

**Imagining Archaeology: Nature and Landscape in the
work of Thomas Hardy and Richard Jefferies**

**Submitted by Rebecca Welshman to the University of Exeter as a thesis
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Abstract

Over the last two decades the potential for the combined study of literature and archaeology has been increasingly recognised. The Victorian era, which gave rise to new literary forms, and to archaeology as a science, offers a fertile area of enquiry. This thesis seeks to bring together the imaginative possibilities of archaeology and literature, conceiving their close association to be rooted in the observance and appreciation of the natural world. Focusing on the work of Thomas Hardy and Richard Jefferies, who both wrote about Wessex landscapes rich in archaeology, the thesis identifies the processes involved in the authors' engagement with nature in archaeological settings. In 1851, Sir Daniel Wilson welcomed archaeology into the 'circle of the sciences', and the subject rose to popularity in the periodical press alongside rural pursuits; driven by the closing divide between town and country. Literary depictions of nature in ancient settings elevated the imaginative conception of the past, and found a receptive audience in London papers such as the *Graphic* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to which Hardy and Jefferies contributed. Both authors associate the mysterious qualities of prehistoric times, and the consonant sense of 'untrodden space', with the discovery of new subterranean territories in the self. In a society that was 'adrift on change', and seeking new meaning, these connections between the literary and archaeological imagination, and between the present and the past, forged at least temporary consolation. Both authors anticipated early Modern approaches to an archaeology of mind.

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Introduction

The systematic study of past human life and culture through excavation and analysis of material evidence has afforded insight into how past cultures lived and died for over two thousand years. The study of knowledge of *arche* was first identified by the Greek philosopher Anaximander during 611–547 BC and referred to the search for beginnings and sources of things which appeared to have no origins.¹ This knowledge was developed by Aristotle, who identified the water of Thales as the *arche*; 'the primeval matter, the original state of things'.² Since archaeology began to develop as a discipline at the end of the eighteenth century, efforts to piece together the human past, in order to understand the present, have become a significant and popular part of human cultures worldwide. Early antiquarianism recognised that the study of the past, through the material evidence that remained, was a way in which the origins of human life might be better understood.

The interdisciplinary character of archaeology has since been widely acknowledged. In *Theatre Archaeology* (2001) Michael Shanks and Mike Pearson define archaeology as a 'cultural field' rather than a discipline per se. Writing about their plans for a dynamic new Interdisciplinary Archaeology Centre at Stanford University they state:

It will cut across several departments — of Classics, History, Anthropological Sciences, Cultural and Social Anthropology, Earth Sciences, and Art History. While archaeology has always been this interdisciplinary field, divisions and rifts have been the norm, frequently

¹ Jaroslav Malina, and Zdenek Vasicek, *Archaeology Yesterday and Today*, trans. by Marek Zvelebil (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 3.

² Ibid.

focusing on that familiar and disabling cultural divide between science and the humanities. We intend something different — a creative intermingling, where the boundaries of the discipline are deliberately blurred, held suspended. Archaeology — truly interdisciplinary [...] means to work upon understanding archaeological things — material traces and material cultures, understanding the creative event that is the construction of archaeological knowledge, and the historical context of such an archaeological project.³

It is this 'creative intermingling' that this thesis aims to achieve, recognising that over the last twenty years, as archaeology has become increasingly popular, the potential for its interdisciplinary application has developed into a more visible and attractive avenue of study. In *Voices in the Past: English Literature and Archaeology* (2004), one of the only books dedicated to the study of both subjects, archaeologist John Hines aims 'to integrate the two into a broader and deeper form of cultural history' by combining literary history with material context.⁴ Hines suggests that the past is still very much 'alive', and that there is much to learn from the material remnants of an ostensibly voiceless past. The book aims to 'read literature in light of the material circumstances of its production and transmission [...] to reinstate evaluation as an essential and explicit feature of critical practice', and seeks to broaden critical reactions to a series of texts from Old English poetry to Victorian realism.⁵

³ Michael Shanks and Mike Pearson, *Theatre Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. xiv.

⁴ John Hines, *Voices in the Past* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2004), preface.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

As Hines recognises, the application of this approach is not limited to a particular era of literature. However, the social, cultural and agricultural changes which occurred in Victorian England, in conjunction with the rising popularity of archaeology, highlight the nineteenth century as a fertile and accessible area of enquiry. Hines examines Victorian conceptions of artifacts as exhibits and considers how the strong sense of domestic space in realist literature is in part generated by the appreciation of domestic material objects.⁶ His book considers the multiplicity of approaches to archaeology in Victorian times — photography, collecting, and construction — but does not attempt to construct a paradigm for the understanding of archaeology and mind in rural Victorian England. Rather, the focus is on presenting a deeper cultural history of a ‘hitherto undeveloped kind’:

By reading archaeology and literature together it is possible both to understand and to appreciate the complexity, and what is often the coherency, of a past that is made more open and more richly available to us than if approached in a more selective manner. The conjunction of these two perspectives can be shown to shed particular light on what things meant in the past. The material context can be argued to be genuinely fundamental to linguistic and thus literary semantics, while the literature can reveal much about the value and meanings of objects. The material world does not only impinge on the meaning of literature in the

⁶ See, for example, ‘Household Words and the Victorian Experience’, pp. 172–204.

form of what is referred to, however; it also constitutes a context in which literature is performed.⁷

Hines ends by noting that ‘the next step would be to redress the urban bias [...] by looking at the particular circumstances of rural life’, and that the ‘novels of Thomas Hardy, exceptional for his desire to explore such experiences in the period of the late nineteenth century agricultural depression, offer tempting prospects’.⁸

Scholars in other fields have recognised that the imaginative implications of nineteenth-century archaeology have significant research potential. Colin Renfrew’s *Towards an Archaeology of Mind* considers the deeper psychological implications of archaeology, which lie beyond the material.⁹ As cultural and science historian, Alex Warwick, wrote in 2006: ‘although the spectacular and commercial aspects of [nineteenth-century] archaeology are clearly important, there is more to be said about the imaginative impact of its processes and discoveries.’¹⁰ Hines hints that the relationship between archaeology and literature is best understood by analysing the material circumstances of literary production: ‘literature and material culture [are] directly involved in processes of change over time [...] they do not just represent historical processes in a detached way, but are amongst the very media in which those changes take

⁷ Hines, p. 35.

⁸ Hines, p. 208. Andrew Radford adopts this approach in *Thomas Hardy and the Survivals of Time* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).

⁹ See Colin Renfrew, *Towards an Archaeology of Mind: an inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Cambridge* on 30 November 1982 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), cited in Hines, p. 195.

¹⁰ Alex Warwick, ‘The City of Resurrections’: the Archaeological Imagination of Arthur Machen’, ed. by Richard Pearson (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006), p. 126.

place'.¹¹ However, his analysis — informed by twenty-first century developments in the fields of archaeology and history rather than nineteenth-century knowledge — results in some oversights and ahistoricisms in his reading of Victorian fiction.

'Imagining Archaeology' proposes that the close reading of Victorian literature in the context of archaeological developments of the time affords significant insight into the imaginative processes involved in late nineteenth-century perceptions of the human past. This approach seeks to highlight places in literature where the scientific and literary imagination — often perceived as distinct by Victorians — are brought together within the cultural arena of archaeology, thus affording a bridge between the two disciplines. As Charles Percy Snow writes in *Two Cultures*:

The clashing point of two subjects, two disciplines, two cultures — of two galaxies, so far as that goes — ought to produce creative chances. In the history of mental activity that has been where some of the breakthroughs came.¹²

Although Hardy once referred to archaeology as 'to a great extent foreign to [his] experience', his work reflects a fascination with the physical, cultural, and imaginative implications of studying the material record.¹³ The tantalising remnants of an essentially irretrievable past gave weight to the experience of

¹¹ Hines, p. 35.

¹² Charles Percy Snow and Stefan Collini, *Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 16.

