of acquisitiveness to the sense of efficiency and the hours of labour worked. So that it would be dreadful if at the end of great labours and my wanderings I should find myself liking the New England conscience or States which at present seem to me to be the most detestable things in the world and the source of all our present evils.[3]

---

1. Provence, pp.298-300.
2. Ibid., p.304.
3. Great Trade Route (London, 1937), pp.400,399,194.

What Ford proposes is to restore civilized commerce, avoiding the Nordic region of darkness and swamps, along the Great Trade Route, which "has been the main civilizing factor of the world since the days when the merchant was sacred."[1] Each country will produce only what it is best fitted to produce, and goods will circulate freely round the world, preferably by barter. This will abolish wars, the professional politician will disappear, and people will be able to "come out of their gas-filled cellars and start again on our weary task of rebuilding our civilizations."[2]

The civilization that is rebuilt will be in the form of small communities, and the basis of the community will be the small producer, "the man who with a certain knowledge crafts can set his hands to most of the kinds of work that go to the maintenance of humble existences, ... but /who/ above all ... can produce ... good food according to the seasons ... in sufficiency to keep his household supplied independent of the flux of currencies and the tides of world supplies — and to have a surplus for his neighbours."[3]

The soldier and the priest will be replaced by the trader, who will become the leader in a cult of civilized pleasure; and the central image of this

---

1. Provence, p.232.
2. Great Trade Route, p.305.
3. Ibid., p.170.

pleasure and disciplined joy is the dance. The old traders

> carried with them ivory, apes, peacocks, perfumes; and perhaps more than anything they evangelised with the dance. For it was not their younger sons, dipsomaniacs, criminals and the degenerate that [the people of the great civilizations of the Road] sent to those people to stay with them but their gravest and most erudite dancers, who were their priests. This cult was one of joy — and rhythm.[1]

The image of the dance underlies Ford's civilization, and is personified in the Boy of Antibes:

> Of all the beautiful and mysterious motives and emotions that go to make up the frame of mind that is Provence the most beautiful, moving and mysterious is that of the Northern Boy of Antibes. The boy danced and gave pleasure, died two thousand years ago and his memorial tablet set into the walls of Antibes which is Antipolis of the Greeks sets forth these salient facts of his life and portrays in the lasting stone the little bag in which he used to make his collections.[2]

The Boy of Antibes becomes the symbol of spiritual regeneration in The Rash Act and Henry for Hugh; but before we can reach that earthly Paradise we must go through the Inferno of When the Wicked Man.

When the Wicked Man

Set as a satire on modern business methods and at first sight close to Mr. Fleight, When the Wicked

---

1. Great Trade Route, p.118.
2. Provence, p.49.

Man (1931) is at another level a harsh study of modern self-alienation and religious and cultural barbarism. The "wicked man" is Joe Notterdam, middle-aged head of a flourishing New York publishing house. Born in Dorset, he had become a sailor, deserted from his ship and, in the company of the Dutch-born Bill Kratch, roamed the American continent marauding and plundering and occasionally doing a few days' work. Kratch and he now control the publishing house; their partnership, however, is based on competition and antagonism, reflected in the fact that Kratch is secretly carrying on an affair with Notterdam's Scottish wife Elspeth and is the father of Notterdam's children.

Apparently rich and succesful, Notterdam is in reality continually plunged into alcoholic gloom by the coldness of his wife. While drunk he signs a lifetime contract to publish the works of a novelist named Porter, who comes from Notterdam's own village but is compelled by the state of publishing to live in New York. The following day he accedes to the pleas of Henrietta Felise, secretary to Kratch, who is seriously ill, and repudiates the contract. He hereby wins Henrietta for himself, but Porter commits suicide. Guilt begins to trouble Notterdam's mind, and he is haunted by visions of his doppelgänger. He is pursued by Porter's fiery half-breed widow, whom he fears and desires; his guilt is intensified

by his knowledge that he has had fantasies about her, "black as night — and very likely hot as hell and sweet as sin under certain circumstances,"[1] and had intended to try to buy her from Porter.

Notterdam hopes to attain peace through the young and innocent Henrietta; but his wife, believing he is having an affair with Lola Porter, who has established herself in the Notterdam home, refuses to divorce him. In desperation he goes to Kratch, who is living in Paris while undergoing treatment, and bribes him into taking Elspeth. In England he tries to expiate his guilt by arranging a memorial edition of Porter's works, but finds himself followed everywhere by Lola Porter and a sinister shadower, her gangster lover McKeown. Drunk, he tries to rape her in his boyhood home, but he is forestalled by the appearance at the window of McKeown, who fuses with his <u>doppelgänger</u> in his mind. He shoots McKeown. The facts of the story are misinterpreted by the newspapers and he arrives back in New York welcomed as a hero for having saved a beautiful woman from the clutches of a villain. Henrietta is at the quayside to meet him.

In his ruthlessness and superstition, Notterdam is Ford's Nordic barbarian. Like the Huns, he and the

---

1. <u>When the Wicked Man</u> (New York, 1931), p.51.

Dutch Kratch had roamed over the continent and now, by Nordic efficiency, held their own in a corrupt and competitive business world. His superstition takes the form of belief in ghosts and black magic: he believes himself descended from Nostradamus ("Nostradamus and Notre Dame and Notterdam were all the same"[1]), and his feelings of guilt project themselves in his haunting by his doppelgänger. Divided against himself, Notterdam is also rootless: significantly, it is only at his and Porter's birthplace that he kills his doppelgänger. But the whole acquisitive society to which he belongs is seen as without cultural meaning: When the Wicked Man presents a far more powerful statement of the problem of wealth without purpose than the fantastic An English Girl, Ford's first American novel. Perversion of culture is seen at every level, from his work, where he makes fortunes securing monopolies of school textbooks, to his home, an aimless mixture of styles:

> The house being an imitation of a Mexican adobe patio, the dining room had to be Spanish seventeenth century in character. The great reception room was eighteenth century, French; Elspeth's bedroom painfully Nouvel Art, with glass tops to all flat surfaces, blue squares, scarlet angles, turquoise and enamel spatterings. Even the chief bathroom was a hothouse arrangement of alabaster and porphyry.[2]

Through Notterdam's doppelgänger Ford projects

---

1. Ibid., p.326.
2. Ibid., p.110.

his self-alienation. Notterdam remembers as a boy seeing Rossetti's painting "How they met themselves" and reading a story of a man haunted by a doppelgänger whom he shot and in so doing killed himself. As Notterdam's feelings of guilt deepen, his doppelgänger becomes older and more hideous, and after he has seen Porter's corpse the figure merges with that of the sinister McKeown, who represents both Porter's avenger and Notterdam's flail for wanting Lola. Notterdam's action in shooting McKeown, whom he recognizes only as his doppelgänger, thus becomes symbolic of his desire to resolve by magic his problem of self-division, but is also, in the light of the story he remembers reading, a suicidal action:

> He was enraged and determined. ... His other self was a detestable monster: flushed, red-eyed, lecherous, obese, his clothes disordered. You should put a monster like that out of the world he soils.
>
> His gun was out. He said:
>
> "By God, I'm going to kill you. ..." You can't of course kill a supernatural being — but he was going to. ...
>
> ... He felt nevertheless as if he were in a cathedral. Immense pillars went up into shadow. He was Nostradamus who had called up a devil. This was the black mass. This was villainy.[1]

Just as suicide cannot resolve Notterdam's dilemma, so too he is not allowed to expiate through punishment or humiliation: he returns to New York, he receives everything that he does not deserve, and he

---

1. Ibid., p.342.

is back where he started, except that, like Ford's other unwilling hero Fleight, he is sadder and wiser.

In its deliberately ambiguous use of supernatural machinery When the Wicked Man possibly derives from "The Turn of the Screw". But in its use of this machinery to explore the self-division of a wanderer in the waste land it is patently modern. The disturbing power of Ford's exploration depends on the swiftness of the narrative movement achieved through the businesslike Notterdam and contrasting extremely with the apparently rambling and digressive method of The Rash Act and Henry for Hugh; but his fable is weakened at a superficial level by an uneasy use of slang expressions ("It would have taken a lot of booze between yesterday and the morning to drive him clean loco"[1]) and an obvious reluctance to venture out of the world of publishing into the real America. Ford's next two novels are, wisely, set in Provence, Heaven to New York's Hell.

The Rash Act and Henry for Hugh

The Rash Act (1933) and its sequel Henry for Hugh (1934) form a strange tale even more heavily laden with symbolism than Last Post; a failure to understand their symbolic overtones has led to their

---

1. Ibid., p.154.

general critical dismissal.[1] Yet in their evocation of a sensuous Mediterranean mood and in the limpidity of their writing they stand out as Ford's best achievement of the 'thirties and reach a serenity attained by none of his earlier fiction. They hardly deserve their present neglect.

The basis of the plot of the novels is a transference of identity. Henry Martin Aluin Smith, a down-and-out American war veteran roaming about the Riviera, is "one of the génération perdue that the French talked of ... so disturbed in their equilibrium by the distortions of the late war that they had no sense of the value of life."[2] His nihilistic despair leads him to plan suicide. The night before this "rash act",[3] while spending his last sous in a nightclub, he meets an Englishman named Hugh Honckton Allard Smith with whom he had served in the British Army. Head of a thriving automobile concern, the Englishman is in the process of being thrown over by a Swedish actress whom he loves but with whom he cannot sleep because of the agonising headaches he experiences caused by a sabre wound he received during the war. He and the American spend the night talking; the

---

1. John A. Meixner, for example, calls The Rash Act "pointless" and Henry for Hugh "all but unreadable". (Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p.262).
2. The Rash Act, p.48.
3. The Rash Act takes its name from a Times law report dated July 14, 1931, and quoted as an epigraph: "'The rash act,' the coroner said, 'seems to have been inspired by a number of motives, not the least among which was the prevailing dissoluteness and consequent depression that are now world wide.'"

Englishman reveals that he too has planned his suicide for the following day and asks the American, who is almost his double in appearance, to take over his identity for the sake of his firm's shareholders. The American refuses, but the following day his own suicide is forestalled while the Englishman's succeeds. He does, however, suffer a blow to his head which confuses him and makes it impossible for him to refuse the Englishman's identity thrust upon him almost by chance. With the Englishman's identity he also assumes his responsibilities, principally that of looking after a mentally disturbed girl, Jeanne Becquerel, who shares his apartment and his bed; the blow to his head has, however, caused his own impotence. The only person who sees through his impersonation is Eudoxie, a woman he loves for her "hard, clear thoughts,"[1] who runs a beauty shop and sells cocaine because it makes people happy. Eudoxie will not allow him to undeceive Jeanne for fear of what the revelation of the Englishman's death will do to her mind, but she is tortured with jealousy.

Henry for Hugh shows the American, slowly recovering from his injury, living a life full of leisurely enjoyment with both Eudoxie and Jeanne. His main cause for anxiety is a fear that his im-

---

1. The Rash Act (New York, 1933), p.165.

personation will be penetrated by the Englishman's elderly aunt, who comes to visit him. She fails to do so, but the American tells her the truth when she is on her deathbed. She calmly accepts him, going into the family history to prove that he and the Englishman are related, and that in fact he has stronger claims to being head of the family. He accepts the responsibilities of this position, and the novel ends happily with the marriage off of Jeanne and his own discovery of his virility and marriage to Eudoxie.

The symbolic themes of maiming, death, rebirth and the assumption of kingship are obvious; but the overriding symbol of the novels is that of the Boy of Antibes, whose epitaph, "Saltavit. Placuit. Mortuus est," recurs as a leitmotif, and towards whom the American's thoughts obsessively return. At first, thoughts of death lead him to tombstones which lead him to the Boy:

> There was a mural inscription at Antibes, a few miles from where he then stood. It was on the wall of the Roman Theatre — to the memory of a boy dancer who had died young.
>
> "SALTAVIT. PLACUIT. MORTUUS EST."
>
> "He danced. He gave pleasure. He is dead."
>
> It would be nice to have that on one's tombstone. But he never would. That would no doubt make his real epitaph. That he had never given pleasure.[1]

---

1. Ibid., p.33.

But on the wall of Eudoxie's bedroom he finds the motto "Saltavit et placuit," and during his sensuously lazy days of convalescence the image of the Boy repeatedly comes to his mind as he watches Jeanne, boylike herself, moving in the Provençal sunlight. Jeanne, slightly oriental, calm now that she is out of the Englishman's hotel and can give herself to frugal housekeeping, is, like the dancer, absorbed in herself. She does not think, "her eyes worked things into patterns. Without her willing it."[1] "Who can tell the dancer from the dance?" — the American sees her, like the dancer, as life and art in one, "graceful, beautiful and enigmatic."[2] Watching her and Eudoxie, who herself cultivates the beauty and suppleness of her body, he finds his way back to the spirit of self-delight and, reborn to himself, is able to take over the kingship of the dead Englishman.

Henry for Hugh shows the composite H.M.A. Smith in the process of reconstruction where The Rash Act had shown his disintegration, specifically the result of a blow with an Uhlan sabre. As the American takes over the manner of life of the Englishman, he also inherits his past: the cavalryman "in the blue uniform charging down on him on a roan charger was something that he might seem to see at almost any moment of the day. In a sort

---

1. Henry for Hugh (New York, 1934), p.121.
2. Ibid.

of substituted memory."[1] The aftermath of the war has been "life without recognizable landmarks,"[2] psychic disorder and a drift towards spiritual despair, and in its portrayal of this drift The Rash Act is, as Ford claimed it to be, "historic."[3] But its reliance upon coincidence removes the story from realism, just as the appearance of the Aunt — almost a figure out of an Eliot play — come to explain Smith to himself, makes Henry for Hugh, despite its depth of sensuous detail, basically symbolic:

> "The note of one's life must continue to be renunciation ... But the accepting of new burdens, though attended with the trappings of glory, ... is in itself a higher renunciation than the hermit's retirement .."[4]

In accordance with the somewhat indolent Provençal atmosphere, the movement of the novel is one of steady flow rather than of dramatic tightening. Accordingly, Ford's progression d'effet is used to mark a slow and inevitable process, like growth, rather than to create tension moving towards climax. In the main he does this by allowing the American to relate most of The Rash Act as he lies between

---

1. The Rash Act, p.328.
2. Ibid., p.276.
3. "Autocriticism," Week-End Review, Sep.9,1933.
4. Henry for Hugh, p.322.

dreaming and waking in his hotel room while recovering from the blow to his head, and most of Henry for Hugh in the pleasantly torpid sun. Fantasy and reality merge in the mind, and the elaborate time-shifting becomes a way of recreative thinking. Fixed mental attitudes dissolve, just as psychic disorder resolves itself in Jeanne and the American and the personality of the dead Englishman flows into him.

The failure of these two novels to win critical recognition despite their limpidity of style and graceful evocation of Provence must be attributed at least partly to Ford, however, for his failure to produce a story that carries its symbolic overtones without relying so deliberately on incredible co-incidence. In The Rash Act, in particular, the setting of a near-magical transformation of character against a Lost Generation background evoked with considerable realism creates a tension of disbelief against which Ford's attempt to create a mood of sensuous acceptance through the drifting of the American's mind has to struggle for most of the length of the book. Failing to convince at this level as fiction, The Rash Act and Henry for Hugh stand, however, as the nearest Ford came to the novel as poem.

Vive le Roy

The last of Ford's novels, Vive le Roy (1936), is basically a detective thriller, though there are touches that link it to its fable-like predecessors. The hero is a young American bacteriologist, Walter Leroy, who carries money from the United States to French Communists engaged in a triangular struggle for possession of Paris with the Republicans and a Royalist party championing a France of small producers. Once in Paris, he is captured and compelled by the Royalists to double for the young King, who has been assassinated; and most of the book concerns the search for him by his beloved, Cassie Mathers, and an elderly international detective named Penkethman. Leroy and Cassie are eventually united by Penkethman, who reveals that he is Leroy's father, and all three return to America. Leroy, while not abandoning his vaguely Communist sympathies, has learned enough of the Royalist ideals to hope that ultimate world Communism will be based on the unit of the small producer.

Obviously suited by practice to a form demanding suspense, Ford produced in Vive le Roy a nervous and exciting story using the time-shift extensively, so that the reader does not know until the climax whether Leroy or the King has in fact been killed.

As in The Third Man, the climactic scene occurs underground, with Cassie and Penkethman finally brought face to face in an underground morgue with a corpse which may be that of the King and may be that of Leroy. This faintly echoes the cycle of death and rebirth underlying The Rash Act and Henry for Hugh, with Penkethman, a god-figure in his strength, invulnerability and omniscience, leading Cassie through the terror of death back to life.

It is, in fact, in Penkethman that the main interest of Vive le Roy lies. Unexplained, mysterious, belonging to no organization, man of action and connoisseur of the arts, he is the patron spirit of the young lovers, and closes the drama, as the Aunt had done in Henry for Hugh, by providing Leroy with roots and a family tradition. Like the Aunt, he is essentially a benevolent god-figure, and like her, in his resolution of the novel brings it strangely close in spirit to the plays of Eliot.

The fact that Ford undertook a work like Vive le Roy, however, indicates the financial difficulties he was experiencing in the last years of his life, which not only compelled him to write a potboiler

thriller but also to embark on extensive tours in the United States giving lectures which were apparently only poorly attended.[1] His troubles were partly lightened by an agreement with Allen and Unwin in 1935 to publish his work in England and by an engagement at Olivet College, Michigan, where he occupied the Chair of Creative Literature for the year 1937-8. Here he made the acquaintance of yet another generation of young American writers, among them notably Robert Lowell, and from the College received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters, his only academic degree. His enormous March of Literature from Confucius' Day to Our Own (1938), an attempt to trace the progress and intercourse of world literatures, is dedicated to the President and Dean of Men of the College. Though showing Ford's surprisingly wide historical and literary erudition, The March of Literature fails in the end to provide any demonstration of a cohesive "march" and remains interesting mainly for its exploration of obscure byways of literature.

The March of Literature was the last work Ford published. At the time of his death he was

---

1. This fact may be blamed in part on the adenoidal trouble Ford experienced in his later years, which made him difficult to hear. One member of an audience reported being "quite at a loss to understand more than a few words because his voice was very bad." (Letter from Gerard Tetley to Douglas Goldring, The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.274.)

working on a novel, Professor's Progress, which, according to Goldring, "was concerned with the shift from the Right to the Left of the intelligentsia."[1] He died in Deauville, France, on June 26, 1939.

The failure of the literature of Ford's last years lay in its exposition of a belief too idiosyncratic to have general relevance: by nature too down-to-earth, he was unable to resolve the ideas that underlie The Rash Act, Henry for Hugh, Provence and Great Trade Route into their components of myth and reality, unable in the two novels to create a form that would embody both these components as Pound in his Cantos was doing. His last works project a highly personal vision and demonstrate again the ingrained detachment of mind that held him back in the 'thirties from the panaceas of religion and socialism as it had throughout his life held him from committing himself to any one ideological or dogmatic position. The result had been a life of singular openness to experiment and of a devotion to the cause of experimental writers notable for its selflessness.

---

1. The Last Pre-Raphaelite, p.271.

The ready acceptance of him as a godfather by younger writers of the 1920's was not due only, however, to his propaganda for them. Almost alone of his generation he was fitted to sympathise with the outlook of an expatriate and lost generation. Moving from England to Germany to France and America, he never really found a home, and in his writing there is only rarely a deep sense of place. In his pre-war novels of contemporary life he was a detached critic of the society around him: it was perhaps only in the Army that he experienced a sense of belonging to something corporate; so that, his critical detachment to some extent shattered by the experience of war, his immediately post-war novels were written in a new-found spirit of involvement. But the war also shattered any belief he might have retained in the ideals of the Victorian world, of whose complacency and self-deception he had been clearly aware in the novels leading up to The Good Soldier; so that the personal myth he spent his last years in elaborating involved the jettisoning of the immediate past of history and the creation of a cultural and historical belief reminiscent of that of Lawrence in its return to the deeper physical springs of life and of Pound in its mediaeval social basis.

Yet despite his devotion to revolution and his historical scepticism, developed in a series of historical novels outlining history as largely a

matter of the triumph of evil, his roots were in Victorianism, to the extent of an optimistic conviction of an inevitable progress in literature, and in the historical past to the extent of his strong sense of social and literary tradition. In the novel his immediate forebears were James and Conrad; his work was technically a development of and addition to their methods; and his comparative soliteriness in the world of letters at the time of his death was essentially due to the failure of fictional techniques to develop along the course of increased sophistication he had expected. Out of the clash between nineteenth-century optimism and twentieth-century disillusionment, both of which he embodied, came the best of his work; and his strong nineteenth-century roots gave him a singularly privileged place in the modern revolution, setting him apart from the younger iconoclasts and giving a unique feeling of poignance to his record of the end of an age.

It is his slightly backward-looking viewpoint, however, that prevents him from assuming coeval status with such writers as Joyce, Eliot and Pound, able to see the disintegration of a world in a similarly deep perspective of history: essentially clear-sighted though he was about human motives, essentially sceptical though he was of historical progress, he was nevertheless, in the end, a devotee of romantic lost causes: this is most strongly evident in his historical fiction, but can also be seen in the best

of his post-war novels, Parade's End, and, in his works of the 'thirties, in his failure to recognise that he was writing of paradigms and myths rather than of convincing plans for the reconstruction of civilization.

His other fundamental weakness stemmed from his failure to keep his life and his work separate. In his two greatest works, The Good Soldier and Parade's End, he transformed personal crises into the stuff of art; but too often the rest of his fiction was based on idealization or justification of himself. Combined with what Pound called his "unpoliticness", which led not only to wearying personal embroilments but also to the financial need that too often in turn led him to grind away at writing without much substance, it produced a body of writing of which comparatively little stands highly to his credit. In one work only, The Good Soldier, did he at the same time transmute and transcend his personal troubles and face the contemporary crisis of the loss of tradition, depicting it faithfully as crisis and not evading its consequences in the name of romance; and, giving to this work a power that justified at once his adherence to Impressionism and his experiments in comparatively worthless earlier novels, left behind a durable monument.

APPENDIX A: THE CONRAD CONTROVERSY

A

THE CONRAD CONTROVERSY

In October, 1924, two months after Conrad's death, Ford completed Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, "a projection of Joseph Conrad as, little by little, he revealed himself to a human being during many years of close intimacy."[1] In it he laid claim to having participated in several of Conrad's books besides the three signed collaborations: specifically, to having provided Conrad with the plot of the story "Amy Foster"; to having taken down The Mirror of the Sea at dictation, extracting details from Conrad despite the latter's depression; to having written the opening of The Rescue; to having helped Conrad rewrite the last chapters of "The End of the Tether" when the manuscript was destroyed by fire; and in addition to having lent Conrad money. In 1931, in Return to Yesterday, he reiterated these claims, adding that he was responsible for Conrad's writing A Personal Record; that he had suggested episodes in "Gaspar Ruiz"; that he had written a few sentences of The

Secret Agent; and that, while Conrad was ill, he had written one serial instalment of Nostromo.

Ford's claims evoked a storm of protest, set off by a letter from Conrad's widow to the editor of the Times Literary Supplement:

> Will you please allow me to correct a few of the most fantastic statements regarding my husband made in Ford Madox Hueffer's book. ... I deny most emphatically that Joseph Conrad ever poached on Mr. Hueffer's vast stock of plots and material in the fabrication of any of his stories. During the years that Mr. Hueffer was most intimate with Joseph Conrad — between 1898-1909 — Ford Madox Hueffer never spent more than three consecutive weeks under our roof ... After 1909 the meetings between the two were very rare and not once of my husband's seeking. The Author of "A Personal Remembrance" claims to have been Joseph Conrad's literary adviser, also his literary godfather! That claim, like everything else in this detestable book, is quite untrue ... [1]

Ford was condemned on both sides of the Atlantic, not only for writing patronisingly of Conrad — a justifiable charge — but also as an elderly cuckoo laying eggs in Conrad's nest. H.L. Mencken remarked that "the high, purple spot of his life came when he collaborated with Conrad, and upon that fact, I daresay, his footnote in the literature books will depend."[2] In Jean-Aubry's "Definitive Biography" of Conrad, Ford becomes "a pathological liar" whose claims are "hardly worth refuting."[3]

---

1. Times Literary Supplement, Dec.4,1924.
2. Review in American Mercury, Apr.,1925.
3. The Sea Dreamer, p. 232.

This sentence on Ford still appears to stand, though mitigated no doubt on the one hand by Jessie Conrad's obvious personal dislike of Ford[1] and on the other by a growing tendency to take all Ford's assertions as simply "impressions", factually negligible. In addition, Ford's claims no longer seem as presumptuous as they must have seemed in 1924, when he was comparatively unknown and Conrad an almost legendary figure[2] whom he was outrageously portraying as "an old shrunken, wizened man, in an unbrushed bowler, an ancient burst-seamed overcoat, one wrist wrapped in flannel, the other hand helping him to lean on a hazel walking stick [with] a round piece of dirty glass [stuck] in one tortured eye."[3]

Ford qualified the rather offhand tone of his claims in a forward to a 1928 edition of The Inheritors:

> I do not mean to claim any special creative part in these works, but in such matters as providing good working conditions, trying passages from dictation [sic], suggesting words, listening to reading, and the endless supplying of the moral support for which Conrad was eternally clamorous, I certainly bothered more over Conrad's work than over my own.[4]

---

1. She appears too, rather comically, to have felt slighted at the fact that "in the books he has written about my husband since his death I have found nothing about myself." Joseph Conrad and his Circle, p.69.
2. It is interesting to note that Conrad refused a knighthood in 1923. See Jean-Aubry, Life and Letters, v.2, p.345.
3. Joseph Conrad, p.238.
4. George T. Keating, A Conrad Memorial Library, p.75.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that nowhere does Ford retract his claims and that none of the claims has positively been disproved. What follows is an attempt to demonstrate the truth of at least a few of them.

Monetary Debts:-

At one time during the collaboration, Ford wrote, "Conrad was faced with either paying immediately a fairly substantial sum, or with being sold up. The sum the writer advanced to Conrad."[1]

In 1904 Ford made a loan to Conrad of £100. By 1913, when Conrad had repaid none of the capital and only two years' interest, Ford pressed him for repayment of the rest of the interest, £40, doing this only because he himself was being pressed by Arthur Marwood.[2] Baines mentions another letter from Conrad to Ford in 1901 which shows that Ford then lent him £100;[3] in view of the interest of £40 Ford asked for in 1913, this was probably a different loan.

---

1. Joseph Conrad, pp.150-1.
2. Unpublished letter from Conrad to Ford dated Mar.27,1913. British Museum Ashley Library Catalogue VIII, p.119.
3. Letter dated Jul.19,1901. Baines, Joseph Conrad, p.268.

"Amy Foster":-

In Joseph Conrad Ford says about "Amy Foster" that Conrad "had simply taken [it] ... from the writer, with no particular apology, and had just re-written it — introducing Amy herself, who had not existed in the draft."[1] In Return to Yesterday he is more accurate: "I suggested the subject of "Amy Foster", the outline of which I wrote in my Cinque Ports of 1902."[2] Conrad was familiar with this work.[3] His story "Amy Foster" deals with a shipwrecked foreigner whose language is not understood by the English, but who is befriended by a dull-witted girl, Amy Foster, who marries him and bears him a child. Conrad's emphasis is on Amy, but the starting point of the tale obviously lies in the following story in Ford's Cinque Ports:

> One of the most tragic stories that I remember to have heard was connected with a man who escaped the tender mercies of the ocean to undergo an almost merciless buffeting ashore. He was one of the crew of a German merchant that was wrecked almost at the foot of the lighthouse. A moderate swimmer, he was carried by the current to some distance from the scene of the catastrophe. Here he touched the ground. He had nothing, no clothes, no food; he came ashore on a winter's night. In the morning he found himself in the Marsh near Romney. He knocked at doors, tried to make himself understood.

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.120.
2. Return to Yesterday, p.194. Note that The Cinque Ports was in fact published in 1900.
3. See letter to William Blackwood, Nov.7,1900, in which he discusses The Cinque Ports in some detail. Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum, pp.113/4.

> The Marsh people thought him either a lunatic or a supernatural visitor. To lonely women in the Marsh cottages he seemed a fearful object. ... They warned their menfolk of him, and whenever he was seen he was hounded away and ill-used. He got the name of Mad Jack.[1]

A Personal Record and The Mirror of the Sea:-

Ford claims the following share in A Personal Record and The Mirror of the Sea:

> [They] were mostly written by my hand from Conrad's dictation. Whilst he was dictating them, I would recall incidents to him — I mean incidents of his past life which he had told me but which did not come freely back to his mind because at the time he was mentally ill, in desperate need of money, and, above all, sceptical as to the merits of the reminisceptial form which I had suggested to him.[2]

His claim about A Personal Record is confirmed by a letter from Conrad dated January, 1924:

> The early E.R. [English Review] is the only literary business that, in Bacon's phraseology, "came home to my bosom." The mere fact that it was the occasion of you putting on me that gentle but persistent pressure that extracted from the depths of my then despondency the stuff of the "Personal Record" would be enough to make its memory dear.[3]

---

1. The Cinque Ports, pp.162-3.
2. Return to Yesterday, p.194.
3. Published in transatlantic review, Feb.,1924.

As for The Mirror of the Sea, both Jessie Conrad[1] and Jean-Aubry[2] confirm that at the least Ford took it down at Conrad's dictation.

Nevertheless, it was over Ford's publication of A Personal Record in the English Review (under the title "Some Reminiscences") that the break in relations between him and Conrad occurred in 1909. The facts of the case are as follows.

Seven instalments of "Some Reminiscences" appeared between December, 1908, and June, 1909; these form the whole of A Personal Record as it was published in 1912. Ford, however, apparently expected an eighth instalment, and in the July number inserted the notice, "We regret that owing to the serious illness of Mr. Joseph Conrad we are compelled to postpone the publication of the next instalment of his Reminiscences," writing to Conrad that to end "Some Reminiscences" with the June instalment would be to leave them in a "ragged condition".[3] Conrad wrote back angrily protesting against these words and refusing to make further contributions to the Review.[4] "In the book (if the book ever appears),"

---

1. Joseph Conrad and His Circle, p.87.
2. The Sea Dreamer, p.244.
3. Ford's letter has not survived, but Conrad's reply has — see Jean-Aubry, Life and Letters, v.2, pp. 101-2. The letter is dated July 31, 1909.
4. Ibid. A letter to Galsworthy dated Sept. 9, 1909, states that another reason for his refusal to contribute further was the fact that the Review had fallen into the hands of Ford's brother-in-law, a Russian. Baines, Joseph Conrad, p.350.

wrote Conrad, "the whole of the contribution to the E.R. as it stands now without the addition of a single word shall form the Part First. ... It is another instalment that would make the thing ragged. It would have to begin another period and another phase. On a dispassionate view I see it so clearly that nothing on earth would induce me to spoil the thing as it now stands by an irrelevant single instalment."[1]

The truth of the matter is, however, that Conrad had thought of an eighth instalment. In a letter to Garnett written two weeks before the letter to Ford he said, "I have a most damnable go of gout which absolutely prevented me from getting the eighth instalment ready in time."[2] To Galsworthy he wrote, "I had to give it up — a very awful failure to live with. It almost unnerved me utterly."[3] And, shortly after the publication of A Personal Record in book form in 1912, he wrote to Garnett, "For a long time I hesitated as to letting them go out in book form ... Still I felt that what was there formed a whole in itself. And since I see that you seem to think so I feel much comforted and cheered."[4]

---

1. Ibid.
2. Letters, ed. Garnett, p.219.
3. Letter dated Jul.13,1909. Jean-Aubry, Life and Letters, v.2, pp.100-1.
4. Letter dated Jan.27,1912. Letters, ed. Garnett, p.239.