¹³ Thomas Hardy, 'Some Romano-British Relics Found at Max Gate, Dorchester', in Michael Millgate, ed., *Thomas Hardy's Public Voice: The Essays, Speeches, and Miscellaneous Prose* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 61–64.

the present. For the lone author, seeking meaning, these traces or ‘survivals’¹⁴, fostered a deep sense of connection with ‘prehistoric forefathers’.¹⁵ As a science closely related to astronomy, through the study of the astronomical alignment of stone monuments (now recognised as astroarchaeology), archaeology broadened Hardy’s cosmic awareness. *Two on a Tower* (1882), for example, acknowledges the close association between architecture, astronomy and prehistory. A stone folly — itself an archaeological monument — is sited on a prehistoric earthwork, and converted into an astronomical viewing tower by the astronomer Swithin St. Cleeve. This spot is central to the story as the site around which all other events revolve. The earth’s fragmented history enriches the fabric of Hardy’s Wessex and adds a mysterious quality to his fictionalised landscapes and characterisation. The close relationship between archaeology and folklore is noticeably present in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, which is set during the 1830s and 1850s, before the arrival of the railways. During this period, archaeologists often misinterpreted the meaning of discovered objects and phenomena, which led to heightened superstition amongst rural communities and strengthened belief in folklore.

The nineteenth century was an era of fewer distractions and entertainments than the present day, meaning that static objects assumed greater prominence. Further, scientific developments promised to explain the mysteries of matter, imbuing objects with new significance. For Jefferies, who combined scientific rationalism with a mystical sensitivity, archaeology became a method of tracing metaphysical and spiritual connections between humans

¹⁴ Andrew Radford, *Thomas Hardy and the Survivals of Time* (Ashgate: Continuum, 2003), p. 85.

¹⁵ Edward B. Tylor, ‘Primitive Society’, *Contemporary Review*, December 1872, p. 703.

and the material world through time. Jefferies was fascinated by the promise of the unknown and its potential to improve the human condition. The ten years Jefferies spent in archaeological research from 1866–1876 is evident in the archaeological allusions made in his essays ‘The Old Mill’ (1878) and ‘The Commonest Thing in the World’ (1877), both published in the *Graphic*, and *The Rise of Maximin* (1876). Archaeologist John Charles McGregor explains that ‘one of the basic problems of archaeology is tracing the origin and spread of traits’,¹⁶ a problem also encountered in the study of literature. Jefferies wrote hundreds of articles for the periodical press from 1866–1887, but did not regularly sign his work until the success of *The Gamekeeper at Home* (1879). A paucity of biographical material and published works for his early career means that scholarship has been unable to identify a clear genesis of *The Story of My Heart* (1883) or *After London* (1885), two of his most well-known and distinctive works. Research for this thesis has identified chronology in Jefferies’s writing style from 1876–1886. Textual and conceptual connections between works have led to the identification of a number of Jefferies’s unsigned or pseudonymous works in magazines and newspapers.¹⁷ Digital searches and language analysis have made it possible to establish some of the specific geographical locations used in *The Story of My Heart* and *After London*, and a more exact timeframe for the texts’ evolution. Both are rooted in Jefferies’s thought during the 1870s — a decade described by Cecil Smith, keeper of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum, as an ‘epoch-making period’ for the study of archaeology:

¹⁶ John Charles McGregor, *Southwestern Archaeology* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 101.

¹⁷ Similar research methods have also identified previously unknown letters by Hardy published in the periodical press.

The object aimed at is equally indeed the search after truth, but on a larger horizon: to study Greek art and life from without as well as from within; to seek for the great principles which underlie perfection, and to neglect nothing which may contribute a link in the long chain of evidence [...] [T]he part of Greek archaeology which must specially attract our attention is precisely that which leaves off where contemporary Greek written record begins. In tracing the origins of Greek art and literature we are necessarily following up the origin of the national life and spirit, and for this our only material lies in the traditions and actual remains of the people.¹⁸

Smith suggests that pre-history — ‘that which leaves off where contemporary Greek written record begins’ — is the most interesting and fruitful area of archaeology. In literature the absence of written records is equally intriguing and promises to lead to new understandings of authors’ lives and works. In the identification of Jefferies’s works in the 1870s, a time for which there are no notebooks and only a few surviving letters, key words become ‘link[s] in the long chain of evidence’. Connections between phrases, which may not initially appear important, can identify certain styles of writing. This is expressed in 1867 in an account of prehistoric Ohio:

¹⁸ Cecil Smith, ‘Recent Archaeological Research’, *Archaeological Review*, 3rd ser., 5 (1889), pp. 297–315 (p. 298).

A trivial link, sometimes, is found to connect fragments, so as to form a strong chain of circumstantial evidence, and render it as certain as the most positive.¹⁹

For Jefferies, the archaeological imagination afforded a perspective of continuity in the human condition; what he termed ‘the human stream [...] that ran through Rome once’.²⁰ In *The Story of My Heart* he uses the metaphor of a ‘chain’ to explain how discovery can lead to further understanding of the self and the human relation to the cosmos. He proposes a ‘higher set of ideas’ to improve and widen philosophy, and suggests that ‘the three found by the Cavemen are but stepping-stones: first links of an endless chain.’²¹

To account for the wide scope of the combined study of archaeology and literature, this thesis is divided into 4 parts and a total of 7 chapters. Intrinsic differences between the thoughts and writings of Hardy and Jefferies require each author to be considered individually. Chapter 1 is devoted to the interdisciplinary possibilities of archaeology and provides an overview of previous research in the area. The intersection between archaeology and other subjects — agriculture, natural history, geology and culture — is considered, and the role of the archaeo-rural imagination in nineteenth-century outdoor pursuits is discussed. Chapter 1 also explains how and why a study of this kind

¹⁹ Charles Whittlesey, *Early history of Cleveland, Ohio: including papers and other matter relating to the adjacent country: with biographical notices of the pioneers and surveyors* (Fairbanks, Benedict & Co., 1867), p. 102.

²⁰ Richard Jefferies, ‘The Lions in Trafalgar Square’, *Toilers of the Field* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 324.

²¹ Jefferies qualifies these ideas as: ‘the existence of the soul’, ‘immortality; and beyond the idea of the deity [...] something more than existence’, *The Story of My Heart* (Portland, ME: Thomas B. Mosher, 1905), p. 40.

affords deeper insights into the imaginative processes involved in the experience of landscape. Chapter 2 explores the sensory possibilities of archaeological landscapes as settings. This chapter also considers the importance of Hardy's and Jefferies's affinity for mapping, and why this is important in their representations of rural landscapes. Parts 2 and 3 provide close readings of Hardy's and Jefferies's texts to show how each author employed archaeological concepts, imagery and terms. These sections also demonstrate how the archaeology of mind can shape thought processes in the conception of the self in relation to time and place.

The concluding part considers the rising popularity of Jefferies's works after his death in 1887 in conjunction with Hardy's permanent transition to writing poetry. In their later works both authors engaged in a form of personal archaeology — an effort to recover former thoughts and feelings associated with landscapes of their youth; this process held unique healing potential. At this time Hardy acquired several of Jefferies's books. He also made one of his only known references to the author in a letter to Edward Garnett, after Garnett sent him a copy of Jefferies's *Amaryllis at the Fair* (1887). Published in the last few months of Jefferies's life, when he was 38, *Amaryllis* is set within the vicinity of the Wiltshire archaeological landscapes which the author documented in the 1860s, and explores the relations between nature, mind and soul. Analysis of Hardy's poetry identifies ways in which he used objects and the material environment as routes through which to return to former emotional conditions, a technique best expressed in his 'Poems 1912–13'.

Part 1

Archaeology and the Landscape

1

Interdisciplinary archaeology

History of Archaeology

By the mid eighteenth century, when the practice of excavation became more widely accepted, the glamour of antiquarianism faded as modern archaeology assumed independence. John Leland, along with early seventeenth-century antiquary and historian William Camden, had considered remains primarily through close observation, and accompanying analysis tended to be speculative. John Aubrey's work described the shape and size of archaeological features, establishing what is now recognised as field archaeology. Early antiquarians were reluctant to dig, and this persisted well into the eighteenth century. This reluctance may be attributed to the idea that archaeologists were wary of the implications of disturbing material remains. As Rosemary Sweet notes in *Antiquaries* (2004), these are the sorts of questions that contemporary research is often inclined to overlook.¹ Sweet suggests that there was no direct evolution between antiquarianism and archaeology,² and Philippa Levine refers to 'three historical communities of antiquarianism, archaeology and history'.³ James Dyer notes that William Stukeley precipitated a 'fashionable interest in antiquities', and that the inclination to excavate British sites was in part due to the influence of archaeological discoveries on the continent, such as Pompei in 1748.⁴ Englishmen embarking on the Grand Tour returned with a flavour of the

¹ Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries* (London: Continuum, 2004), p. xv.