"The End of the Tether":-

From July to December, 1902, "The End of the Tether" was serialised in Blackwood's Magazine. On the 23rd June the second instalment, which Conrad had just finished, was burned to ashes when a lamp exploded in his study.[1] To have the manuscript rewritten for the printers in Edinburgh, wrote Ford, "became a matter of days, then of hours. Conrad wrote; the writer corrected the manuscript behind him or wrote in a sentence."[2] In 1931 he confirmed his account: "We worked at the story day and night, Conrad writing in the cottage. In the house I wrote passages which he sometimes accepted and sometimes didn't."[3]

Ford's claim to have written parts of the story cannot be verified; but it is significant that the day after the disaster, before Conrad had begun the work of rewriting, he should have written to Ford,[4] and that he should have established himself in Ford's Vinchelsea cottage to do the rewriting.

The Secret Agent:-

"A little of The Secret Agent was written by

---

1. Baines, Joseph Conrad, p.278.
2. Ford, Joseph Conrad, p.243.
3. Return to Yesterday, p.227.
4. Baines, Joseph Conrad, p.278.

me," wrote Ford, "sentences here and there, mostly about the topography of Western London — which Conrad did not know at all — and details about policemen and anarchists. That the plot of this story was suggested by me Conrad acknowledges in his preface."[1]

In his Preface to The Secret Agent, Conrad speaks of the subject coming to him in "the shape of a few words uttered by a friend in a casual conversation about anarchists." He continues: "We recalled the already old story of the attempt to blow up the Greenwich Observatory. ... My friend ... remarked in his characteristically casual and omniscient manner: 'Oh, that fellow was half an idiot. His sister committed suicide afterwards.'"

The "omniscient friend" could be either Ford or Arthur Marwood. It is worth noting, however, that Ford and his Rossetti cousins were as children concerned in the production of an anarchist newspaper The Torch,[2] while in Conrad's novel Verloc has a shop which sells "a few apparently old copies of obscure newspapers badly printed, with names like The Torch."[3] The indication seems to be that the friend was Ford, though his claim to have written "sentences here and there" cannot be verified.

---

1. Return to Yesterday, p.194.
2. See Ford, Ancient Lights, pp.130,135,141; Return to Yesterday, pp.108-9; Juliet Soskice, Chapters from Childhood, p.4.
3. The Secret Agent (London, 1923), p.3.

The Rescue:-

Ford claims to have provided the opening of The Rescue, which Conrad began in 1896, abandoned, and completed in 1920: "The writer said to Conrad: 'You'd better give me those manuscripts and let me put together some sort of beginning for you."[1]

Jessie Conrad confirms that Ford did offer to help: "I persuaded Joseph Conrad against allowing Ford Madox Hueffer to assist in the finishing [of The Rescue]. The mere thought appeared a sacrilege to me."[2] It appears, however, that Conrad did in fact at least send the manuscript to Ford: Baines quotes an unpublished letter from Conrad to Ford dated January 2, 1903, and remarks: "In desperation, [Conrad] sent [the manuscript of The Rescue] off to Hueffer's 'friendly hands for the only real work of Rescue that will ever be found in its text.'"[3] We have no means of knowing whether Conrad retained what Ford wrote.

Nostromo:-

Ford's most startling claim was that he had written part of Nostromo, serialised from January 29

---

1. Joseph Conrad, p.171.
2. Joseph Conrad and His Circle, p.71.
3. Baines, Joseph Conrad, p.286.

to October 7, 1904, in T.P.'s Weekly: "Conrad was very ill ... and I had to write the part of the serial that remained to make up the weekly instalment."[1]

In the Yale University Library there exist fourteen pages of Nostromo in Ford's handwriting: they were presented to the library by the collector George T. Keating in 1938, are numbered 583-603 (590 is missing) and correspond to a portion of Chapter Five of Part Two of Nostromo. A thorough study of these pages has been made by John Hope Mercy in an unpublished doctoral dissertation:[2] he compares the pages with the corresponding sections in the serial version (in T.P.'s Weekly, April 8, 1904) and the first edition. His conclusions, as summarised by David D. Harvey,[3] are as follows.

"The portion of the manuscript which is in Ford's hand was printed in T.P.'s Weekly ... Approximately six and one-half pages of Ford's original manuscript have been lost."[4] The pages comprise "not a copy of any earlier text, but ... both a first and a last draft of the text as it appeared in the April 8, 1904 issue." He gives evidence that the pages were most probably not dictated. He finds that

---

1. Return to Yesterday, p.85.
2. "Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford: A Study in Collaboration," a Ph.D. dissertation presented in Cornell University in 1960.
3. Ford Madox Ford, p.107.
4. Ford claimed to have written twenty-five pages. Return to Yesterday, p.103.

the first English edition "provides a tighter, better-written text" than the manuscript or serial portion, "but the variations are not significant."

If any further corroboration of Ford's claim is needed, it can be found in a letter from Conrad to J.B. Pinker dated August 22, 1903: "If people want to begin printing (serial) [Nostromo] say in September you may let them safely — for you know that, at the very worst, H. stands in the background (quite confidentially you understand)."[1]

In the light of these facts, it no longer seems justifiable to dismiss Ford's other and less easily verified claims to having been of assistance to Conrad in his writing. The record of his collaboration with Conrad is one of remarkable unselfishness.

---

1. Baines, Joseph Conrad, p.292.

APPENDIX B: FORD'S POETRY

B

FORD'S POETRY

Since 1912 there have come from Ezra Pound a virtually lone series of attestations to the originality and importance of Ford's poetry:

> I would rather talk about poetry with Ford Madox Hueffer than with any man in London;[1]
>
> There is no doubt whatever that [the 1913 Collected Poems] is the most important book of verse of the season, and that it, moreover, marks a phase in the change which is - or at least which one hopes is coming over English verse;[2]
>
> He has given us, in On Heaven, the best longish poem yet written in the 'twentieth-century fashion'...[3].. I find him significant and revolutionary;
>
> Ford Madox Ford knew the answer but no one believed him;[4]
>
> The critical LIGHT in the years immediately pre-war in London shone not from Hulme but from Ford .....[5] in so far as it fell on writing at all;
>
> I went to England in 1908 to 'learn' from Yeats[6] - and stayed to learn from Yeats and Ford.

Pound's continued propaganda has caused several recent critics[7] to take a second look at Ford's neglected poetry; and, though none has yet matched Pound's enthusiasm, clearer note has at least been taken of Ford's influence, even if this influence is probably, as we shall see, as indirect

---

1. "Status Rerum," Poetry, Dec.,1912.
2. Review in New Freewoman, Dec.15,1913.
3. "Mr. Hueffer and the Prose Tradition in Verse," Poetry, June.,1914.
4. "Harold Monro," Criterion, Jul.,1932.
5. "This Hulme Business," Townsman, Jan.,1938.
6. From interview with Denis Goacher printed in Nimbus, Winter,1956.
7. Notably Peter Wigham, "Ford Madox Ford," European, Dec.,1957, C.E.Pulos, "The New Critics and the Language of Poetry," University of Nebraska Studies no.19, March,1958.

and limited as Pound (who is quite clear-sighted about its nature[1]) implies.

"I went to England in 1905 to 'learn' from Yeats - and stayed to learn from Yeats and Ford," Pound remarked. By 1908 Ford had published four volumes of poetry, The Questions at the Well (1893), Poems for Pictures (1900[2]), The Face of the Night (1904) and From Inland (1907); before the Collected Poems appeared in 1913 he was still to publish Songs from London (1910) and High Germany (1912). The first of these volumes may be ignored. It was published pseudonymously when Ford was 19; only three of the poems survive (with changes) into the Collected Poems. The poems are full of incense, chalcedony, wilderments and Heart's Desire, and breathe an adolescent world-weariness. The Poems for Pictures make no real advance on them, though they are technically more accomplished. One fact about them, however, is interesting: they are specifically poems for pictures, poems suggested by pictures, and several of the pictures are typical of the subjects of Madox Brown and Rossetti (see "St. Æthelburga", "King Cophetua's Wooing") - indeed, one of the poems, "Beginnings", is a tribute to Rossetti the painter. This choice of Ford's of a visual basis to his poems is noteworthy in the light of Pound's later criticism, "I think Hueffer goes wrong because he bases his criticism on the eye, and almost solely on the eye",[3] and of the habit Ford made in several of his historical novels of basing

---

1. Cf. his remark, "There seems little likelihood of his ever being taken seriously by anyone save a few specialists and a few of his intimates" in "Status Rerum", Poetry, Dec.,1912.
2. Ford, in several places, gives the date as 1897. He errs.
3. In "On Criticism in General", Criterion, Jan.,1923.

the appearance and characteristics of his personages on contemporary portraits. Ford's concern with painting and ability as an art critic should not be underestimated; his Ford Madox Brown, however much a work of piety, is solid and accurate, and his monographs on D.G. Rossetti, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and, more particularly, Holbein are sensitive and appreciative. Frederick Bornhauser, writing on Ford's art criticism,[1] speaks of his "carefully studied and developed judgments," and remarks that "he wrote sensitively and wisely, with the convincingness of a friend of art and a friend of all friends of art." This does not take account of Ford's later strictures on the Pre-Raphaelite painters,[2] which have their roots in a retrospective personal animus, but it remains a fair evaluation of Ford's earlier criticism.

The Face of the Night consists of nineteen poems and three short verse plays. Neither poems nor plays are ambitious; the plays, in particular, are negligible as drama. The poems, however, approach far more closely

---

1. "Ford as Art Critic," Shenandoah, Spring, 1953.
2. See his "Pre-Raphaelite Epitaph," Saturday Review of Literature, Jan.20,1934: "Only Millais and my grandfather — and perhaps Dyce who was an Academician before he got as you might say religion — had had any contact at all with the traditions of their art or the remotest inkling of what paint is for or how it should be used. And extraordinarily little use they made of their training. Yet they did make a little. The difference between a picture by Dyce, Millais or my grandfather and a painting by Holman Hunt is simply a difference of degree in the pain that the eye feels when it impinges on their canvases."

than the earlier work to a rendering of Ford's vision. For there can be little doubt that most of Ford's best poetry is based on vision, a sort of vision that seems to have occurred spontaneously and under perfectly normal circumstances, and is shared by no other recent poet one can think of except Robert Frost; in Pound's words, "That Ford was almost an halluciné few of his intimates can doubt. He felt until it paralyzed his efficient action, he saw quite distinctly the Venus immortal crossing the train tracks."[1] In one of the best poems of the collection, "From the Soil", a farm labourer speaks:

> Underneath
> The grass that fed my sheep, I often thought
> Something lay hidden, some sinister thing
> Lay looking up at us as if it looked
> Upwards thro' quiet waters; that it saw
> Us futile toilers scratching little lines
> And doing nothing. And maybe it smiled
> Because it knew that we must come to this
> ...
> And down below that thing lay there and smiled;
> Or no, it did not smile; it was as if
> One might have caught it smiling, but one saw
> The earth immovable, the unmoved sheep
> And senseless hedges run like little strings
> All over hill and dale ...

As important as this greater certainty with which vision and emotion are captured and held is the greater precision and certainty of the imagery: he is able to write lines like

> ... those gracious girls of long ago
> ...
> Whose fingers from the painted spinet keys
> Drew small heart-clutching melodies.

Of the poems in From Inland, only six had not

---

1. "Ford Mddox Ford: Obit," Nineteenth Century, Aug.,1939.

appeared in earlier volumes. A note by Ford states that "the earlier [six] in order of these poems are new. Other of the verse here published appeared in volumes published, to all intents and purposes, privately,[1] during the last few years. The responsibility for the selection must be borne by Mr. Edward Garnett, not myself."[2] The six new poems are undistinguished: there are about them a mournfulness and a weariness with life that are basically sentimental; and technically the poems are regressive, full of dying falls, misty effects and "poetic" word-sequences.

Songs from London marks a departure. For the first time, Ford uses the modern city as setting and subject, if only in two of the slighter poems, "Finchley Road" and "The Three-Ten": he is moving towards the position he is to take up in the Introduction to the 1913 Collected Poems:

> Upon the face of it the comfrey under the hedge may seem a safer card to play, for the purposes of poetry, than the portable zinc dustbin left at dawn for the dustman to take.
>
> But it is not really, for the business of poetry is not sentimentalism so much as the putting of certain realities in certain aspects. The comfrey under the hedge, judged by these standards, is just a plant — but the ash-bucket at dawn is a symbol of poor humanity, of its aspirations, its romance, its ageing and its death.

However unconvincing this symbol may be, the point remains that the city or the crowd is accepted on its own terms and not as the inferior half of a city-country apposition.

---

1. In the Introduction to his 1913 Collected Poems, Ford states that no volume of poetry of his sold more than seventeen copies. This may, however, be "impressionism".
2. From Inland (London, 1907), p.vii.

Even Ford's later poetry continually belies his dictum, "I think [poetry] is not [written about love, about country lanes, about the singing of birds] - not nowadays. We are too far from these things;" [1] but this belying is a matter of the personal temperament of a man to whom, after the War at least, the writing of poetry was not the fundamental occupation. As he significantly claims, "I may really say that for a quarter of a century I have kept before me one unflinching aim - to register my own times in terms of my own time, and still more to urge those who are better poets and better prose-writers than myself to have the same aim." [2] From this point of view "Finchley Road" and "The Three-Ten" can be considered specimens of an approach to modern life through poetry rather than attempts at significantly experimental poetry. The impact of the experiment will be seen in the "[urging of] those who are better poets and better prose-writers."

Within the context of Ford's own poetry, Songs from London is interesting in that it contains "Views", the first of the longish, rambling poems which contain probably his best verse - "Views", "The Starling", "To All the Dead", "On Heaven", "Antwerp", "Footsloggers". Ford denied, in the 1913 Introduction, that even by 1912 he had read enough of Browning to admit his influence, but "Views" is in fact a typically Fordian mutation of a Browning monologue, with the narrator musing, in his plangent, wistful way, on the day when he and his love

---

1. Introduction to Collected Poems (1913)
2. Ibid. Italics my own.

shall see the world with the same eyes and so see each other truly. The poem is full of echoes of Browning —

> Being in Rome I wonder will you go
> Up to the Hill. But I forget the name .....
> Aventine? Pincio? No: I do not know.
> I was there yesterday and watched. You came. —

and even of Wordsworth —

> Since you,
> You — simulacrum, image, dream of dreams,
> Amidst these images and simulacra
> Of shadowy house fronts and these dim, thronged streets
> Are my companion! —

but the poem deserves to stand with Ford's best because of the delicate and unobtrusive skill with which one stream of apparently meandering thought is merged into another purely through the development of the implications of words and images, for the controlled gradation of pace and force in the verse itself — a level of progression d'effet — so that the verse mirrors the emotional turnings of the voice behind it, and for the achievement of the tone that Ford came to seek — that of "someone talking in rather a low voice into the ear of a person that he liked." [1] Its weakness is Ford's besetting weakness, a tendency to deliquescence, to sentimentalism.

"On Heaven" and Ford's War poems are probably his best-known. Nevertheless, High Germany contains much of his finest poetry: it is debatable whether "To All the Dead", in particular, is not his finest poem. Certainly it is the only one of the mature poems in which the problem is of Ford's technique being inadequate to the power of his vision rather than of the poem being

---

1. "On Conrad's Vocabulary", Bookman (N.Y.), Jun.,1928.

an elaboration of inadequate material. His resources are in places so occupied that the sense of the man behind the poem vanishes and the words alone take over control. For it is ironically true that most of the poetry of Ford, the believer in Flaubertian impersonality, is ruined by its suggestion of the personality, cultivated, ironic but trapped into something like impotence by regret, wistfulness or sentiment, behind the poem — no matter whether this personality be Ford's own or a persona. "To All the Dead" is a poem of vision: Violet Hunt wrote that Ford "went by himself to Les Ambassadeurs in the open air — and came home and wrote "All the Dead" about a vision he had had on the Hunnen Grabe, the Champs Elysées of Giessen ... [of] the Germanic warriors rising, clasping to their breastplates the Germanic maidens that have lain buried with them for the last thousands and thousands of years." [1] Like the best of the rest of the volume ("The Starling" and "In the Little Old Market-Place"), however, "To All the Dead" is uneven in quality. A note at the end of the 55-page volume gives the limits of composition as "Paris, Sep. 6th — Giessen, Nov. 1st MCMXI". Remarkable passages of poetry are intermixed with stretches of doggerel; in one place (in "Sūnsmund's Address to an Unknown God") one finds an outburst which cannot but be read as autobiographical and which certainly sounds paranoic:

---

1. The Flurried Years, p.160. The time is 1911 and Ford and Violet Hunt are for a while in Paris.

> There's not one trick they've not brought off on me,
> I guess they think I haven't noticed it
> For I've no bitterness ...
> They've lied to me about my mistresses,
> Stolen my brandy, plagiarised my books,
> Lived on me month by month, broken agreements,
> Perjured themselves in courts, and sworn false oaths
> With all the skill of Protestant British tradesmen
> Plundering a Papist and a foreigner
> With God on their lips.