² Sweet, p. 152.

³ Philippa Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional. Historians, Antiquarians and Archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838–1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 2.

⁴ James Dyer, *Discovering Archaeology in England and Wales* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008), p. 8.

excitement and insight into national identity that excavation offered.⁵ The development of systematic excavation did not come about until the end of the century, following the work of Reverend Bryan Faussett who excavated a series of clustered cemeteries of small Jutish barrows in Kent from 1757–1773, and wrote them up with full-page plate illustrations. These excavations produced the model for the remarkable series of burial excavations by William Cunnington and Sir Richard Colt Hoare, two of the most dynamic and intrusive barrow diggers of the Romantic era. Not only was their work the first systematic project to be undertaken on prehistoric sites on a large scale, but on a conceptual level this new inclination to excavate ancient sites, without the direction or supplementation of historical documentation, represented something altogether more brave and intriguing. This was the first time, in Cunnington's words, that archaeologists sought to work with 'something that supersede[d] conjecture'.⁶ As Dyer explains, Cunnington 'saw digging as a means of answering questions.'⁷ On this basis, prehistory rapidly developed national importance, and fifty years later, in 1872, it was marked by the publication of Sir John Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*.⁸

This formative time for archaeology gave rise to unprecedented levels of academic and wider interest in the subject. An article in the *Sunday at Home* declared the nineteenth century to have been 'marked by a vast access of knowledge concerning ancient life, its manners, customs, beliefs and

⁵ Dyer, p. 10.

⁶ William Cunnington, 'Account of Tumuli Opened in Wiltshire' (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1806), p. 103.

⁷ Dyer, p. 10.

⁸ Lubbock, a biologist, archaeologist, and Liberal politician, was one of the patrons of the fund for Jefferies's widow and children after he died, and became Lord Avebury after his campaign to preserve Avebury Rings in Wiltshire, the largest Stone Age site in Europe. He also corresponded with Darwin.

civilisation.⁹ Sir Daniel Wilson formally introduced the term 'prehistoric' into the English language in 1851.¹⁰ This recognition of a deeper, more complex chronology for the history of humankind made way for a new branch of archaeology, known as prehistory. That the earliest history of mankind was unaccompanied by written records was something that, despite inherent tensions between the two schools of thought, appealed to creative thinkers in both the sciences and the arts. The indeterminate expanse of prehistory motivated the late-Victorian inclination to identify and, as far as possible, reconstruct a picture of how previous cultures lived and died.

In archaeology these developments were rapid and insightful. Initially, the first of these — discoveries of stone implements in alluvial deposits in cave sites in the 1850s — were dismissed as unreliable evidence that mankind had been contemporaneous with large extinct mammals. These sites were reconsidered in 1858–59 in conjunction with similar discoveries at Brixham, Devonshire, now recognised as the most important site in prehistoric archaeology, and with stone implements in alluvial deposits in the open-air sites of the Somme Valley in France.¹¹ The geologist Charles Lyell, recognised as having popularised the uniformitarian idea of deep time, was one of the first to publicly respond to this new evidence of ancient man. In a remarkable turn of events Lyell backtracked from his admonition in the preface to *The Wonders of Geology* in 1832 that the evolution of species

⁹ George T. Stokes, 'Recent Discoveries and the Christian Faith', *Sunday at home: a family magazine for Sabbath reading*, 25 May 1889, p. 325.

¹⁰ See Sir Daniel Wilson, *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Sutherland and Knox, 1851).

¹¹ Van Riper in Claudine Cohen, 'Charles Lyell and the evidences of the antiquity of man,' in *Lyell: the Past is the Key to the Present*, ed. by Derek J. Blundell & Andrew C. Scott (London: The Geological Society, 1998), 83–93 (p. 86).

should not be compared to the evolution of geology. In *On the Antiquity of Man* (1863), he expresses clear acceptance of the ideas of the French biologist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck on the gradual change of a species over time, and asserted his belief in the existence of fossil man:

It is now 30 years since I gave an analysis in the first edition of my “Principles of Geology” (vol. ii, 1832) of the views which had been put forth by Lamarck, in the beginning of the century, on this subject [...] In that interval the progress made in zoology and botany [...] is so vast, that [...] what Lamarck then foretold has come to pass [...] Lamarck taught not only that species had been constantly undergoing changes from one geological period to another, but that there also had been a progressive advance of the organic world from the earliest to the latest times [...] from brute intelligence to the reasoning powers of Man.¹²

By this time the evidence of ancient human lineage was irrefutable, and Lyell would have lost credibility if he had not publicly corrected himself. During the thirty years between his authorship of his first book to his second, Lyell witnessed what he termed ‘vast progress’ that turned early-century archaeological and geological theories on their head and potentially threatened the validity of religious doctrines, leaving scientists and historians little option but to adapt their position to one of acceptance.

Working with the conceptual division of the Stone Age into more than one phase, scientists, such as Lubbock, writing in 1865, formally recognised

¹² Charles Lyell (1863), pp. 388–391 in Cohen, p. 87.

differences in stone tool technologies.¹³ A year later, in 1866, Hodder Michael Westropp distinguished a Middle Stone Age between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic.¹⁴ The idea that the past could be classified and understood in terms of eras or epochs, which were increasingly identified as complex and diverse, formed the basis of the rise of archaeology as a respected and independent discipline.

Archaeology was then, and still is, unique for belonging to both the arts and sciences, for overlapping and yet remaining distinct from other areas of study such as geology, natural history, history, evolution, and Biblical studies. Geology — the dating and classification of strata — shared significant common ground with archaeology during the late Victorian era, perhaps more so than any other subject. Geological advancement during the first half of the nineteenth century set the scene for a more comprehensive and informed study of the material remnants of the human past. In 1872, the *British Quarterly Review* announced that:

When the history of the intellectual development of the nineteenth century comes to be written, one of its more prominent features will be the extraordinary attention, which is being given to the exploring of the great void that extends from the historical border away into the remote geological past.¹⁵

¹³ Malina and Vasicek, p. 51.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ 'The Present Phase of Prehistoric Archaeology', *British Quarterly Review*, October 1872, pp. 443-487 (p. 443).

For nineteenth-century authors whose work was deeply grounded in their native landscapes, the sudden new dimension to earth's history afforded by the revised age of the earth encouraged a more imaginative reassessment of the relationship between humans and their world, and this has been well documented.¹⁶ Unlike archaeology, which was informed by written historical evidence and material remains, geology provided the key to the door of prehistory, and the vista beyond stretched into infinity. In the study of its influence and importance to Victorian authors, archaeology has traditionally been considered as almost inseparable from geology, in the assumption that the two subjects shared such close affiliation in the cultural domain of Victorian England that they require little or no distinction in their literary interpretation.¹⁷ A number of Victorian authors themselves blended the imaginative possibilities of archaeology with their understanding of geology. Hardy's *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) for example, conceives an indistinct human past within the shadow of a more ancient and tangible geological chronology. However, such close focus on the relationship between archaeology and geology potentially overlooks the close and long-established relationship between archaeology and natural history. A relationship, although altered by the popularisation and rise of geology, nevertheless continued to develop independently.

¹⁶ See, for example, Adeline Buckland, "A Product of Dorsetshire": Geology and the Material Imagination of Thomas Hardy', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 6 (2008) <www.19.bbk.ac.uk> [accessed 4 September 2009].