Ford's career as a poet is in one sense a continual attempt to resolve his own paradox, "The Impressionist author is sedulous to avoid letting his personality appear in the course of his book. On the other hand, his whole book, his whole poem is an expression of his personality."[1] _High Germany_ is a strange mixture of success and failure in this resolution.

In June, 1914 _Poetry_ published "On Heaven", the last poem Ford published before the War and the one which has now become his best-known; it was republished, with about thirty lines referring to the Virgin Mary excised, in _On Heaven and Other Poems_ (1918) and in the _Collected Poems_ (1936). Lascelles Abercrombie called it "slop, but ... certainly by far the best specimen of the slop-pail school that I have come across."[2] Ezra Pound's first reaction was, "Good? Rather! It is the most important poem in the modern manner. The most important single poem that is."[3] "'A Frivolous Heaven' would have been a better name," said Violet Hunt, to whom the poem is dedicated, "or 'A Doll's Heaven.'"[4] Each of these

---

1. "On Impressionism," _Poetry and Drama_, Dec.,1914.
2. Christopher Hassall, _A Biography of Edward Marsh_ (London, 1959), p.285.
3. Letter to Harriet Monroe dated May23,1914. _Letters_, ed. Paige, p.37. See also Pound's essay "Mr. Hueffer and the Prose Tradition in Verse," _Poetry_, June,1914, in which he calls "On Heaven" "the best longish poem yet written in the 'twentieth-century fashion.'"
4. _The Flurried Years_, p.216.

writers is, from his own limiting viewpoint, correct. "On Heaven" is certainly not what Violet Hunt demanded of Ford — "No beauty ... no damned optimism ... just a plain, workaday heaven that I can go to some day and enjoy it when I'm there"[1] — but a fantasy of love and peace in Provence, full of "the softness of sweet tears" and containing a "God [who] is a good man ... a kind man." Even Ford acknowledged its "sloppiness."[2] And yet it is, in a quiet way, utterly modern. To see this, one must ignore the "tear-wet faces" and "drowsy odours compounded all of cyclamen, of oranges, of rosemary and bay": the quaint archaisms, the occasional cliché, the softness that is almost a habit with Ford — these mar the poem as such but have little to do with what Milton Bronner calls its "noun-and-verb effects,"[3] with what Pound calls Ford's "sense of the prose values or prose qualities in poetry."[4] Because it is poetry infused with a "sense of prose values", it does not make its full impact in short quotation, but the following passage gives an impression of its style:

> Hard by the castle of God in the Alpilles,
> In the eternal stone of the Alpilles,
> There's this little old town, walled round by
> the old, grey gardens ...
> There were never such olives as grow in the
> gardens of God,
> The green-grey trees, the wardens of agony
> And failure of gods.
> Of hatred and faith, of truth, of treachery
> They whisper; they whisper that none of the
> living prevail;

---

1. The Flurried Years, p.216.
2. Preface to On Heaven and Other Poems (London, 1918).
3. See "Ford Madox Hueffer, Impressionist," Bookman (N.Y.), Oct.,1916.
4. Pavannes and Divisions (N.Y., 1918), p.111.

They whirl in the great mistral over the white,
dry sods,
Like hair blown back from white foreheads in
the enormous gale
Up to the castle walls of God...

But, in the town that's our home,
Once you are past the wall,
Amongst the trunks of the planes,
Though they roar never so mightily overhead in
the day,
All this tumult is quieted down, and all
The windows stand open because of the heat of
the night
That shall come.
And, from each little window, shines in the
twilight a light,
And, beneath the eternal planes
With the huge, gnarled trunks that were aged and
grey
At the creation of Time,
The Chinese lanthorns, hung out at the doors of
hotels,
Shimmering in the dusk, here on an orange tree,
there on a sweet-scented lime,
There on a golden inscription: 'Hotel of the
Three Holy Bells.'
Or 'Hotel Sublime,' or 'Inn of the Real Good
Will.'
And, yes, it is very warm and still,
And all the world is afoot after the heat of the
day,
In the cool of the even in Heaven ...
And it is here that I have brought my dear to
pay her all that I owed her,
Amidst this crowd, with the soft voices, the
soft footfalls, the rejoicing laughter,
And after the twilight there falls such a warm,
soft darkness,
And there will come stealing under the planes
a drowsy odour,
Compounded all of cyclamen, of oranges, of
rosemary and bay,
To take the remembrance of the toil of the day
away.

Ford suggests that the prose writer should seek *le mot juste* as long as *le mot* is not too *juste*, too surprising;[1] and just as his prose balances between the conventional word and the too striking word, his poetry

---

1. *Joseph Conrad*, p.194.

balances between the conventional image and the too striking image. His verse tends therefore to be self-effacing. It gains its effects without impressing itself on the reader: one is left with a sense of what has been said and very little sense of how it has been said. This is more than merely style that conceals style: it is at least an attempt to impose the values of Ford's chosen masters, the line of Flaubert, Turgenev, Maupassant and the earlier James, on English poetry at a time when it was infested with what Pound calls "old crusted lice and advocates of corpse language."[1]

Of course the attempt fails. "On Heaven" is merely amateurish in comparison with the far more fundamentally revolutionary poetry that Pound himself and Eliot were shortly to publish, with the whole weight of nineteenth-century French experiment in poetry behind them. Ford paid little attention to the Symbolist poets. Hugh Kenner has some interesting remarks to make on this subject:

> Symbolism meant something to Eliot that it didn't to Ford, who seems not to have undergone the Symbolist impact at all.
>
> Intensity, for Ford, was a matter of mass: progression d'effet. He saw this dimension alone in Eliot's work, apparently; and at the level of progression d'effet, "Prufrock", however sound, was nothing more remarkable than the verse Ford himself could turn out in a morning. (His "On Heaven" was at this level skilful and moving enough to be — deservedly so — an Imagist wonder in 1916 or so.) Ford presumably saw something absurd in the massive reputation erected by Eliot on a very

---

1. Letter to Michael Roberts, Jul.,1937. Letters, ed. Paige, p.296.

> slender output. Slender, that is, by Impressionist standards. Sound enough, but short-winded. Confronted by
>
> I should have been a pair of ragged claws
> Scuttling across the floors of silent seas
>
> Ford would have recalled Bouvard's "J'ai envie de me faire saltimbanque sur les places publiques!" and reflected that the technique was easy after all. The "tentacular roots" of these precise images, "reaching down to the deepest terrors and desires," would not have been apparent to him. He describes the effort of the good stylist to make sure "that the word chosen was not too juste. A too startling epithet, however vivid, or a simile, however just, is a capital defect because the first province of style is to be unnoticeable." "Impressionism" implied author-suppression at that level. The Eliotic "impersonality" — an author-suppression compatible with great local intensity, so that line after line lodges in the memory — apparently did not strike him as a meaningful extension of that principle. He could not, to put it crudely, have started a poem with the word "Polyphilo-progenitive." He was, ultimately, unwilling to let the language do the work. The impressionist aim — "above all to make you see" — immolates language to subject in a futile as well as salutary sense. The poet's language is something vastly more than himself; it contains the past of the race and in its potentialities for juxtaposition the intelligible species of all the mysteries.[1]

"On Heaven" is "an Imagist wonder" for its time (though even this must later be qualified), but it does not wholly stand on its own feet as a poem. Violet Hunt has some cruelly exaggerated but not untrue remarks to make about it:

> This poem, when at last I got it rounded and complete, set the seal of verity on my surmises as to the nature of at least one of the varieties of amatory experience ... The Heine love — "Du bist wie eine Blume" — is, I think, implicit in this poem. Heine love, which rises now and again, gracefully, to passion, as in "Ritter Olaf,"

---

1. "Remember that I have Remembered," Hudson Review, Winter, 1951. John Gould Fletcher's first remark about the manuscript of "Prufrock" is interesting in the above connection: "Very, very Hucfferish and tailed off badly towards the conclusion." See Stanley K. Coffman, Imagism (Oklahoma, 1951), p.42.

> but mostly homely, cynical, wistful. Not, so far as I could tell, the love that moves mountains, faces the seven deaths of boredom, but the mild, watery variety that, rather than attempt to move the thwarting mass of opposition, sits down in front of it and repeats the great word Agony three times, taking up all one line! ... Love without breadth, depth or thickness, without dimension. Subjective purely.[1]

The sentimentality of which Violet Hunt basically complains is present too in the War poems of On Heaven and Other Poems, but in a healthier form, arising out of compassion rather than self-pity: emotion no longer feeds upon itself. For whatever personal reasons, Ford reacted to the War with as deep a simplicity as he ever attained, and the poetry reflects this response. His War poems became, understandably, popular: towards the end of the War, "Antwerp," together with "On Heaven," was "circulated by H.M. Dept. of Propaganda," the latter "being likely to make soldiers take a cheerful view of death,"[2] while "The Old Houses of Flanders" was several times anthologised. Written from within the chaos of war, these poems are not concerned to find the meaning of the chaos: they face its cruel waste with a consciousness that sometimes seems dazed recording effects too immense for it to understand; they oppose destruction

---

1. The Flurried Years, p.216.
2. "Acknowledgements," Collected Poems (1936). By "H.M. Dept. of Propaganda" Ford presumably means Wellington House, which commissioned When Blood Is Their Argument and Between St. Denis and St. George. "On Heaven" had had a chequered history before this: in June, 1914 the Home Secretary requested its withdrawal from the Fortnightly Review on the grounds that it was blasphemous (see Return to Yesterday, p.420). The thirty-odd lines referring to the Virgin were subsequently excised, though it is questionable whether this was in answer to the charge of blasphemy and not because of their "sloppiness".

and personal disintegration with an elemantary faith in discipline, fidelity, patriotism and love.[1] The three finest poems — "Antwerp" (1915), "The Old Houses of Flanders" (1915) and "Footsloggers" — are compassionate, and passionate, meditations on a horror that is all the more horrible for being boring and endless and grey.

T.S. Eliot called "Antwerp" "the only good poem I have met with [by 1917] on the subject of the war."[2] Of course neither "Antwerp" nor any of the others is "the only good poem on the subject of the war." However "twentieth-century in manner" they may be, they are casually put together compared with Owen's; they never rise to Owen's tragic compassion and indignation; they are often written, rather stiffly, from the viewpoint of an officer, a gentleman and a lover:

> Presently I shall go in,
> I shall write down the names of the forty-two
> Prisoners in the Battalion guardroom
> On fair white foolscap,
> Their names, rank and regimental numbers,
> Corps, Companies, Punishments and Offences,
> Remarks, and By Whom Confined.
> Yet in spite of all I shall see only
> The infinite miles of dark mountain,
> The infinite miles of dark marshland,
> Great curves and horns of sea,
> The little village,
> And you,
> Sitting in the firelight.[3]

---

1. It is interesting in this connection to note that Ford wrote several letters to Conrad from the Front telling of the disorienting effect on his mind of the continual noise of shelling. See Edward Naumburg, Jr., "A Collector Looks at Ford Madox Ford," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr.,1948.
2. Review in Egoist, Nov.,1917. At this date, however, the body of Owen's work had not been published. In addition, if Hugh Kenner has taught us anything about Eliot, it is not to take all his occasional remarks at face value.
3. From "What the Orderly Dog Saw," dated 12/12/1915.

What these poems express — the almost unreal immensity and tedium of war, the pitiful humanity of officers and men, friend and foe, the feeling of corporate life in an army, the dependence of men on the love of their women at home, the disintegrating effect of trench warfare on the psyche — was, with an understanding deepened by reflection on the causes, the totality and the consequences of the War, to form much of the basis of Parade's End. Unique to the poems is their immediacy, their effect of "a quiet, civilized voice speaking in your ear":

> I should like to imagine
> A moonlight in which there would be no more
> machine-guns.[1]

It is on High Germany, "On Heaven" and the War poems that Ford's reputation as poet must rest. His interest, after the War, settled on prose, and his later poetry is occasional and slight. His long poem "A House" won the Poetry prize for the best poem of 1920,[1] but it is difficult to understand why. It is a long ramble, in in little more than doggerel, about the corporate life of a household. In 1923 Ford published Mister Bosphorus and the Muses, Or A Short History of Poetry in Britain, a "variety entertainment in four acts, words by Ford Madox Ford, music by several popular composers, with harlequinade, transformation scene, cinematograph effects, and many other novelties, as well as old and tried favourites," a dated and tedious 3,000-line skit.

---

1. From "Clair de Lune," dated 17/9/1916.
2. "A House" was published simultaneously by Poetry (Chicago) and The Chapbook in March, 1921. Ford wrote to Edgar Jepson in Nov., 1921, "It pleases me as the first public recognition I ever received — except for the Inst. de France, and that hadn't any $ attached." Harvey is unable to trace this latter award.

New Poems (New York, 1927) consists of "A House" and five slight lyrics. Collected Poems (New York, 1936) adds "'Buckshee:' Last Poems," first printed in 1931, and a "Coda". Dedicated to "Haïtchka"

> (God was a stupid man and threw
> Into our outstretched arms, Haïtchka, you),

the "Buckshee" poems tell of love and life in France. They are assured pieces of work, but written under no very strong pressure.

Wherebare we to place Ford as a poet? Plainly, on the evidence of even his best work, he cannot rank high. His desire to write verse that should sound like conversation led him to ramble. His talent for rhyming proved dangerous.[1] Much of his work is ruined by sentimentalism indulged, probably, because after his years with Conrad poetry was to him a secondary activity to be approached with less of the fine rigour that went into his best prose. He was, as Pound says, an halluciné — one thinks of "To All the Dead" and the last part of "Antwerp" — but — and this is the most fundamental criticism of his poetic creed one can make — he was content to render his vision, to constater, and in the process reduces to a fatal simplicity which a habit of irony cannot disguise the complex of feeling within the

---

1. See the following account of a ship's concert in 1927 in which Ford took part: "His part in the entertainment was to sit at a table, where he offered to make a limerick on any passenger's name for a dollar, with the return of the money guaranteed if he did not complete the verse within thirty seconds. ... He certainly turned in a lot of dollars for the Seamen's Charities." C.F. Crandall, "When Sinclair Lewis Wrote a Sonnet in Three Minutes, Fifty Seconds," N.Y. Herald Tribune Books, Sep.2,1951.

range of implication of the vision. He is content with impressionism, and impressionism usually on the level of the visual only. As Pound acutely observes, "His is the flow of impressionism ... carried out of its due medium. Impressionism belongs in paint, it is of the eye. ... Poetry is in some odd way concerned with the specific gravity of things, with their nature ... The conception of poetry is a process more intense than the reception of an impression."[1]

The fact is that the extent of Ford's influence on English poetry in the period just before the War cannot be assessed unless his verse is read in conjunction with his criticism, and, in the end, unless the effect of his conversation with his intimates, particularly with Pound, is taken into account. Ford's critical writings on poetry are few in number and, but for the Introduction to the 1913 Collected Poems, consist of articles and reviews scattered in various periodicals. The first significant article was written in 1907:

> At the beginning of the year [1907] when all was hope and busy stir I suggested to a friend [Walter Jerrold] that he should gather together — in the hope of proving that poetry is not yet dead — an anthology of modern verse. Now ... it [The Book of Living Poets] lies before me. No, Poetry is not dead, but she has 'retired,' she lives in cloisters and old formal gardens. ... When I consider the selection from my own verse I am bound to say that it is as derivative and un-modern as anyone else's. ... The other night I was going eastward upon the top of a 'bus. It was just outside the Tottenham Courtroad Tube

---

1. Review of High Germany, Poetry Review, Mar.,1912. See also his article "On Criticism in General," Criterion, Jan.,1923, in which he says: "I think Hueffer goes wrong because he bases his criticism on the eye, and almost solely on the eye. ... It is the exact rendering of the visible image, the cabbage field seen, France seen from the cliffs."

> Station. In front of us was a tongue of deep shadow, the silhouetted forms of bus-tops, dray-tops, drivers' hats, all in a pyramidal mass of darkness, and a stimulating, comfortable, jangling confusion. Before us was a blazing haze of golden light, on each side the golden faces of innumerable people, lit up by the light that streamed from the shopwindows, and up along the housefronts the great shafts of light streamed heavenwards. And the gloom, the glamour, the cheerfulness, the exhilarating cold, the suggestion of terror, of light and of life ... It was not Romance, it was Poetry. It was the poetry of the normal, of the usual, the poetry of the innumerable little efforts of mankind, bound together in such a great tide that, with their hopes, their fears, and their reachings out to joy they formed a something at once majestic and tenuous, at once very common and strangely pathetic. But of that I find little in the work of the living novelists, and less or nothing in the work of living poets.[1]

This looks forward to the remarkable 1913 Introduction, where, indeed, the scene at the Exhibition described is only another "impression" of this Tottenham Court Road scene.

In "1908 or 1909"[2] Ford met Pound, and later F.S. Flint, Richard Aldington, D.H. Lawrence, John Gould Fletcher and H.D., and became caught up in the vigorous modernist movements. In 1913 he wrote:

> Modern life is so extraordinary, so hazy, so tenuous with, still, such definite and concrete spots in it that I am ever for the look out for some poet who shall render it in all its values. I do not think that there was ever, as the saying is, such a chance for the poet; I am breathless, I am agitated at the thought of having it to begin upon;[3]

and shortly afterwards,

---

1. "The Year 1907," Tribune, Dec.28,1907.
2. 1937 footnote to letter by Pound to Harriet Monroe, dated May23,1914. Letters, ed. Paige, p.45.
3. Introduction to Collected Poems (1913).

> I think thatwhat we want most of all in the literature of today is religion, is intolerance, is persecution, and not the mawkish flap-doodle of culture, Fabianism, peace, and good-will. ... I must confess to rather inclining towards [the Futurist poets] -- just because they want to smash things ... At any rate it is pretty certain that we of 1913 are a fairly washed-out lot and that we do desperately need a new formula.[1]

Ford attached himself to the Imagist poets, but his relationship with them was from the start peculiar. As Hugh Kenner observes, his "avuncular ironies about the impatient young 'parading those respectable streets in trousers of green billiard cloth and Japanese foulards' connote equal amusement with the paraders and with the respectability."[2] He seemed to imply that he had fathered Imagism,[3] and called "Imagist" "a rather proud title,"[4] but he was chary of accepting the title himself. John Gould Fletcher reports a speech made by Ford in July, 1914 at a dinner to celebrate the publication of Des Imagistes:

> He began by informing us that he did not know in the least what an imagist poet was. Ezra had assured him that he was an imagist poet, but if so, he had been one long before the world had ever heard of imagism. His poems, which Ezra had insisted should be printed in Poetry as examples of imagistic poetry, were all derived from Heine and Browning. He

---

1. "Nineteen-Thirteen and the Futurists," Outlook, Jan., 1914.
2. "Remember that I Have Remembered," Hudson Review, Winter, 1951.
3. See his review of Some Imagist Poets, Outlook, Jul.10, 1915, where he says, "I do not suppose that I have led a movement, though I dare say I have." He is slightly more explicit in his Foreword to Imagist Anthology 1930.
4. Review of Some Imagist Poets, Outlook, Jul.10,1915.

> personally doubted whether Miss Lowell was an imagist poet, or for that matter, whether Ezra himself was, though he knew him to be interested in imagist poetry. The only imagists he saw present at the table were Aldington and H.D., whose imagism seemed to him entirely devoid of foreign admixture. He sat down, amidst an embarrassed silence.[1]

Ford's attitude is in fact quite understandable. From the beginning he distinguished between Imagism and his own Impressionism, both being basically realistic: "One is an Impressionist because one tries to produce an illusion of reality;"[2] and, "My Imagiste friends fall ... into the category of realists."[3] But it is when he writes of the Imagist's "very clear and defined rendering of [a] material object"[4] that he gives the clue to his attitude. Ford's definition of Imagism was, justifiably, a limiting one. About Some Imagist Poets he writes:

> Of the six poets printed in this anthology, only two — H.D. and Mr. F.S. Flint — have the really exquisite sense of words, the really exquisite tranquillity, beauty of diction, and insight that justify a writer in assuming the rather proud title of Imagist. ... Mr. D.H. Lawrence is a fine poet, but he employs similes — or rather the employment of similes is too essential a part of his methods to let his work, for the time being, have much claim to the epithets restrained or exact. ... Mr. John Gould Fletcher, Mr. Aldington and Miss Lowell are all too preoccupied with themselves and their emotions to be really called Imagists ...[5]

---

1. Life Is My Song (N.Y., 1937), p.148.
2. "On Impressionism," Poetry and Drama, Dec.,1914.
3. "Les Jeunes and 'Des Imagistes,'" Outlook, May16, 1914.
4. Ibid.
5. Review in Outlook, Jul.10,1915.

The ideal Imagist poem was, to Ford, a fine, exact and impersonal rendering of something material; and this criterion defines, precisely, a few of the poems of H.D. and Flint and a few of Pound's Lustra. The nearest Ford himself came to writing an Imagist poem was in "When the World Was in Building" (1918); and this poem is not fully Imagist precisely because it revolves about the emotions of the speaker rather than about the "very definite emotions" Ford mentions when he writes that "any very clear and defined rendering of any material object has power to convey to the beholder or the reader a sort of quivering of very definite emotions:"[1]

> Thank Goodness, the moving is over,
> They've swept up the straw in the passage
> And life will begin ...
> This tiny, white, tiled cottage by the bridge! ...
> When we've had tea I will punt you
> To Paradise for the sugar and onions ...
> We will drift home in the twilight,
> The trout will be rising ...

Ford was not by temperament capable of writing Imagist poetry as he defined it: to apply his own words, he was too preoccupied with himself and his emotions to be really called Imagist. This is a fact which he confesses in the 1913 Introduction:

> The writing of verse hardly appears to me to be a matter of work: it is a process, as far as I am concerned, too uncontrollable. From time to time words in verse form have come into my head and I have written them down, quite powerless and without much interest, under the stress of certain emotions. ... With me the writing of verse is not a conscious art. It is an expression of emotion, and I can so often

---

1. "Les Jeunes and 'Des Imagistes,'" Outlook, May16,1914.

not put my emotions into any verse.[1]

Despite all this, Ford's claim that he fathered Imagism is not entirely false. The theories behind Imagism stem from T.E. Hulme, but to state, as Hulme's biographer A.R. Jones does, that "Ford says nothing [in his foreword to Imagist Anthology 1930] about poetry that had not been said, and said much more precisely, many times before by the young experimental poets who grouped themselves around T.E. Hulme from 1908 onwards. There is little or no evidence of Ford's having any direct influence on poetry, either in its practice or in its theory"[2] is to write in half-truths. It is obviously misleading to cite the 1930 foreword here rather than Ford's earlier writings. That Ford had "no ... direct influence on poetry" is in fact almost true; but it ignores his widely pervasive indirect influence.

Ford's relationship with the Imagists is most fully discussed in Stanley Coffman's Imagism, in which he deals with the various claims that Flint, Ford and Hulme founded the movement. After demonstrating Flint's remoteness from experimental thought, he writes, "Ford Madox Hueffer's claims to attention are stronger than Flint's, though his relationship to Imagism has in the main gone unnoticed,"[3] and proceeds to summarise, somewhat freely, those of Ford's tenets that probably did

---

1. See, however, Ford's early article "The Making of Modern Verse," Academy, Apr.19,1902, in which he describes some of the labours that went into the making of his verse.
2. "Notes towards a History of Imagism," South Atlantic Quarterly, Summer,1961.
3. Imagism, p.113.

influence the Imagist poets:

> He wanted the poet to be less ambitious, to treat the fleeting, personal moods which he unquestionably can know; to avoid the symbolism that tries to read beyond the known to knowledge which must be vague and can only be given vague expression; to transform ordinary facts into phenomena seen imaginatively and to give poetry a quality of hardness by the intellectual effort required in the process; and above all, to avoid the 'literary.'[1]

The conclusion that Coffman reaches is the most just: that the theories behind Imagism were developed by Hulme, but that Ford's practice was a decisive factor in the growth of the movement, whether as direct example or as consolidation for younger poets of a belief that "noun-and-verb" poetry could succeed.

Of these poets, it was Ezra Pound on whom Ford's influence was deepest. (One should not forget Pound's considerable effect on Ford: as A.R. Jones remarks, "Pound introduced him to some of London's younger and livelier poets and authors and managed to broaden his taste and outlook. Indeed, there is evidence that Pound effected a considerable, and in some ways decisive influence on Ford."[2]) Pound has continually stressed his debt. "It should be realised," he wrote in 1937, "that Ford Madox Ford had been hammering this point of view [objectivity and again objectivity, and expression] into me from the time I first met him (1908 or 1909) and that I owe him anything that I don't owe myself for

---

1. Ibid., p.119.
2. "Notes towards a History of Imagism," South Atlantic Quarterly, Summer, 1961.

having saved me from the academic influences then raging in London;"[1] and again, "I went to England in 1908 to learn from Yeats and stayed to learn from Yeats and Ford. From 1910 onward, Fordie and I groaned at each other for nigh on thirty year. ... How long it would have taken me to get to the present — wherever — if I hadn't plugged up Campden Hill daily when the fat man was there in residence Gawd alone knows."[2]

There are obvious reasons why Pound more than any other of the younger poets should have been deeply influenced by Ford. At the time when they met, Pound was striving to escape from the background that Ford was moving beyond: Browning, Morris, Swinburne and the poets of the 'Nineties loom as large behind the early Pound as behind the Ford who wrote the bitter preface to Ancient Lights. In Ford, Pound met perhaps the one mature critic in the England of his time to whom criticism and writing were, as they were to Pound,[3] parts of the same process.[4] Ford was James's one-time jeune homme modeste, a man old enough to be a master yet approachable enough to be a friend, someone who shared his dedication to the craft of letters, who could match

---

1. Footnote to letter to Harriet Monroe, May23,1914. Letters, ed Paige, p.45.
2. From interview with Denis Goacher printed in Nimbus, Winter,1956.
3. See Pound's remark, "I consider criticism merely a preliminary excitement, a statement of things a writer has to clear up in his own head sometime or other, probably antecedent to writing; of no value unless it comes to fruit in the created work later." "On Criticism in General," Criterion, Jan.,1923.
4. See F.S. Flint, Otherworld (London, 1929), p.ix: "We have no critics. ... There is certainly Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer; but I could name off-hand half a dozen Frenchmen who, like Mr. Hueffer, are both critics and poets too." See also Pound, "This Hulme Business," Townsman, Jan.,1938: "The critical LIGHT during the years immediately pre-war shone not from Hulme but from Ford."

his multilingual erudition, and who in particular shared his enthusiasm for the Provençal poets. What Ford mainly brought home to Pound was the practicability of the application of the lessons of precision, objectivity and lucidity of the school of Flaubert to English poetry. It is not important to what extent Ford's own applications were successful: at a time when Pound was certain of himself and dissatisfied with the state of letters in England to the extent of being certain of the necessity of revolution but uncertain of the direction of the revolution, Ford gave him, or at least helped him to — at the simplest level — two catchphrases, le mot juste and make it new. Pound himself testifies to the truth of this:

> I find [Ford] significant and revolutionary because of his insistence on clarity, and precision, upon the prose tradition;[1]
>
> I shall give these simple ideas of this decade ... I shall give the names of the men who embody them ... Ford Hueffer, a sense of the mot juste. The belief that poetry should be at least as well written as prose, and that 'good prose is just your conversation.' This is out of Flaubert and Turgenev and Stendhal, and what you will. It is not invention, but focus;[2]
>
> I wanted for private purposes to make a note on a point raised in Ancient Lights; I thought it would go on the back of an envelope, and found to my young surprise that I couldn't make the note in fewer words than those on Ford's actual page. That set me thinking, mehercule.[3]

---

1. "Mr. Hueffer and the Prose Tradition in Verse," Poetry, June, 1914.
2. "Affirmations," New Age, Feb.11,1915.
3. "Ford Madox Ford: Obit," Nineteenth Century, Aug.,1939.

What, then, are we to make of Ford's effect on the course of poetry in this century? In Pound we have his most clearly avowed disciple, yet there is not a line of Pound's that could be mistaken for one of Ford's: the influence has been exerted not simply through the poetry, but through the criticism plus the conversation (obviously an imponderable) plus the poetry-as-example. If the influence is here exerted in (for the purposes of critical examination) so indirect a way, what are we to make of the further removes of Ford's influence? What, for example, are we to make of the sudden late interest in each other's poetry of Ford and William Carlos Williams? In a letter to Pound dated June, 1932, Williams wrote, "Yes, I have wanted to kick myself (as you suggest) for not realising more about Ford Madox's verse;"[1] and Ford's admiration of Williams went to the extent of his seriously planning in 1939 to found a "Friends of William Carlos Williams Circle." Again, do we see a line of descent in Flaubert's "il était très fort, courageux, tempérant, avisé," Ford's acknowledged imitation of it in "kingcraft solid, austere, practical and inspired" and Robert Lowell's "grey, sorry and ancestral house"? — Lowell acted as Ford's amanuensis during 1937. The essence of Ford's influence is indirectness and pervasiveness: one cannot venture

---

1. Selected Letters, ed. Thirlwall (N.Y., 1937), p.127.

further than more or less enlightened critical guesses.[1] Ford was, in prose and verse, what Williams calls "a sort of radium, which most men never bother their heads to be concerned with though they plainly show its lack."[2]

---

1. Thus we have tentative suggestions such as that made by C.E. Pulos in "The New Critics and the Language of Poetry," University of Nebraska Studies no. 19, March,1958: "Perhaps ... the school of Flaubert, through Ford and Ford's early relation to Pound, has more to do with the origin of the new poetry and the new criticism than is generally supposed."
2. New Directions no.7, 1942, p.491.

APPENDIX C: BIBLIOGRAPHY and INDEX

BOOKS BY FORD

The Brown Owl: A Fairy Story. Illustrated by Ford Madox Brown. London: T. Fisher Unwin: 1892. (Actually first published 1891.)

The Feather. Frontispiece by Ford Madox Brown. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1892. (Fairy story.)

The Shifting of the Fire. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1892. (Novel.)

The Questions at the Well: With Sundry Other Verses for Notes of Music. By "Fenil Haig." London: Digby, Long and Co., 1893.

The Queen Who Flew: A Fairy Tale. Frontispiece by Edward Burne Jones. London: Bliss, Sands and Foster, 1894.

Ford Madox Brown: A Record of His Life and Work. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1896.

Poems for Pictures and Notes of Music. London: Macqueen, 1900.

The Cinque Ports: A Historical and Descriptive Record. Illustrated by William Hyde. London: Blackwood, 1900.

The Inheritors: An Extravagant Story. With Joseph Conrad. N.Y.: McClure, Phillips; London: Heinemann, 1901.

Rossetti: A Critical Essay on His Art. London: Duckworth; N.Y.: Dutton, 1902.

Romance: A Novel. With Joseph Conrad. London: Smith, Elder, 1903.

The Face of the Night: A Second Series of Poems for Pictures. London: Macqueen, 1904.

The Soul of London: A Survey of a Modern City. London: Alston Rivers, 1905.

The Benefactor: A Tale of a Small Circle. London: Brown, Langham, 1905. (Novel).