¹⁷ See, for example, Alex Warwick's account of Lyell's *Principles of Geology* and his allusions to archaeology (Alex Warwick, "The City of Resurrections": Arthur Machen and the Archaeological Imagination', in *The Victorians and the Ancient World: Archaeology and Classicism in Nineteenth-Century Culture* ed. by Richard Pearson (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006), pp. 127–129, and Andrew Radford's *Thomas Hardy and the Survivals of Time*).

The idea of deep time, as understood through geology, liberated the late-nineteenth-century scientific imagination in a way that could not be achieved through the study of history or classical antiquity alone. Increasing curiosity in the growing mystery of human origins contributed to radical late-Victorian changes in the ways in which excavated objects were retrieved, displayed and interpreted. The barrow excavations of the early nineteenth century set a strong precedent for new focus on excavation throughout the century. Having outgrown their significance as merely antiquarian collectables, burial treasures assumed new importance in the Victorian cultural consciousness, superseding in significance and value the rock specimens of geology as objects that had been crafted with ancient human hands. These material relics broadened understanding of fossil discoveries by providing a more humane context and insight into the social structures of prehistoric groups. As geological developments of the early nineteenth century had shockingly displaced the significance of the individual life by placing it within a far greater timescale, mid- to late-Victorian archaeology hinted towards providing a form of compensatory insight into continuity in human thought and feeling over time. The study of death — how it occurred, the associated rituals, and the objects involved — offered a richer experience of living. That Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age cultures had worshipped different deities, and had experienced a more intense and emotionally aware relationship with the land upon which they lived, encouraged the Victorian belief that a quasi-religious affinity between humans and the landscape might still be possible.

The continued rise of archaeology led the antiquary and scientist, Sir Daniel Wilson, to announce in 1851 that archaeology had transcended the 'laborious trifling' of the amateur antiquary to join 'the circle of the sciences.'¹⁸ Wilson also made the first systematic reference to the Three-Age system known as Bronze, Iron, and Stone — a system, despite its unstable chronology, that was to inform and shape the progress of archaeology as an independent discipline.¹⁹ Late-nineteenth-century archaeology was considered to fall into three main areas: Biblical, Classical, and Prehistoric. Yet at least until the mid-nineteenth century archaeology did not only include the recovery and examination of material objects as a means of elucidating the human past. 'Archaeology' was an umbrella term to connect loosely associated ideas and interests, including collecting, anecdotal stories about the past, the translation of foreign inscriptions, and Greek and Roman art. An article by historian and education reformer, Oscar Browning, in the *Fortnightly Review* (1874), recommends that archaeology should be further encouraged as a 'new avenue of study' in schools; one that develops the study of Classics. In his definition of archaeology, Browning asserts that 'it is not intended to mean what are generally called antiquities, but only a part of them'.²⁰ Browning distinguishes between 'two branches' of archaeology — '1. the archaeology of art, and 2. the archaeology of daily life (to include topography)'.²¹ Pointing out that the former is sadly neglected within

¹⁸ Sir Daniel Wilson, *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Sutherland and Knox, 1851), p. xii.

¹⁹ The Three-Age System was originally introduced by Danish museum curator Christian Jurgensen Thomsen in 1807, supplemented by the later work of Oscar Montelius.

²⁰ Oscar Browning, 'The Study of Archaeology in Schools', *Fortnightly Review*, October 1874, p. 496.

²¹ *Ibid.*

education, Browning recommends that there should be less attention paid to the philosophy and religion and more focus on the forms and relics of ancient civilisations:

It is very strange that in a country where so much time is spent in studying the thoughts of the Greeks and Romans, where the highest literary education of our universities can scarcely rise beyond the study of their philosophy, that the study of their art should be so dead and unknown. It is difficult to exaggerate how large a place art held in the mind of a Greek. It is scarcely too much to say that it was the depository of all his highest thoughts, feelings, and emotions. We may strain as we like to reconstruct the poetry of Aeschylus and the scepticism of Euripides, or to fathom the depth of the religion of Plato. These are after all but contained in words. The deepest feelings of the age from which they sprung were contained in the forms of beauty which have long ago perished for ever.²²

Browning wrote this article in 1874 — the year that Jefferies's first novel, *The Scarlet Shawl*, was published by Tinsley Brothers, and Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd* appeared in serial form in the *Cornhill Magazine*. As will be discussed in parts 3 and 4, similar ideas regarding the relation between thought, feeling, beauty and form feature in the later work of Hardy and Jefferies.

²² Ibid, pp. 496–7.

Archaeology, Nature and Culture

The popularisation of archaeology as a science and outdoor pursuit was closely associated with the popularisation of natural history and nature. In 1887, the *Daily News* recorded that spending time out of doors had become popular enough to warrant running a four-horse coach through Epping Forest during autumn:

It seems that there is sufficient number of enthusiasts for woodland scenery to justify the proprietors of a four-horse coach in continuing to run twice a day throughout the present month for the mere sake of exhibiting to its passengers the autumnal glories of the foliage in Epping Forest.²³

The popularity of nature also led to a craze for wearing autumn leaves as fashionable accessories:

the foliage of late autumn has burst suddenly into fashion among us. The ladies now wear real autumn leaves in their bonnets, besides displaying them in sprays upon the left shoulder, or cunningly tucked into belts, where but a few years since the wearing of such decorations would have been thought strange and eccentric.²⁴

²³ Anon., 'Nature in Fashion', *Daily News*, 17 October 1887, n. p.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

To accompany this surge of interest, a new trade also developed. Bunches of leaves were gathered and sold — described as a ‘branch of industry absolutely unknown only five years ago — now afford[ing] employment to thousands of poor people’.²⁵

This burgeoning appreciation of the outdoors encouraged the rise of archaeology as an outdoor pursuit that was accessible to all classes. The popularity of archaeology as a wealthy man’s hobby in the early nineteenth century had established the study of antiquities both financially and culturally, which led to its wider appeal and appreciation. As a reviewer of Sir Richard Colt Hoare’s *The History of Ancient Wiltshire* stated in 1811:

It is one of the advantages belonging to the present day, that men of rank and fortune have many objects, unknown in ruder times, to wear them, not only from sensual gratification, but also from amusements, not perhaps actually criminal, yet gross and inelegant.²⁶

The accessibility of archaeology and natural history distinguished both subjects from other sciences. The remnants of times past, in the varied shapes and forms of barrows, earthworks and stone circles, were visible to all who ventured into the countryside, which included people of varied occupations and positions within society. This concept of nature and archaeology virtually ‘living’ alongside one another is expressed in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1881) in an article titled ‘Living Roman Remains’. The discovery

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Anon., ‘The History of Ancient Wiltshire’, *Quarterly Review*, February 1811, p. 111.

of some Spanish plants growing near the site of a Roman ruin leads the author to speculate that they originated from those sown by Roman soldiers when stationed at the garrison. The theory was supported by the discovery of seeds in Egyptian mummies, which sprouted corn when germinated. Although the author recognises these stories as false, they encourage the idea of nature's survivals from thousands of years ago and foster links between the archaeological imagination and the natural world. The author also considers the ancestry of the British people: 'earlier than the landing of the Celtic chieftains [...] some of ourselves are still doubtless living Roman remains', and concludes that even fruits are 'directly descended from Roman ancestors.'²⁷

Archaeological sites functioned as meeting places for sport and leisure pursuits. A contributor to *Baily's Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes* (1867), writing about a fox hunt, considers the beauty of a Roman castle as a setting:

On the highest part of the long ridge, or, as it may be termed, the water-shed of these upland wastes, are situate the remains of a Roman castle. It consists of four banked mounds enclosing a couple of acres of fine sward, with two entrances and the usual vallum. In its general outline the ancient castrum remains perfect. A prettier place for a meeting on a fine day — commanding as it does, such a varied and beautiful prospect — cannot be seen, and as the first whip rode into the area, with the huntsman and hounds following, and the second whip in

²⁷ Anonymous, 'Living Roman Remains', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 8 November 1881, p. 12.

his place, the gay sight would have warmed the heart of the most unimpassioned spectator.²⁸

The 'varied and beautiful prospect' of the archaeological setting heightens the aesthetic qualities of the traditional rural scene, and places it in within a grander, more historically informed context. The reference to the 'general outline [of] the ancient castrum' that has 'remain[ed] perfect' alludes not only to the archaeological form of the castle but also to the English lineage inherited from Roman occupation. The unique ancient setting for the traditional English sport stimulates the author's archaeological imagination to conceive of a strong momentary sense of Englishness that 'would have warmed the heart of the most unimpassioned spectator.' Archaeology helped to furnish emergent ideas of sport with historical roots. In an age that questioned the value and ethics of a range of human interests, comparisons with previous ages through material evidence proved to be an effective means of evaluation and reflection. An anonymous article questions the meaning of sport and refers to the time when Rome ruled the world; in amphitheatres, 'fights between one wild beast and another, between wild beasts and men [...] had an attraction for the populace of Rome which could be exercised by no [...] humane display.' As such, nineteenth-century racing appeared 'very flat' by comparison.²⁹

Archaeology was part of a more general effort to identify ways in which the past underlay and pervaded Victorian culture. As a science that crossed

²⁸ M. F. H., 'Gone Away', *Baily's Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, 1 March 1867, p. 31.

²⁹ Anonymous, 'Ideas of Sport', *Star*, 14 August 1879, n. p.

over into the arts, archaeology offered a means of closer cultural analysis and insight into cultural processes. General Pitt-Rivers (1827–1900), the archaeologist who ‘created modern excavation technique’,³⁰ believed he had found a new science of cultural evolution.³¹ Pitt-Rivers was the son-in-law of Sir John Lubbock (who became known as Lord Avebury after his campaign to protect Avebury Ring), and a close friend of Thomas Hardy. Pitt-Rivers’s work was an offshoot of Darwinian evolution; it was not until fifty years after his death that cultural evolution was recognised to have shaped late-Victorian archaeological discourse. French geologist Gabriel de Mortillet, working within the context of evolutionary theory during the 1860s and 1870s, identified two forms of cultural evolution relating respectively to laws of human progress and laws of analogous development, as well as introducing an improved system of classification for Stone Age artefacts.³²

By the time that Hardy and Jefferies were writing, the chronological breakthroughs in geology and archaeology had already set the scene for a more informed and enlightened appreciation of the past. Understandings of the natural world were less contained by Biblical explanations and archaeologists were more at liberty, through the potential of evolutionary theory, to explore the origins of human societies. January 1880 saw the launch of the *Antiquary: A Magazine devoted to the Study of the Past*, edited by Edward Walford, formerly of the *Gentleman’s Magazine*. The close association between archaeology and literature was recognised in the

³⁰ M.W. Thompson, *Evolution and Archaeology in the Nineteenth Century* (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1977), p. 117.

³¹ This was noted by Rivers to be evident in the evolving forms of military weapons, which he compared to Darwin’s theories of evolution of living forms.

³² Malina and Vasicek, p. 51.

opening pages of the first edition by quotations from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*: 'Instructed by the Antiquary Times/He must, he is, he cannot but be wise';³³ from Lord Bacon — 'out of monuments, names, wordes, proverbs, traditions, private recordes, and evidences, fragments of stories, passages of books, and the like, we doe save and recover somewhate from the deluge of time'; and Schiller — 'Time doth consecrate; And what is grey with age becomes religion.'³⁴ As observed by Virginia Hoselitz in *Imagining Roman Britain* (2007), early to mid-nineteenth-century accounts of archaeology made extensive use of historical documents as sources of guidance and corroboration, thus closely associating archaeological research with literature.³⁵ Since the nineteenth century, archaeologists have sought to work through the complex relationship between written history and material artefacts, aware of the potentially risky oversights involved in over-interpreting objects without sufficient context, or when the written context is inaccurate. Both literature and archaeology require the scholar to recognise varying degrees of ambiguity — in texts, as well as material culture — and to adjust their interpretation accordingly.

The use of greatly improved object classification systems and more reliable dating methods has strengthened the interpretative faculty of archaeology. This movement away from reliance on text was largely defined and encouraged by the late-nineteenth-century development of prehistory as a field of its own. As John Moreland writes, 'archaeology was the point of

³³ Anon., *Antiquary*, January 1880, p. 1.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁵ Virginia Hoselitz, *Imagining Roman Britain* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), p. 97 and p. 123.

entry into this Word-less world, and for many prehistory remains the proper domain of the archaeologist.³⁶ Research has identified the nineteenth century as a time when ‘a combination of research in geology, evolutionary science, history and hermeneutics relativised [the Biblical] text through internal critique and setting it beside other sources of knowledge.’³⁷

The rapid development of Victorian archaeology during a time of increasing secularisation was part of a more general explorative trend that aimed to secure the place of humans within a broader and more informed chronology than literal readings of scripture afforded. Vanessa Brand argues that by the 1830’s, ‘uniform’ change for the Victorians was ‘accepted as a causative agent replacing the catastrophic change which biblical geology had encouraged in the previous decade.’³⁸ This thesis suggests that to consider the imaginative implications of late-Victorian archaeology in the context of spiritual curiosity is to acknowledge the emotional and psychological complexities associated with the conception of landscape and humans’ place within it. Both Hardy and Jefferies used archaeological sites as settings in ways which facilitated soulful engagement with nature, and which precipitated intense emotion reactions. Both authors were sceptical agnostics, although it was once suggested that Jefferies experienced a deathbed conversion.³⁹ Moreover, both authors had close friends who were archaeologists and

³⁶ John Moreland, *Archaeology and Text* (London: Duckworth: 2011), p. 10.

³⁷ See, for example, Andr n (1998); Appleby, Hunt and Jacob (1994), and Piggott (1989) in Moreland, p. 9.

³⁸ H. S. Torrens, ‘Geology and the Natural Sciences: Some Contributions to Archaeology in Britain 1780-1850’, in *The Study of the Past in the Victorian Age*, ed. by Vanessa Brand (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1998), pp. 35–60 (p. 53).

³⁹ See Anon., ‘Did Richard Jefferies Die a Christian?’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 22 September 1891, p. 3.

members of the clergy, such as Reverend William Barnes and Reverend Canon Jackson.

More serious attempts to explore and define the relationship between text and the material record have now been made, to the point of achieving clear distinction between prehistoric and historical archaeology. It is thus possible to consider the interdependent relations between literature and archaeology from a more informed perspective. While it remains impossible to identify a simple trajectory for the evolution of archaeology, it is nonetheless clear that while the subject was shaped by other areas of knowledge such as history, collecting, and geology, and continues to be informed by them, it has sought to achieve independent recognition. For example, the phenomenon of collecting through the use of metal detecting has led to the discovery of major hoards which in turn shed significant light on previously unknown historical eras. Agriculture and archaeology continue to be closely affiliated. A metal detector searching the land of a Staffordshire farmer recently discovered an unusually large Anglo-Saxon hoard,⁴⁰ and at a farm at Osmington on Dorset's Jurassic Coast a fossil collector announced the discovery of the fossilised skull of a Pleiosaur. Paleontological discoveries at La Cotte, a coastal site on Jersey first excavated in 1910, continue to raise questions about the organisation of prehistoric societies.⁴¹ Contemporary archaeology has attempted to make clearer chronological distinctions between eras through

⁴⁰ See Mike Pitts, 'Anglo-Saxon gold hoard is the biggest — and could get bigger,' *Guardian*, 24 September 2009 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/sep/24/staffordshire-anglo-saxon-gold-find>> [accessed 1 January 2009], n. page.

⁴¹ Robert Marrett first excavated La Cotte in 1910. Katharine Scott (1980) published an article on Neanderthal hunting practices, which involved stampeding and driving mammoths off the cliffs.

the application of more reliable dating techniques than those used during the late nineteenth century. However, in cases where the material record does not provide enough information to identify the origin and significance of archaeological remains, information from other fields, such as anthropology and geography, can be helpful.