Hans Holbein the Younger: A Critical Monograph. London: Duckworth; N.Y.: Dutton, 1905.

The Fifth Queen and How She Came To Court. London: Alston Rivers, 1906. (Novel).

The Heart of the Country: A Survey of a Modern Land. London: Alston Rivers, 1906.

Christina's Fairy Book. London: Alston Rivers, 1906.

Privy Seal: His Last Venture. London: Alston Rivers, 1907. (Novel).

England and the English: An Interpretation. N.Y.: McClure, 1907. (Collection of The Soul of London, The Heart of the Country and The Spirit of the People).

From Inland and Other Poems. London: Alston Rivers, 1907.

An English Girl: A Romance. London: Methuen, 1907. (Novel).

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood: A Critical Monograph. London: Duckworth; N.Y.: Dutton, 1907.

The Spirit of the People: An Analysis of the English Mind. London: Alston Rivers, 1907.

The Fifth Queen Crowned: A Romance. London: Eveleigh Nash, 1908. (Novel).

Mr. Apollo: A Just Possible Story. London: Methuen, 1908. (Novel).

The 'Half Moon': A Romance of the Old World and the New. London: Eveleigh Nash, 1909. (Novel).

A Call: The Tale of Two Passions. London: Chatto and Windus, 1910. (Novel).

Songs from London. London: Elkin Mathews, 1910. (Poems).

The Portrait. London: Methuen, 1910. (Novel).

The Simple Life Limited. By "Daniel Chaucer." London: John Lane, The Bodley Head; N.Y.: John Lane, 1911. (Novel .

Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections: Being the Memories of a Young Man. London: Chapman & Hall, 1911. (Published in the U.S.A. as Memories and Impressions: A Study in Atmospheres. N.Y.: Harper, 1911).

Ladies Whose Bright Eyes: A Romance. London: Constable, 1911. (A considerably revised American edition was published by Lippincott in 1935). (Novel).

The Critical Attitude. London: Duckworth, 1911.

High Germany: Eleven Sets of Verse. London: Duckworth, 1911. (Actually published 1912).

The Panel: A Sheer Comedy. London: Constable, 1912. (Novel).

The New Humpty-Dumpty. By "Daniel Chaucer." London: John Lane, The Bodley Head; N.Y.: John Lane, 1912. (Novel).

This Monstrous Regiment of Women. London, 1913. Published by the Women's Freedom League. (Pamphlet).

Mr. Fleight. London: Latimer, 1913. (Novel).

The Desirable Alien at Home in Germany. With Violet Hunt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1913.

The Young Lovell: A Romance. London: Chatto & Windus, 1913. (Novel).

Ring for Nancy: A Sheer Comedy. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1913. (A revision and expansion of The Panel).

Collected Poems. London: Max Goschen, 1914. (Actually published 1913).

Henry James: A Critical Study. London: Secker, 1913. (Actually published 1914).

Antwerp. The Poetry Bookshop, London, [1915]. (Pamphlet). (Poem).

The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head; N.Y.: John Lane, 1915.

When Blood Is Their Argument: An Analysis of Prussian Culture. N.Y. and London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915.

Between St. Dennis and St. George: A Sketch of Three Civilizations. London and N.Y.: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915.

Zeppelin Nights: A London Entertainment. With Violet Hunt. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head; N.Y.: John Lane, 1916. (Actually published 1915).

On Heaven and Poems Written on Active Service. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head; N.Y.: John Lane, 1918.

A House (Modern Morality Play). An issue of The Chapbook dated March, 1921. London: The Poetry Bookshop.

Thus to Revisit: Some Reminiscences. London: Chapman and Hall, 1921.

The Marsden Case: A Romance. London: Duckworth, 1923. (Novel).

Women and Men. Paris: Three Mountains Press, 1923.

Mister Bosphorus and the Muses, Or a Short History of Poetry in Britain: Variety Entertainment in Four Acts. Engravings by Paul Nash. London: Duckworth, 1923.

Some Do Not ... : A Novel. London: Duckworth, 1924.

The Nature of a Crime. With Joseph Conrad. London: Duckworth, 1924. (Novella).

Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance. London: Duckworth, 1924.

No More Parades: A Novel. London; Duckworth, 1925.

A Mirror to France. London: Duckworth, 1926.

A Man Could Stand Up — : A Novel. London: Duckworth, 1926.

New Poems. N.Y.: William Edwin Rudge, 1927.

New York Is Not America. London: Duckworth; N.Y.: Albert and Charles Boni, 1927.

New York Essays. N.Y.: William Edwin Rudge, 1927.

The Last Post. N.Y.: Literary Guild of America, 1928. (Published in England as Last Post (Duckworth, 1928)). (Novel).

A Little Less than Gods: A Romance. London: Duckworth, 1928. (Novel).

The English Novel from the Earliest Days to the Death of Joseph Conrad. Philadelphia and London: Lippincott, 1929.

No Enemy: A Tale of Reconstruction. N.Y.: Macaulay, 1929. (Novel).

Return to Yesterday: Reminiscences 1894-1914. London: Gollancz, 1931.

When the Wicked Man. N.Y.: Liveright, 1931. (Novel).

The Hash Act: A Novel. N.Y.: Long & Smith; London: Cape, 1933.

It Was the Nightingale. N.Y.: Lippincott; London: Heinemann, 1933.

Henry for Hugh: A Novel. N.Y.: Lippincott, 1934.

Provence: From Minstrels to the Machine. Illustrations by Biala. Philadelphia: Lippincott; London: Allen and Unwin, 1935.

Vive le Roy: A Novel. Philadelphia: Lippincott; London: Allen and Unwin, 1936.

Collected Poems. Introduction by William Rose Benét. N.Y.: O.U.P., 1936.

Great Trade Route. N.Y.: O.U.P.; London: Allen and Unwin, 1937.

Mightier than the Sword: Memories and Criticisms. London: Allen and Unwin, 1938. (Published simultaneously in the U.S.A. as Portraits from Life: Memories and Criticisms, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938).

The March of Literature from Confucius' Day to Our Own. N.Y.: The Dial Press, 1938.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY FORD TO BOOKS

Stories from De Maupassant. Translated by E.M. [Elsie Martindale]. Preface by Ford M. Hueffer. London: Duckworth, 1903.

London Town Past and Present. By W.W. Hutchings. With a Chapter on the Future in London by Ford Madox Hueffer. London: Cassell, 1909.

Des Imagistes: An Anthology. N.Y.: A. and C. Boni, 1914. (Contains Ford's poem, "In the Little Old Market-Place", and Ford's spoof in reply to Richard Aldington's parody of "On Heaven".)

The Governess. By Mrs. Alfred and Violet Hunt. With a Preface by Ford Madox Hueffer. London: Chatto & Windus, 1912.

The Trail of the Barbarians, being "L'Outrage des Barbares." By Pierre Loti. Translated by Ford Madox Hueffer. London: Longmans, Green, 1917.

Transatlantic Stories. Selected from The Transatlantic Review. With an Introduction by Ford Madox Ford. London: Duckworth, 1926.

The Left Bank & Other Stories. By Jean Rhys. With a Preface by Ford Madox Ford. N.Y. and London: Harper, 1927.

The Sisters. By Joseph Conrad. With an Introduction by Ford Madox Ford. N.Y.: Crosby Gaige, 1928.

Imagist Anthology 1930. N.Y.: Covici, Friede, 1930. (Contains foreword and three poems by Ford.)

A Farewell to Arms. By Ernest Hemingway. Introduction by Ford Madox Ford. N.Y.: Modern Library, 1932.

PERIODICAL ARTICLES BY FORD

"The Making of Modern Verse," Academy, Apr.19-26,1902.

"Literary Portraits: XXIII: The Year 1907," Tribune, Dec.28,1907.

"The Functions of the Arts in the Republic," Editorials, English Review, Dec.,1908 - Mar.,1909.

"The Nature of a Crime," by "Baron Ignatz von Aschendrof," English Review, Apr.,May,1909.

"A Call: A Tale of Passion," English Review, Aug.-Nov., 1909.

Letter to the editor, Outlook (London), May6,1911.

"Joseph Conrad," English Review, Dec.,1911.

"Literary Portraits — V: Miss Violet Hunt and 'The Desirable Alien,'" Outlook (London), Oct.11,1913.

"Literary Portraits — VIII: Professor Saintsbury and the English 'Nuvvle,'" Outlook (London), Nov.1,1913.

"Literary Portraits — XI: Mr. R.A. Scott-James and 'The Influence of the Press,'" Outlook (London), Nov.22, 1913.

"Literary Portraits — XVII: Nineteen-Thirteen and the Futurists," Outlook (London), Jan.3,1914.

"Literary Portraits — XXIII: Fyodor Dostoievsky and 'The Idiot,'" Outlook (London), Feb.14,1914.

"Literary Portraits — XXV: Monsignor Benson and 'Initiation,'" Outlook (London), Feb.28,1914.

"Literary Portraits — XXXV: Les Jeunes and 'Des Imagistes,'" Outlook (London), May9,1914.

"Literary Portraits — XXXVI: Les Jeunes and 'Des Imagistes' (Second Notice)," Outlook (London), May16,1914.

"On Heaven. (To V., who asked for a plan for a working Heaven)," Poetry, Jun.,1914.

"On Impressionism," Poetry and Drama, Jun.,Dec.,1914.

"The Saddest Story," Blast, Jun.20,1914.

"Literary Portraits — XLI: Mr. Richard Curle and 'Joseph Conrad,'" Outlook (London), Jun.20,1914.

"Mr. Blood and Commonsense about the War," Outlook (London), Jan.23,1915.

"A Jubilee," (Review of Some Imagist Poets), Outlook (London), Jul.10,1915.

"The Movies," Outlook (London), Aug.21,1915.

Letter to the editor, Athenaeum, Jul.16,1920.

"A Haughty and Proud Generation," Yale Review, Jul.,1922.

"'Ulysses' and the Handling of Indecencies," English Review, Dec.,1922.

"Stocktaking: Towards a Revaluation of English Literature," by "Daniel Chaucer," Transatlantic Review, Jan.-Jul., Sep.,Nov.,1924.

"Literary Causeries: II. Vill Loomyare," Chicago Tribune (Paris), Feb.24,1924.

"Chroniques: Paris, February," Transatlantic Review, Mar.,1924.

"Literary Causeries: VII. Pullus ad Margaritam," Chicago Tribune (Paris), Mar.30,1924.

"Chroniques: III. And from the United States," Transatlantic Review, Aug.,1924.

"Editorial, Paris, Armistice Day," Transatlantic Review, Dec.,1924.

"The Other House," (Review of Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters, ed. G. Jean-Aubry), N.Y. Herald Tribune Books, Oct.2,1927.

"Cambridge on the Caboodle," review of E.M. Forster's Aspects of the Novel, Saturday Review of Literature, Dec.17,1927.

"On Conrad's Vocabulary," Bookman (N.Y.), Jun.,1928.

Letter to the editor, Bookman (N.Y.), Oct.,1928.

"Autocriticism," (review of The Rash Act), Week-End Review, Sept.9,1933.

"Techniques," Southern Review, Jul.,1935.

"London Re-Visited," London Mercury, Dec.,1936.

Letter to the editor, Saturday Review of Literature, Jun.3,1939. (Signed "Faugh an-Ballagh Faugh).

BOOKS AND ARTICLES RELEVANT TO FORD

Agate, James. Review of Mightier than the Sword, Daily Express, Mar.10,1938.

Aiken, Conrad. Scepticisms: Notes on Contemporary Poetry. N.Y.: Knopf, 1919.

Aldington, Richard. Life for Life's Sake. N.Y.: Viking, 1941.

———. Portrait of a Genius, But ... (The Life of D.H. Lawrence, 1885-1930). London: Heinemann, 1950.

Allen, Walter. "Books in General," New Statesman, Apr.20, 1946.

———. The English Novel: A Short Critical History. London: Phoenix House, 1954.

Angeli, Helen Rossetti. Pre-Raphaelite Twilight: The Story of Charles Augustus Howell. London: Richards, 1954.

Arnold, Aerol. "Why Structure in Fiction: A Note to Social Scientists," American Quarterly, Fall,1958.

Aubry, G. Jean-. The Sea-Dreamer: A Definitive Biography of Joseph Conrad. London: Heinemann, 1957.

Baines, Jocelyn. Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1959.

Bartlett, Paul A. "Letters of Ford Madox Ford," Saturday Review of Literature, Aug.2,1941.

Beach, Joseph W. The Twentieth-Century Novel: Studies in Technique. N.Y.: Appleton-Crofts, 1932.

Bennett, Arnold. "Books and Persons," New Age, Mar.17,1910.

———. The Journal of Arnold Bennett: 1896-1928. Ed. Newman Flower. London: Cassell, 1932.

Berry, John. "Notes of a Novelist," Nation (N.Y.), Nov.14,1959.

Bishop, John P. Collected Essays. Ed. E. Wilson. N.Y.: Scribner's, 1948.

Blackmur, R.P. "The King Over the Water: Notes on the Novels of F.M. Hueffer," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr. 1948.

Bornhauser, Fred. "Ford as Art Critic," Shenandoah, Spring, 1953.

Bowen, Stella. Drawn from Life: Reminiscences. London: Collins, 1941.

Bradbury, Malcolm. "The English Review," London Magazine, Aug.,1958.

Brewer, Joseph. "Ford Madox Ford: A Memoir," Saturday Review of Literature, Jul.8,1939.

Bronner, Milton. "Ford Madox Hueffer: Impressionist," Bookman (N.Y.), Oct.,1916.

Brooks, Van Wyck. Opinions of Oliver Allston. N.Y.: Dutton, 1941.

———. The Confident Years: 1885-1915. London: Dent, 1952.

Cassell, Richard A. "The Two Sorrells of Ford Madox Ford," Modern Philology, Nov.,1961.

———. Ford Madox Ford: A Study of His Novels. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1961.

Coffman, Stanley K., Jr. Imagism: A Chapter for the History of Modern Poetry. Norman, Oklahoma: U. of Oklahoma Press, 1951.

Conrad, Jessie (Mrs. Joseph). Letter to the editor, Times Literary Supplement, Dec.4,1924.

———. "The Romance of 'The Rescue,'" Bookman's Journal, Apr.,1925.

———. "Conrad's Share in The Nature of a Crime and His Congo Diary," Bookman's Journal, Jul.,1925.

———. Joseph Conrad as I Knew Him. London: Heinemann, 1926.

———. Joseph Conrad and His Circle. London: Jarrolds, 1935.

Conrad, Joseph. Letter to the editor, Saturday Review (N.Y. Times), Aug.24,1901.

———. The Secret Agent: A Simple Tale. London: Dent, 1923.

———. Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters. Ed. G. Jean-Aubry. London: Heinemann, 1927.

———. Letters from Joseph Conrad: 1895-1924. Ed. Edward Garnett. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1928.

———. Joseph Conrad: Lettres Françaises. Ed. G. Jean-Aubry. Paris: Gallimard, 1929.

———. A Conrad Memorial Library: The Collection of George T. Keating. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1929.

———. Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum. Ed. William Blackburn. London: Heinemann, 1958.

Cox, James T. "Ford's 'Passion for Provence,'" E.L.H. (Johns Hopkins University), Dec.,1961.

Crandall, C.F. "When Sinclair Lewis Wrote a Sonnet in Three Minutes, Fifty Seconds," N.Y. Herald Tribune Book Review, Sept.2,1951.

Crankshaw, Edward. Joseph Conrad: Some Aspects of the Art of the Novel. London: Lane, 1936.

———. Review of The Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford, Observer, Jun.17,1962.

Cummings, E.E. XAIPE: Seventy-One Poems. London: Oxford U.P., 1950.

Curle, Richard. Joseph Conrad: A Study. London: Kegan Paul, 1914.

———. The Last Twelve Years of Joseph Conrad. London: Sampson Low, Marston, 1928.

Davis, Harold E. "Conrad's Revisions of The Secret Agent: A Study in Literary Impressionism," Modern Language Quarterly, Sept.,1958.

Davis, Rupert Hart-. Hugh Walpole: A Biography. London: Macmillan, 1952.

Douglas, Norman. Late Harvest. London: Lindsay Drummond, 1946.

Dreiser, Theodore. Review of The Good Soldier, New Republic, Jun.12,1915.

Eliot, T.S. Review of The New Poetry: An Anthology. (Eds. Harriet Monroe & Alice Henderson). Egoist, Nov.,1917.

Ellmann, Richard. James Joyce. London: Oxford U.P., 1959.

Firebaugh, J.J. "Tietjens and the Tradition," Pacific Spectator, Winter,1952.

Flaubert, Gustave. Letters. Ed. Richard Rumbold. London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1950.

Flint, F.S. Otherworld: Cadences. London: Poetry Bookshop, 1920.

Frierson, William C. The English Novel In Transition: 1885-1940. Norman, Oklahoma: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1942.

Gallup, Donald C. "The Making of The Making of Americans," New Colophon: A Book-Collector's Miscellany. N.Y.: Crawford, 1950.

Galsworthy, John. Letters from John Galsworthy: 1900-1932. Ed. Edward Garnett. London: Cape, 1934.

———. The Life and Letters of John Galsworthy. Ed. H.V. Marrot. London: Heinemann, 1935.

Ganz, Paul. The Paintings of Holbein. London: Phaidon, 1950.

Garnett, David. The Golden Echo. London: Chatto and Windus, 1953.

Garnett, Edward. Review of Joseph Conrad, Nation and Athenaeum, Dec.6,1924.

———. Review of Joseph Conrad, Weekly Westminster, Feb.14,1925.

Goacher, Denis. "Pictures of Ezra Pound," Nimbus, Winter, 1956.

Goldring, Douglas. Reputations: Essays in Criticism. London: Chapman and Hall, 1920.

———. South Lodge: Reminiscences of Violet Hunt, Ford Madox Ford and the English Review Circle. London: Constable, 1943.

———. The Last Pre-Raphaelite: The Life and Writings of Ford Madox Ford. London: Macdonald, 1948.

Gordon, Caroline. "The Story of Ford Madox Ford," Highlights of Modern Literature. Ed. Francis Brown. N.Y.: New American Library, 1954.

———. How to Read a Novel. N.Y.: Viking, 1957.

Gorman, Herbert. "Ford Madox Ford: The Personal Side," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr.,1948.

Gose, Elliott B. "Reality to Romance: A Study of Ford's Parade's End," College English, May,1956.

———. "The Strange Irregular Rhythm: An Analysis of The Good Soldier," Publications of the Modern Languages Association, Jun.,1957.

Greene, Graham. "The Dark Backward: A Footnote," London Mercury, Oct.,1935.

———. Review of Great Trade Route, London Mercury, Feb.,1937.

———. Review of Vive le Roy, London Mercury, Aug.,1937.

———. The Lost Childhood and Other Essays. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1951.

———. Introduction, The Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford. London: Bodley Head, 1962.

Greenslet, Ferris. Under the Bridge. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943.

Guérard, Albert J. Conrad the Novelist. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1958.

Hackett, Francis. Henry VIII. London: Constable, 1929.

Hafley, James. "The Moral Structure of The Good Soldier," Modern Fiction Studies, Summer,1959.

Hartley, L.P. Review of Last Post, Saturday Review, Feb.18,1928.

———. Review of A Little Less Than Gods, Saturday Review, Nov.24,1928.

Harvey → Harwood, H.C. "Recent Tendencies in English Fiction," Quarterly Review, Apr.,1929.

Hassall, Christopher. A Biography of Edward Marsh. London: Heinemann, 1959.

Harvey, David Dow. Ford Madox Ford: 1873-1939: A Bibliography of Works and Criticism. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton U.P., 1962.

Herndon, Richard. "The Genesis of Conred's 'Amy Foster,'" Studies in Philology, Jul.,1960.

Hicks, Granville. "Ford Madox Ford — A Neglected Contemporary," Bookman (N.Y.), Dec.,1930.

Hoffman, Frederick, Jr. The Modern Novel in America: 1900-1950. Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1956.

Hoult, Norah. There Were No Windows. London: Heinemann, 1944.

Huddleston, Sisley. Bohemian Literary and Social Life in Paris. London: Harrap, 1928.

———. Back to Montparnasse. London: Harrap, 1931.

Hunt, Violet. White Rose of Weary Leaf. London: Constable, 1908.

———. "Read, Mark ..." (Story), Saturday Review, Aug.5., 1922.

———. The Flurried Years. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1926.

Hunt, William Holman. Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. N.Y.: Macmillan, 1905.

Hynes, Samuel. "The Epistemology of The Good Soldier," Sewanee Review, Spring,1961.

Isherwood, Christopher. Review of Parade's End, Tomorrow, Nov.,1950.

Jackson, Holbrook. The Eighteen Nineties. London: Hammondsworth, 1950.

James, Henry. The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces. London: Scribner's, 1947.

———. What Maisie Knew. London: John Lehman, 1947.

———. The Ambassadors. N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1953.

———. The Wings of the Dove. N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1959.

James, R.A. Scott-. Preface to the 1948 Penguin republications of the Tietjens novels.

———. Fifty Years of British Literature: 1900-1950. London: Longmans Green, 1956.

———. "Ford Madox Ford When He Was Hueffer," South Atlantic Quarterly, Spring,1958.

Jameson, Storm. The Georgian Novel and Mr. Robinson. London: Heinemann, 1929.

Jepson, Edgar. Memories of an Edwardian. London: Secker, 1938.

Jones, A.R. "Notes Towards a History of Imagism," South Atlantic Quarterly, Summer,1961.

Karl, Frederick. "The Significance of the Revisions of the Early Versions of Nostromo," Modern Fiction Studies, Summer,1959.

———. "Joseph Conrad's Literary Theory," Criticism, Fall, 1960.

———. A Reader's Guide to Joseph Conrad. N.Y.: Noonday Press, 1960.

Kenner, Hugh. Review of Trained for Genius, Kenyon Review, Autumn,1949.

———. "Remember that I have Remembered," Hudson Review, Winter,1951.

———. The Poetry of Ezra Pound. London: Faber, 1953.

———. Gnomon: Essays on Contemporary Literature. N.Y.: McDowell, Oblensky, 1958.

Lawrence, D.H. Letters. Ed. Aldous Huxley. London: Heinemann, 1956.

———. D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography. Ed. Edward Nehls. Madison, Wisc.: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1957.

———. The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence. Ed. Harry T. Moore. London: Heinemann, 1962.

Lid, Richard W. "Tietjens in Disguise," Kenyon Review, Spring 1960.

———. "Ford's Good Soldier: A Triumph of Narrative," First Person, Fall,1960.

———. "Ford Madox Ford and His Community of Letters," Prairie Schooner, Summer,1961.

———. "On the Time-Scheme of The Good Soldier," English Fiction in Transition, IV,2 (1961)

———. "Ford Madox Ford, Flaubert and the English Novel," Spectrum, Spring-Summer,1962.

Lowell, Robert. "Ford Madox Ford: 1873-1939," (Poem), Encounter, Apr.,1954.

Lubbock, Percy. The Craft of Fiction. London: O.U.P., 1961.

Ludwig, Richard M. "The Reputation of Ford Madox Ford," P.M.L.A., Dec.,1961.

McAlmon, Robert. Being Geniuses Together: An Autobiography. London: Secker and Warburg, 1938.

Macauley, Robie. "The Good Ford," Kenyon Review, Spring,1949.

———. Introduction to Parade's End, N.Y.: Knopf, 1950.

———. "The Dean in Exile: Notes on Ford Madox Ford," Shenandoah, Spring,1953.

———. "Observations on Technique: Some Notes on a Lecture given by Ford Madox Ford at Olivet College in June, 1938," Shenandoah, Spring,1953.

McCormick, John. Catastrophe and Imagination: An Interpretation of the Recent English and American Novel. London: Longmans, Green, 1957.

McFee, William. Letter to the Editor, Bookman (N.Y.), Jun.,1925.

Mackenzie, Compton. Literature in My Time. London: Rich and Cowan, 1933.

MacShane, Frank. "The Pattern of Ford Madox Ford," New Republic, Apr.4,1955.

———. "The Transatlantic Review," London Magazine, Dec.,1960.

———. "The English Review," South Atlantic Quarterly, Summer,1961.

———. "A Conscious Craftsman: Ford Madox Ford's Manuscript Revisions," Boston University Studies in English, Autumn,1961.

———. "Ford Madox Ford and His Contemporaries: The Techniques of the Novel," English Fiction in Transition, IV,1 (1961).

———. "'To Establish the Facts': A Communication on Mr. A.N. Jones and Ford Madox Ford," South Atlantic Quarterly, Spring,1962.

Marshall, Archibald. Out and About. London: Murray, 1933.

Masterman, C.F.G. The Condition of England. London: Methuen, 1909.

Masterman, Lucy. C.F.G. Masterman: A Biography. London: Nicholson and Watson, 1939.

Martindale, Elizabeth. Margaret Meever. London: Parsons, 1913.

Maupassant, Guy de. Fort Comme la Mort. Trans. Elizabeth Stevens. London: Hutchinson, 1952.

Maixner, John A. Ford Madox Ford's Novels: A Critical Study. London: O.U.P., 1962.

———. "The Saddest Story," Kenyon Review, Spring,1960.

Mencken, H.L. Review of Joseph Conrad, American Mercury, Apr.,1925.

Mendilow, A.C. Time and the Novel. London: Peter Nevill, 1952.

Meyerhoff, Hans. Time in Literature. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1955.

Mizener, Arthur. Review of Parade's End, Kenyon Review, Winter,1951.

Monro, Harold. Some Contemporary Poets. London: Leonard Parsons, 1920.

Morris, Lloyd. Review of Trained for Genius, N.Y. Herald Tribune Books, May22,1949.

Moser, Thomas. "Towards The Good Soldier," Daedalus, Spring, 1963.

Mudrick, Marvin. "Character and Event in Fiction," Yale Review, Winter, 1961.

Muller, Herbert. "Impressionism in Fiction: Prism vs. Mirror," The American Scholar, Summer, 1938.

Naumburg, Edward, Jr. "A Catalogue of a Ford Madox Ford Collection," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr., 1948.

New Directions; Number Seven. "Homage to Ford Madox Ford: A Symposium." Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1942. (Articles by Granville Hicks, Richard Aldington, William Rose Benét, John Peale Bishop, Joseph Brewer, Edward Dahlberg, George Dillon, Carl Van Doren, Jane Dransfield, Paul Engle, John Gould Fletcher, Caroline Gordon, James Laughlin, Christopher Morley, Lloyd Morris, Katherine Anne Porter, Ezra Pound, R. Ellis Roberts, Evelyn Scott, George Stevens, Allen Tate, Jean Starr Untermeyer, William Carlos Williams, Edward Naumburg, Jr.)

Norman, Charles: Ezra Pound. N.Y.: Macmillan, 1960.

Observer. Review of The Good Soldier, Mar. 28, 1915.

Paterson, Isabel. Review of Some Do Not, No More Parades and A Man Could Stand Up, N.Y. Herald Tribune Books, Oct. 17, 1926.

———. "Turns with a Bookworm," N.Y. Herald Tribune Books, Nov. 21, 1926.

Porter, Katherine Anne. The Days Before. N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace, 1952.

Pound, Ezra. Review of High Germany, Poetry Review, Mar., 1912.

———. "Status Rerum," Poetry, Jan., 1913.

———. Review of Collected Poems, New Freewoman, Dec. 15, 1913.

———. "Mr. Hueffer and the Prose Tradition in Verse," Poetry, Jun., 1914.

———. "A Shake Down," Little Review, Aug., 1918.

———. Pavannes and Divisions. N.Y.: Knopf, 1918.

———. "On Criticism in General," Criterion, Jan., 1923.

———. "Harold Monro," Criterion, Jul., 1932.

———. ABC of Reading. London: Faber, 1951.

———. Polite Essays. London: Faber, 1937.

———. "This Hulme Business," Townsman, Jan., 1938.

———. "Ford Madox Ford: Obit," Nineteenth Century and After, Aug., 1939.

———. The Pisan Cantos. London: Faber, 1948.

———. Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir. London: Laidlaw, 1949.

Pound, Ezra. The Letters of Ezra Pound. London: Faber, 1950.

———. Guide to Kulchur. London: Faber, 1956.

———. Pavannes and Divigations. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1958.

———. Selected Poems. Ed. T.S. Eliot. London: Faber, 1959.

Pritchett, V.S. Review of Great Trade Route, Fortnightly Review, Mar.,1937.

———. Review of The Good Soldier, N.Y. Times Book Review, Sept.16,1951.

Prothero, J.K. Review of Zeppelin Nights, New Witness, Jan.6,1916.

Pulos, C.E. "The New Critics and the Language of Poetry," University of Nebraska Studies No. 19, Mar.,1958.

Putnam, Samuel. Paris Was Our Mistress; Memoirs of a Lost and Found Generation. N.Y.: Viking, 1947.

Rascoe, Burton. We Were Interrupted. N.Y.: Doubleday, 1947.

Read, Herbert. Annals of Innocence and Experience. London: Faber, 1940.

Reynolds, Stephen. Letters of Stephen Reynolds. Ed. Harold Wright. Richmond: Hogarth, 1923.

Rhys, Jean. Postures. London: Chatto and Windus, 1928.

———. After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie. London: Cape, 1931.

Rossetti, William M. Some Reminiscences. London: Brown, Langham, 1906.

Schorer, Mark. "The Good Novelist in The Good Soldier," Princeton University Library Chronicle, Apr.,1948.

———. Foreword, Critiques and Essays in Modern Fiction: 1921-1951. Ed. John W. Aldridge. N.Y.: Ronald, 1952.

———. Editor, Modern British Fiction: Essays in Criticism. London: O.U.P., 1961.

Seiden, Melvin. "Ford Madox Ford and His Tetralogy," London Magazine, Aug.,1959.

Shanks, E. Buxton. Review of Collected Poems, Poetry and Drama, Dec.,1913.

———. Review of The Last Pre-Raphaelite, World Review, Jun.,1948.

Skinner, Robert T. The Schoolmaster Looks Back. Edinburgh: Constable, 1947.

Soskice, Juliet. Chapters from Childhood. London: Selwyn and Blount, 1921.

Stein, Gertrude. Flowers of Friendship: Letters to Gertrude Stein. Ed. Donald Gallup. N.Y.: Knopf, 1952.

Swinnerton, Frank. The Georgian Scene. London: Methuen, 1934.

Tindall, William Y. Forces in Modern British Literature: 1885-1956. N.Y.: Knopf, 1947.

Wagner, Geoffrey. Wyndham Lewis: A Portrait of the Artist as Enemy. London: Routledge and Paul, 1957.

Walpole, Hugh. "London Letter," N.Y. Herald Tribune Books, Nov.24,1929.

Walter, E.V. "The Political Sense of Ford Madox Ford," New Republic, Mar.26,1956.

Wells, H.G. Letter to the editor, English Review, Aug., 1920.

———. Experiment in Autobiography. London: Macmillan, 1934.

West, Rebecca. Review of The Good Soldier, Daily News, Apr.2,1915.

Wigham, Peter. "Ford Madox Ford," European, Dec.,1957.

Wiley, Paul L. Conrad's Measure of Man. Madison, Wisc.: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1954.

———. Novelist of Three Worlds: Ford Madox Ford. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1962.

Williams, William Carlos. Selected Poems. Ed. Randall Jarrell. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1949.

———. Review of Parade's End, Sewanee Review, Jan.-Mar.,1951.

———. The Autobiography of William Carlos Williams. N.Y.: Random House, 1951.

———. Selected Letters. Ed. John C. Thirlwall. N.Y.: McDowell, Oblensky, 1957.

Wimsatt, William K., Jr. and Brooks, Cleanth. Literary Criticism: A Short History. N.Y.: Knopf, 1957.

Wise, Thomas J. A Bibliography of the Writings of Joseph Conrad (1895-1921). London: Privately printed, 1921.

Wyzewa, T. de. "Le Roman Anglais en 1907," Revue des Deux Mondes, Dec.15.,1907.