In the nineteenth century, the implications of archaeology for understanding the human past were yet to be fully realised. A reviewer of the *Antiquary* in the *Saturday Review* in 1881 writes:

If we were disposed to find fault with *The Antiquary* it would be chiefly on account of the bewildering multiplicity of its topics and the want of system in their arrangement.⁴²

The reviewer criticises the edition for containing ‘at random’ a seemingly mismatched collection of contributions on a far too wide-ranging number of subjects. These include ‘A Walk Round St. Paul’s in 1501’, the prefix to ‘The Pedigree of Shelley’, followed by ‘Antiquarian Notes on the British Dog’, and ‘Remains of the London Wall near the Minories’. These papers are interspersed with contributions on a history of ‘The Wedding Ring’ and an ‘Archaeological Tour of Norfolk’ — which the reviewer criticises for depicting ‘the interest of Castle Acre [...] in fourteen short lines.’ Also in the same volume is a paper on the Old Masters and ‘A Guide to the Study of Book-plates’. The result, observes the reviewer, is similar to being ‘taken into the general shop of a country village, where we can get much of nothing, but a

⁴² Anon., ‘The Antiquary’, *Saturday Review*, 22 October 1881, p. 517.

little of everything, though not perhaps of the best quality.⁴³ The formative nature of early disciplinary archaeology meant that there was no clear delineation of what constituted archaeological research. This ambiguity, coupled with the unsystematic approach to archaeological practice, resulted in the often disorganised and wide-ranging scope of the literary representation of archaeology.

The development of the Three Age system and the new dating of the Bronze Age, introduced by Swedish archaeologist Oscar Montelius, brought about an increased perception of distance between late-Victorian society and prehistoric societies. This distance contributed to the frequent literary portrayals of alienation, fear, and despair in the context of scientific discovery; an anxiety exacerbated by the instability of an increasingly secular society. Archaeology was an attractive avenue of study as it sought to alter perceptions of this distance by learning about the practices and customs of prehistoric societies. Michael Freeman notes that by the mid-nineteenth century the 'challenges and spectres of the prehistoric' had begun to fade.⁴⁴ Attitudes began to change as it was realised that earlier representations of prehistoric man were poorly informed and overly speculative. In 1853 the archaeologist Frederick Collings, in a humble account of his excavations of Celtic megaliths, recognised a kinship between Victorian society and its ancestors, which brought increasing implications for disturbing the human past:

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Michael Freeman, *Victorians and the Prehistoric: Tracks to a Lost World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 7.

During the steady progress of investigation we were often compelled to acknowledge that our day-dreams of barbarous sacrifice, and writhing victims and yelling multitudes, were now for ever to be dispelled. No place of human sacrifice was here; it was evident we stood where mourners once had wept — where the last offerings and offices of affection had been bestowed and performed on departed relatives and friends — where the survivors had bewailed the common lot of all humanity — when they saw deposited in peace the mortal remains we now so ruthlessly disturbed.⁴⁵

Collings was writing at the end of an era which Glyn Daniel identifies as a 'revolution in thought' (1810–1859), during which the 'fog' of prehistory began to be diffused; a time when the authority of Biblical accounts gave way to compelling geological evidence and systematic archaeology.⁴⁶ Just over a decade later, W. Walker Wilkins published 'Were the Ancient Britons Savages?', which acknowledged the significant misconceptions surrounding these past peoples:

Perhaps no member of the human family has been so entirely unfortunate, or so severely dealt by as the primitive inhabitant of this country. He has been victimised in turn by Phoenicians, Romans, Danes, Saxons, and Normans; and has at last fallen into the hands of

⁴⁵ Frederick Collings, 'Observations on the Celtic Megaliths, and the contents of Celtic Tombs, chiefly as they remain in the Channel Islands', *Archaeologia*, January 1853, p. 232.

⁴⁶ Daniel, Glyn, and Colin Renfrew, *The Idea of Prehistory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), p. 21.

the equally ruthless archaeologist, who ... treats him with proverbial contempt.⁴⁷

An anonymous article in the *Reader* titled 'Ancient Britons and Druids' in 1863 recognised that the ancient Britons were no longer to be shunned or ridiculed. In demanding that the Britons should be considered in a new light, the article not only lists their qualities and faculties, but draws attention to the genealogical link between ancient British people and the nation of the time:

As far back as we can catch a glimpse of them, they were, though decidedly in what we now call the savage or uncivilised state, persons of very creditable brains and faculties [...] [D]espite all the additions of Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans that have since been made to the composition of our nation, it is believed, on gradually increasing evidence, that our inheritance, intellectually and otherwise, to this day from the oldest and purest British times of these lands has been by no means inconsiderable. So let no man of sense sneer at the ancient Britons.⁴⁸

These responses were part of an emerging trend which recognised the humane qualities of prehistoric peoples, and began to redress the notion of past societies as barbarous and uncivilised. An important part of this affinity

⁴⁷ W. Walker Wilkins, 'Were the Ancient Britons Savages?', *Fortnightly Review*, 1 March 1866, p. 194.

⁴⁸ Anon., 'Ancient Britons and Druids', *Reader*, 18 July 1863, p. 51.

was the late-Victorian understanding that prehistoric societies had developed specific and long-established customs and rituals associated with their particular landscape and environment. These included systematic and ritualistic burial traditions, the symbolic appreciation of objects — often those that had been handcrafted — and the adoption of far more sophisticated means of agricultural subsistence than had previously been realised. Primitive societies were not, after all, to be scorned for any perceived lack of civilisation or intelligence, but were to be considered as having adapted and responded to their particular environment. Part of this process of adaptation involved social and cultural variations, which concealed recognisable forms of thought and feeling over time. Not only were these continuities recognisable in Victorian society, but they were tangible in forms of human habitation and in the landscape itself. Thomas Wright, eminent author and antiquarian and founder of the British Archaeological Association, wrote in 1867 that the Victorian country cottage, with its ditch and bank enclosure, was ‘a copy [...] of the mansion of the Anglo-Saxon chieftain’, and that the earthworks of the Saxons continue to ‘puzzle eager antiquaries, and give rise to dreams of Celtic kings and prehistoric peoples belonging to very mythic ages’.⁴⁹

Articles in the periodical press throughout the mid- to late nineteenth century suggest that there were many often conflicting ways of experiencing and thinking about the outdoors. Natural history had been a popular pastime

⁴⁹ Thomas Wright, ‘Up the Valley of the Oney’, *Albion, A Journal of News, Politics and Literature*, 11 May 1867, p. 219. One of Hardy’s notebook entries — ‘Wright’s caricature history of the Georges’ — confirms his familiarity with the work of Wright. The entry, which is from the Trumpet-Major Notebook (1878-79), refers to Wright’s *Caricature History of the Georges* (or, *Annals of the House of Hanover, compiled from the squibs, broadsides, window pictures, lampoons, and pictorial caricatures of the time*), published in 1868 (Thomas Hardy, *The Personal Notebooks of Thomas Hardy*, ed. by Richard H. Taylor (London: Macmillan, 1978), p. 157).

throughout the Romantic era. Rosemary Sweet observes that the close association between natural history and archaeology had been forged in the eighteenth century through the joint study of fossil and skeletal remains and during the excavation of barrows and observation of soil strata.⁵⁰ She notes that Royal Society meetings were deliberately organised to coincide with the meetings of the Royal Society of Antiquaries, and that the joint membership of both societies was encouraged.⁵¹ After the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, the scientific understanding of nature assumed a new dimension, informed by the knowledge that humans, animals and insects were part of an evolutionary tree of life, evidence of which could be observed all around. During the later half of the nineteenth century articles, books and societies concerned with the natural history of England became increasingly popular. The inclination to imagine former conditions of life was encouraged by spending time out of doors. Part of the argument of this thesis rests on the idea that the emotional response to the beauty of the natural world facilitated imaginative connections between past and present and offered a stabilising effect on the psyche. Both Hardy and Jefferies wrote about the beauty of human and natural forms. Jefferies's article 'The Study of Beauty' (1884) suggests that beauty is inherited over time, and *The Story of My Heart* (1883) aligns the appreciation of the natural world with the admiration of the human form.⁵²

⁵⁰ Sweet, pp. 9–10.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² My research has established that 'Beauty in the Country', collected in *The Open Air*, formerly appeared in *Society* as 'The Study of Beauty'. This identifies a new periodical to which Jefferies contributed. Notes for the article in Jefferies's manuscripts suggest that it was going to be part of a much larger project on natural beauty that never came to fruition. I also discovered that Jefferies's essay 'The Modern Thames' was first published in this magazine.