Young, Kenneth. Ford Madox Ford. London: Longmans Green, 1956.

Zabel, Morton D. Craft and Character in Modern Fiction. N.Y.: Viking, 1957.

INDEX

(Names and titles of books by Ford)

Abercrombie, Lascelles, B.09

A Call, 1.19,20; 2.14; 4.15-24,48; 5.04,17,23-4.

A House, 6.02; B.16.

Aldington, Richard, 4.06,08; B.19,21.

A Little Less than Gods, 6.38-43.

A Mirror to France, 7.03n1.

Ancient Lights, 1.02,04,08; 2.01,10n2; 4.14,28-30; A.10n2; B.25,26.

An English Girl, 1.18,19,20; 2.32; 3.10,12-17; 4.23,31; 7.10.

Angeli, Helen Rossetti, 1.07n2; 4.29-30.

Aubry, Gerard Jean-, 224n2; 3.36; A.02,03n2,07,08n3.

Bach, Johann Sebastian, 1.10n2.

Baines, Jocelyn, 2.02; A.04n3,09n1,09n4,11,13n1.

Baker, Carlos, 6.10.

Barker, Granville, 4.05.

Barnes, Djuna, 6.09.

Barrie, J.M., 5.29.

Bartlett, Paul A., 2.34n3; 6.11n2.

Belloc, Hilaire, 4.05.

Bennett, Arnold, 3.47; 4.05,21.

Between St. Denis and St. George, 5.30; B.14n2.

Blackmur, R.P., viii; 2.07.

Blackwood, William, 2.06,19n1; 3.41n1; A.05n3.

Bornhauser, Frederick, B.03.

Bowen, Stella, 4.30n2; 6.01,02,07,08,10,44.

Bradbury, Malcolm, 4.05.

Bronner, Milton, B.10.

Brooke, Rupert, 4.05.

Brooks, Van Wyck, 6.08.

Brown, Ford Madox, 1.01,02-03,09-10,11,12; B.02,03n2.

Browning, Robert, 1.02; B.06-07,25.

Carlyle, Thomas, 1.01; 4.29.

Cassell, Richard A., viii; 3.02,11n3; 4.34-5; 6.32n4.

Chambers, Jessie, 4.07,08.

Chesterton, Gilbert Keith, 4.05; 5.29n4.

Coffman, Stanley K., Jr., B.13n1,23-24.

Collected Poems (1913), 1.14; 4.48; B.01,02,05,06,18,22.

Collected Poems (1936), 7.02; B.09,17.

Conrad, Jessie (Mrs. Joseph), vii; 2.33; 6.11,32,39-40, A.02,03,07,11.

Conrad, Joseph, vi,vii,xi; 1.05,11,12-14; 2.01-37; 3.01,10,11,35-36,41n1,44; 4.01,02,03, 05, 07,28; 6.04,10-11,35,39-40; 7.24; A.01-13; B.15n1,17.

Coppard, A.E., 6.09.

Crandall, C.F., B.17n1.

Crane, Stephen, 1.11,12; 2.03n1,31.

Crankshaw, Edward, 2.37.

Crosland, T.W.H., 4.03.

Cummings, E.E., 6.09.

Curle, Richard, 2.03n1.

Davies, W.H., 4.01,05.

Dolmetsch, Arnold, 4.08.

Doolittle, Hilda (H.D.), 4.08; B.19,21,22.

Douglas, Lord Alfred, 4.03.

Douglas, Norman, 4.05,07.

Duckworth, Gerald, 6.02.

Dürer, Albrecht, 3.25.

Dyce, Frederick, B.03n2.

Eliot, T.S., 4.08; 5.13; 6.09; 7.17,20,24; B.12-13,15.

England and the English, 3.02-04; 5.02-03; 7.03.

Flaubert, Gustave, 2.04,08,13,19,27,31; 3.39; 5.05-06,12; 6.16; B.12,26.

Fletcher, John Gould, B.13n1,19,20,21.

Flint, F.S., B.19,21,22,25n4.

Ford Madox Brown, 1.04-05,06,13; 2.06; B.03.

Forster, E.M., 4.05.

France, Anatole, 4.05.

From Inland and Other Poems, B.02,04-05.

Frost, Robert, B.04.

Galsworthy, John, 3.02n1,35; 4.01,04,05; A.07n4,08.

Garnett, David, 1.04,06n5; 2.16n2; 4.11.

Garnett, Edward, 1.03,05,06n5,13; 2.01,03,09,24; 3.01; 4.01,03n3,08n1,08n2,09,28; A.08; B.05.

Garnett, Richard, 2.04.

Gaudier Brzeska, Henri, 4.08.

Goncher, Denis, B.01n6,25n2.

Goldring, Douglas, ix; 1.05n3,06,14n1; 2.03n1,05n3,34; 3.01; 4.03,04,11,13; 5.29n1; 6.01n2,02,05n3,08,30n1,44-45; 7.21n1,22;

Gollancz, Victor, 7.02n2.

Gordon, Caroline, viiinl.

Gose, Elliott B., Jr., 6.16n1.

Gosse, Edmund, 4.05.

Graham, R.B. Cunninghame, 4.01,05.

Great Trade Route, xi; 1.11-12; 4.27,33,34; 5.20; 7.02,03-07,22.

Greene, Graham, vii,ix; 3.17,32,39; 7.20.

Hackett, Francis, 3.20,28.

Hans Holbein the Younger, 3.01,25; B.03.

Hardy, Thomas, 4.01,02,05.

Harris, Frank, 3.08,47; 4.28.

Harrison, Austin, 4.05.

Harvey, David D., ix; 1.05; 3.07n2,18n1,40n1,44n2,47n3; 4.02n3,13n3,31n1,38n1,38n2; 6.03n1-7; 7.01n1,02n2; A.12; B.16n2.

Hassall, Christopher, B.09n2.

Hauptmann, Gerhardt, 4.05.

Heine, Heinrich, B.13-14.

Heinemann, William, 4.09n4.

Hemingway, Ernest, vi,vii; 6.09-10.

Henley, William H., 1.08,10,13; 2.02.

Henry for Hugh, 3.17; 7.03,07,12-18,20,22.

Henry James, 2.30; 4.47-48.

High Germany, 4.13,14; B.02,07-09,16.

Hinton, Percival, 6.39n1.

Hogarth, William, 4.25.

Holbein, Hans, 1.10,18; 3.19,25-26; 4.25.

Hudson, W.H., 2.31; 3.11; 4.01,05.

Hueffer, Catharine, 1.01,03.

Hueffer, Elsie, see Martindale, Elsie.

Hueffer, Franz Xaver, 1.01.

Hulme. T.E., B.01,23,25n4.

Humphrey, Robert, 6.32.

Hunt, Mrs. Alfred, 4.12

Hunt, Violet, vii,xi; 2.33; 4.04,05,10-14,33; 5.01,06,29; 6.01,30,32; B.08,09-10,13.

Hunt, William Holman, 1.02,07; 2.26; 4.12; B.03n2.

Hynes, Samuel, 5.08,27.

It Was the Nightingale, 2.34; 3.03; 4.30; 6.11-15,32; 7.02.

James, Henry, vi; 1.11,12; 2.13,16,26,29,30,31,32-33; 3.04-05,09,10,11,12,16,28,32; 4.01,05, 12,38,47-48; 5.06,08,12,22; 6.34; 7.12,24; B.12,25.

James, R.A. Scott-, 4.04.

Jepson, Edgar, 4.07; 6.05n3,07; B.16n2.

Jerrold, Walter, 1.05n3; B.18.

Jones, A.R., B.23,24.

Jones, Edward Burne, 1.03,08.

Joseph Conrad, xi; 1.12-13,18; 2.02,04,06-09,11,13, 15,16,19,23,25-31; 3.08n3,12,40; 4.30; 6.10-11; 7.01; A.01-13; B.11.

Joyce, James, vi; 5.13; 6.09,34; 7.24.

Katharine Howard Trilogy, vii; 3.17-40;44; 4.25,35.
Keating, George T., 2.05n1; 6.39n3; A.03n4,12.
Kenner, Hugh, viii; 2.28; 6.38; B.12,15n2,20.
Kipling, Rudyard, 1.10.
Koestler, Arthur, 3.04.

Ladies Whose Bright Eyes, 4.30-35.
Lane, John, 5.07.
Last Post, 7.01,03,12. See also Parade's End.
Lawrence, D.H., vi; 4.03n3,05,07-10; 6.09; 7.23; B.10,21.
Lewis, P. Wydham, 4.05,07-08,13.
Lid, Richard W., ixn4; 3.11; 5.22.
Lowell, Amy, B.21.
Lowell, Robert, 7.21; B.27.

Macaulay, Robie, viii.
McCormick, John, 6.10n3,32n2.
MacShane, Frank, ixn4; 1.06n5; 2.34n4; 4.02n1,06; 6.09.
Malory, Thomas, 3.35.
Mark Twain, 4.31,33.
Marshall, Archibald, 4.05n2,46.
Martindale, Elsie, 1.03,04,05,06; 2.01,16n2; 3.01,12; 4.11-12.
Marwood, Arthur, 1.02n3; 2.33-34; 4.01,02,04,28; 6.13-14,18,37; A04,05,06,07,08,09,10.
Masterman, C.F.G., 4.03; 6.01.
Maupassant, Guy de, 2.08,31; 5.04,11; B.12.
Meixner, John A., viii; 1.06,13; 3.09,32,33,45n1,48; 4.33; 6.07,13,27; 6.31,32,33,36-37; 7.13n1.
Meldrum, David S., 2.01n2; 3.41n1.
Menchen, H.L., A.02.
Meredith, George, 4.05.
Merrill, Bobbs, 4.38.
Mightier than the Sword, 1.03; 2.31; 4.09.
Millais, John, 2.26; B.03n2.
Mister Bosphorus and the Muses, 6.10; B.16.

Mr. Apollo, 3.02,44-50; 4.31,42.
Mr. Fleight, 4.15,26,41-47; 6.17; 7.07,12.
Mond, Sir Alfred, 4.04.
Monroe, Harriet, B.09n3,19n2,25n1.
Moore, George, 1.07.
Moore, Harry T., 4.09n3.
Morey, John Hope, A.12,13.
Morris, William, 1.03-04,08,11; 2.01; 4.27,28; B.25.
Moser, Thomas, ixn4; 4.48.

Naumburg, Edward, Jr., B.15n1.
New Poems, 7.01; B.17.
New York Essays, 7.01
New York is Not America, 7.01.
No Enemy, ixn3; 5.06; 6.02,03-05,12; 7.03.

On Heaven and Other Poems, 4.48; 5.29,30; B.01,09-16.
Orwell, George, 4.27.
Owen, Wilfred, B.15.

Parade's End, vii,viii,ix,xi; 2.07,16,34; 3.43,49; 4.41; 5.28; 6.05,10,11-38; 7.03,25.
Paterson, Isabel, 6.28,29.
Pinker, J.B., 3.07n2; 4.38; 6.03; A.13.
Poems for Pictures, B.02.
Pound, Ezra, vi,xi; 2.11-12; 4.01,05,07,13,30,48; 6.01,08,09; 7.22,23,24,25; B.01,02,04, 09,10,12,17,18,19,20,21,22,24-27.
Praetorius, Mr. & Mrs., 1.02.
Privy Seal, see Katharine Howard Trilogy.
Prothero, J.K., 5.29.
Proust, Marcel, 6.11-12.
Provence, ixn3,xi; 4.27,34; 7.03-07,22.
Pulos, C.E., B.01n7,28.

Quinn, John, 6.09.

Roscoe, Burton, 6.09n2.

Read, Herbert, 1.13.

Return to Yesterday, 1.06,13; 2.02,04,05,30,32,35,36; 3.01,02; 4.02,08,30; 5.03; 6.36n2; 7.02; A.01-13; B.14n2.

Reynolds, Stephen, 4.05.

Rhys, Jean, 6.44.

Roberts, Michael, B.12n1.

Romance, 1.05,13; 2.05,06,07,17-25,30; 3.01.

Rossetti, 1.09; 4.29,31; 7.11; B.03.

Rossetti, Christina, 2.13.

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 1.09; B.02.

Rossetti, Lucy, 1.04.

Rossetti, William Michael, 1.01; 3.19.

Ruskin, John, 1.02,08; 3.07; 4.29.

Schorer, Mark, viii; 5.08,13,24.

Schücking, Levin, 4.01.

Sinclair, May, 4.07.

Smith, Aaron, 2.03.

Songs from London, B.02,05-07.

Some Do Not, 109-10,19. See also Parade's End.

Soskice, David, 4.04; A.07n4.

Soskice, Juliet, 1.02; A.10n2.

Stein, Gertrude, 6.08.

Stendhal, B.26.

Stevenson, R.L., 2.18.

Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 1.07; 2.32n5; B.25.

Tetley, Gerard, 22n1.

The Benefactor, 1.14,18,19,20; 2.17,32; 3.04-12;

The Brown Owl, 1.02-03,06.

The Cinque Ports, 1.05; 2.06; A.05,06.

The Desirable Alien, 4.13.

The English Novel, 1.10n2; 7.01-02.

The Face of the Night, 1.14n2; B.02,03-04.

The Feather, 1.03.

The Fifth Queen, see Katharine Howard Trilogy.

The Fifth Queen Crowned, see Katharine Howard Trilogy.

The Fifth Queen Trilogy, see Katharine Howard Trilogy.

The Good Soldier, vii,viii,ix,x,xi; 1.20-21; 2.14; 3.02,05,11,49; 4.13,15,21,22,41,47,48; 5.01-28; 6.05,07,16,17,31,34n1,38; 7.23,25.

The 'Half Moon', ixn3; 3.43-44; 4.37.

The Heart of the Country, see England and the English.

The Inheritors, 1.10,14,18,19; 2.05,06-17; 3.04,08,44; 6.17; A.03.

The March of Literature, 2.28,29; 6.37; 7.03,21.

The Marsden Case, 6.05-07,12.

The Nature of a Crime, 1.17n1,18; 2.21,34-35; 4.15.

The New Humpty Dumpty, ixn3; 1.19; 4.39-41; 5.28.

The Panel, 1.20; 4.15,24,37-39.

The Portrait, 4.24-26,41.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, 1.09; 2.26; 4.29; B.03.

The Queen Who Flew, 1.03.

The Questions at the Well, B.02.

The Rash Act, 3.17; 7.03,07,12-18,20,22.

The Shifting of the Fire, 1.04,14,15-21; 2.17.

The Simple Life Limited, 4.15,26,27-28.

The Soul of London, see England and the English.

The Spirit of the People, see England and the English.

The Young Lovell, 4.15,36-37.

Thoreau, Henry, 1.06.

Time to Revisit, 2.02n3,30,31; 4.30; 6.02.

Tolstoy, Leo, 4.01.

Tomlinson, H.M., 4.05.

Turgenev, Ivan, 1.07; 3.08; B.12,26.

Verhaeren, Emile, 4.05.

Vive le Roy, 7.19-21.

Wagner, Richard, 1.01,17n1.

Waliszewski, K., 2.24.

Walpole, Hugh, 2.02n2; 7.01n2.

Walter, E.V., 6.28.

Ward, Maisie, 5.29n4.

Wells, H.G., 1.06-07; 2.02,36; 4.01,02n3,05,11; 5.29.

Westcott, Glenway, 5.06.

When Blood is Their Argument, 5.30; B.14n2.

When the Wicked Man, 3.17; 7.07-12.

Wigham, Peter, B.01n7.

Wiley, Paul L., viii,ix; 1.17n1; 2.15,20n1; 3.03-04, 06-07,16,28,44,46; 4.16,21,25-26,44; 5.20; 6.04-05.

Williams, William Carlos, 6.09; B.27,28.

Wise, Thomas J., 2.21n1.

Women and Men, 3.02; 5.13n4; 6.10.

Wordsworth, William, B.07.

Wyzewa, T. de, 3.39.

Yeats, W.B., 4.05; B.25.

Zabel, Morton Dauwen, 6.29.

Zeppelin Nights, 5.29-30.