Jefferies's contribution to the popularisation of natural history led to his notoriety as 'the Gilbert White of our century'.⁵³ His periodical press contributions during the 1870s and 1880s on rustic life and nature precipitated a wave of similarly titled articles by other authors on related subjects. For example, Jefferies's *Wild Life in a Southern County* (1879), published first in serial form and later in book form, was followed by 'Bird Life in a Southern County'— an anonymous article in *Temple Bar* magazine in 1889⁵⁴ — and was later followed by a book under the title *Bird-Life in a Southern County, being Eight Years' Gleanings among the Birds of Devonshire* in 1899 by naturalist Charles Dixon.⁵⁵ Jefferies's *The Gamekeeper at Home* and *The Amateur Poacher*, serialised in the *Pall Mall Gazette* from 1878–79, were similarly emulated in articles published in the same paper during the 1880s, such as 'The Confessions of a Poacher', 'The Badger at Home', and 'The Mole at Home'.

Jefferies's work was part of a new wave of journalism that sought to address the financial and political inequalities experienced by the agricultural working classes. The majority of his non-fiction works on agricultural subjects — *The Gamekeeper at Home* (1878), *The Amateur Poacher* (1879), *Hodge and his Masters* (1880), and *Wild Life in a Southern County* (1878) — were originally serials which he had not intended to publish in book form. Again, the later books, *The Open Air* (1886), *The Life of the Fields* (1884), were compilations of his periodical contributions. Part of Jefferies's popularity can be attributed to his realist depiction of nature and country life and his

⁵³ Anon., 'A Hedgerow Philosopher,' *Examiner*, 28 August 1880, p. 1022.

⁵⁴ See G. A. B. D., 'Bird-Life in a Southern County', *Temple Bar*, July 1889, p. 429.

⁵⁵ For a review of Dixon's book see Anon., *London Quarterly Review*, October 1899, p. 409.

individual and vivid style of writing. As Reverend M.G. Watkins wrote in his review of *Wild Life in a Southern County*:

With all the truthfulness to nature of our old favourite Gilbert White, this book is utterly dissimilar to the *Selbourne*. It looks on the objective side of the country, enlivening the narrative by touches of personal humour [...] This author views the country as coloured by his own subjectivity, and with pensive step and modern habits of introspection discerns a new grace in its ordinary sights.⁵⁶

Jefferies became such a recognisable voice in the *Pall Mall Gazette* that the paper's readers began assigning unsigned contributions to him, identifying him by his style and subject matter. For example, an unsigned item titled 'Hodge and his Vote in Wiltshire'⁵⁷ is commented on a fortnight later in a letter to the Editor as having been written by Jefferies. In another instance, Jefferies received a letter in 1887 from one of the paper's readers asking if a paper titled 'On Battersea Bridge', a prose account of the sunset in London, that appeared in the paper in 1884 had been republished.⁵⁸ In the latter case the article was not by Jefferies but by George Gissing.

Mid-nineteenth-century developments had set the scene for the sudden rise of archaeology within cultural, social and educational domains. During the 1860s it was apparent that the term archaeology was still used flexibly in

⁵⁶ M. G. Watkins, 'Wild Life in a Southern County', *Academy*, 15 March 1879, p. 230.

⁵⁷ Anon., 'Hodge and his Vote in Wiltshire', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 December 1883, n. p.

⁵⁸ Hugoe Matthews and Phyllis Trietel, *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies* (Oxon: Petton Books, 1994), p. 217.

relation to a number of hobbies and interests that were loosely associated with antiquities. In 1864, Robert Chambers, editor of *Chambers's Journal*, brought out in book form a series of weekly and monthly contributions to the journal under the title *The Book of Days*. Described in the *Daily News* as a 'Miscellany of Popular Antiquities in connexion with the Calendar, including Anecdote, Biography, History, Curiosities of Literature, and Oddities of Human Life and Character', the book hints at the rising popularity of archaeology at least ten years before Jefferies and Hardy were writing. In the preface, Chambers describes the book as consisting of:

1. Matters connected with the Church calendar, including the popular festivals, saints' days, and other holidays, with illustrations of Christian antiquities in general;
2. Phenomena connected with seasonal changes;
3. Folk-lore of the United Kingdom, namely popular notion and observances connected with time and seasons;
4. Notable events, biographies, and anecdotes, of an entertaining character, tending to illustrate the progress of civilisation, manners, literature, and ideas in these kingdoms;
5. Curious, fugitive and inedited pieces.⁵⁹

The same review notes the book's similarity to an earlier publication by Hone, titled the 'Every Day Book,' stating that both publications 'will forever remain as a capital contribution to popular archaeology.'⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Anon., 'Literature', *Daily News*, 16 March 1864, n. p.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Archaeology and Agriculture

The imaginative implications of the human history that lay beneath the soil, and the physical process of its disturbance through agricultural activity, contributed to the growing late-nineteenth-century awareness of the immense significance of the human past. The Great Agricultural Depression of the final three decades nurtured affinities between nature, agriculture, and archaeology in Victorian England, not least because systematic developments in archaeology were consistent with agricultural changes, such as the introduction of mechanisation. In writing about the landscapes they knew as home, Jefferies and Hardy document the impact of agricultural, social and cultural change on rural life. For Hardy, this was partly achieved through his revival of the Saxon name of Wessex and his creations of Wessex characters who were closely related to their native origins. The farmland of the surrounding counties forming historical Wessex concealed archaeological evidence of Iron Age and Roman farming communities — signifying not only the emergence of civilisation in Britain, but a tradition of working the land that had been passed down through generations to the nineteenth century. That the two writers were closely associated, but are not known to have corresponded, implies possible rivalry between them. Jefferies was an aspiring novelist, whose first novel with Tinsley's — *The Scarlet Shawl* (1874) — was a failure, whereas Hardy's *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), also published by Tinsley, was better received. In his comparison of the two authors, Roger Ebbatson notes that the 'connexions and contrasts are of great significance to

the student of Hardy',⁶¹ and cites Michael Millgate, who wrote that Jefferies 'reveals an understanding [...] at once more intimate and more evidently compassionate than Hardy's.'⁶²

Hardy's only known allusion to Jefferies in the 1880s occurred when both authors were commissioned by Charles Longman to write about the agricultural labourer. In 'The Dorsetshire Labourer' (1884), Hardy alludes to Jefferies's depiction of the life of the agricultural worker in *Hodge and his Masters*:

Misery and fever lurk in his cottage, while, to paraphrase the words of a recent writer on the laboring classes, in his future there are only the workhouse and the grave.⁶³

These words seem to recall the memorable closing lines of *Hodge and his Masters*:

The old man was driven into the workhouse; muttering and grumbling, he had to be bodily carried to the trap, and thus by physical force was dragged from his home. In the workhouse there is of necessity a dead level of monotony — there are many persons but no individuals [...] At the workhouse the monotony weighed upon him. He used to think as he lay awake in bed that when the spring came nothing should keep

⁶¹ Roger Ebbatson, 'Hardy and Richard Jefferies', *Thomas Hardy Review*, 1, 2 (1976), 59–60 (p. 59).

⁶² Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy, His Career as a Novelist* (London: The Bodley Head, 1971), pp. 207–8 in Ebbatson, 'Hardy and Richard Jefferies', p. 59.

⁶³ Thomas Hardy, 'The Dorsetshire Labourer', *Longman's Magazine*, July 1883, pp. 252–269 (p. 252).

him in this place. He would take discharge and go out, and borrow a hoe from somebody, and go and do a bit of work again, and be about in the fields. [...] When once an aged man gives up, it seems strange at first that he should be so utterly helpless. In the infirmary the real benefit of the workhouse reached him [...] The end came very slowly; he ceased to exist by imperceptible degrees, like an oak-tree. He remained for days in a semi-conscious state, neither moving or speaking. It happened at last. In the grey of the winter dawn, as the stars paled and the whitened grass was stiff with hoar frost, and the rime coated every branch of the tall elms, as the miller came from the pen and the young ploughboy whistled down the road to his work, the spirit of the aged man departed. [...] Hodge died, and the very gravedigger grumbled as he delved through the earth hard-bound in the iron frost, for it jarred his hand and might break his spade. The low mound will soon be level, and the place of his burial shall not be known.⁶⁴

Jefferies's tone of despair and his allusions to the invisible fruits of labour would have appealed to Hardy, who by that time was already known for the tragic plots of his fiction.

Scott McEathron discusses the relations between Jefferies's agricultural essays and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*,⁶⁵ and notes Jefferies's authoritative and empathic style. Jefferies's writing on farming and rural social

⁶⁴ Richard Jefferies, *Hodge and his Masters* (London: Quartet Books, 1979), pp. 309–310.

⁶⁵ Scott McEathron, *Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 38–41. The portrayal of agricultural working conditions in Jefferies's 'Women in the Field', published in the *Graphic* (1875) also has relevance to *Tess*.

reform earned him a reputation as an agricultural expert, and in 1884 the *Liverpool Mercury* declared him 'the best of all the writers on rural topics.'⁶⁶

The two authors are recorded to have met at a dinner held by the publisher George Murray Smith in February 1880, also attended by Henry James and Matthew Arnold. Florence Hardy recalls that Hardy was introduced to Richard Jefferies, 'a modest young man then getting into notice as a writer, through having a year or so earlier published his first successful book, entitled *The Gamekeeper at Home*'.⁶⁷

Andrew Radford has explored Hardy's and Jefferies's rural understanding in light of Victorian archaeology, and has discussed the imaginative significance of contemplating past human activity in agricultural landscapes.⁶⁸ However, the potential for the detailed study of Hardy and Jefferies to yield new insights into late-nineteenth-century understandings of the earth has not been given due attention. Both authors' experiences of ancient landscapes, gained through the increasing availability of knowledge of how previous societies lived and died, allowed greater insights into the relation between humans and the landscape over time, and forged new connections between Victorians and their ancestors. This is best seen in their fiction and non-fiction works. In his discussion of the work of Hardy and Jefferies, Andrew Radford concludes that the nineteenth-century imagination, dislodged by social revolution, could not be sufficiently sustained by a human

⁶⁶ Anon., 'Our London Correspondence', *Liverpool Mercury*, 29 January 1884, p. 5.

⁶⁷ Florence Hardy, *The Life of Thomas Hardy* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1962), p. 136.

⁶⁸ See Andrew Radford, *Mapping the Wessex novel: landscape, history and the parochial in British literature, 1870–1940* (London: Continuum, 2010). Radford studies four authors: Hardy, Jefferies, John Cowper Powys and Mary Butts.

past which was ultimately remote and inaccessible.⁶⁹ Roger Ebbatson has considered ways in which Hardy's and Jefferies's phenomenological experiences of place might be better understood in the context of Heideggerean theory,⁷⁰ and how both authors innovatively employ agricultural technology in their representations of landscape and nature.⁷¹ Other research has identified the nineteenth-century difficulty of perceiving continuity between past and present human societies due to the dissolution of 'the Georgic vision of nature [...] [in] an era of rapid rural and agricultural change.'⁷²

An era of change and uncertainty, the agricultural depression introduced new farming methods and alternative ways of thinking about the landscape. At the same time, the rise of archaeology as a science encouraged wider recognition of the importance of the land as a preserve of past human activity. Although the processes of archaeology and agriculture may not appear to have much in common — archaeologists worked to preserve the material record, while the process of farming often destroyed it — both occupations worked with, and were motivated by, the layered formations of the soil and their potential yield. As archaeologists dug the earth to try to learn more about the origins of human societies, agriculturalists worked the land more intensively with new technical knowledge. Yet although agriculturalists and archaeologists did not necessarily identify with one another's lifestyles or working practices, they simultaneously forged new ways

⁶⁹ Radford, *Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 55.

⁷⁰ See Roger Ebbatson, 'Sensations of Earth: Thomas Hardy and Richard Jefferies', in *Heidegger's Bicycle: Interfering with Victorian Texts* (Brighton and Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2006), pp. 63–80.

⁷¹ See Roger Ebbatson, 'Landscape and machine: Hardy, Jefferies and the question of technology', *Writing Technologies* 2, 2 (2009), 35–54.

⁷² Christopher Parker, *Gender roles and sexuality in Victorian literature* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1995), p. 32.

of understanding and working the landscape in order to maximise the potential for human progress.

The growing size of cities in the late-Victorian era, and the ease with which developing transport links afforded access to urban areas, meant that an unprecedented number of people spent time away from the countryside. The 1851 census showed over half of the English population to be dwelling in cities, in comparison to 1831, when three-quarters of inhabitants had lived in the countryside.⁷³ One consequence of this transition was the rising popularity of nature during the 1870s and 1880s, a movement encouraged by awareness of the increasing distance between mankind and the natural environment. This trend encouraged the public to take more notice of natural phenomena and to make more frequent excursions to countryside and coastal areas. An article in the *Cornhill Magazine* claims that by the end of the Franco-Prussian war the study of nature had been 'revived'.⁷⁴ At around this time, some of the London papers, such as the *Graphic* to which Hardy and Jefferies contributed, introduced columns for rural notes on weather and crops.

Late-nineteenth-century archaeology was shaped by the rural to urban transition and the processes of industrialisation and expansion, and was popularised alongside nature. A reviewer of the *Antiquary* magazine in the *Saturday Review* declared in 1882 that 'Archaeology has outlived ridicule, and become fashionable'.⁷⁵ In urban areas archaeological remains were

⁷³ Philip Davis, *The Oxford English Literary History. The Victorians. Volume 8: 1830–1880* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 13.

⁷⁴ See Anon., 'British Birds and Bird Lovers', *Cornhill Magazine*, July 1875, p. 35.

⁷⁵ Anon., 'The Antiquary', *Saturday Review*, 17 June 1882, pp. 772–774.

commonly discovered by accident during excavations for roads or foundations, and in rural areas either through ploughing, digging for chalk, or during alterations to the ground. For example, a report in the *Reliquary* (1884) cites the discovery of Romano-British remains, along with dishes and vases, in rural Wiltshire when workmen were levelling the ground at a racing establishment.⁷⁶ The same article cites a discovery of a Roman altar at St. Swithin's Church, in the city of Lincoln, also made by workmen, who were digging foundations to the new church tower.⁷⁷ Victorian progress, whether it was renovation, extension, or expansion, was disturbing ground — in a literal and metaphorical sense — at an unprecedented rate. These accidental discoveries informed archaeologists about where to dig and raised new questions about the activities and nature of past human societies. Far from standing apart from nineteenth-century cultural and scientific movements as an elitist hobby, archaeology shaped and was shaped by the late-Victorian scientific imagination.

By the time that the *Antiquary* appeared Jefferies was gaining public notice as an author on country subjects after the serialisation of *The Gamekeeper at Home* in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1878) and its subsequent publication in book form. Like much of Jefferies's later work, the book did not fit clearly into one genre; it was an amalgamation of his own knowledge of natural history, his interaction with local rural communities, and his acute imaginative observation of the natural world. As the *Academy* noted in 1898:

⁷⁶ Anon., 'Discovery of Roman Remains in Wiltshire', *Relinquary: quarterly archaeological journal and review*, April 1884, p. 256.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

The first impression is that *The Gamekeeper at Home*, *Wild Life*, *The Amateur Poacher*, and many of the smaller essays, fall “betwixt and between”; too rambling and unmethodical for science, too literal and matter-of-fact for literature. Yet there will be found in them a growing wistfulness of wonder, a melancholy grace, a deeper meaning, that invite the reader’s return. They are saved by their style and on the way to become classics. Those three, at least, are literature.⁷⁸

Jefferies’s inability to concentrate on a particular genre contributed to his struggle to achieve a consistent reputation as an author, and thus at best he achieved temporary acclaim in some spheres, which faded during the later twentieth century, while remaining relatively unknown and misunderstood in others.⁷⁹ Jefferies’s letters to *The Times* (1872–3) about the Wiltshire Labourer first brought him public notice. That a largely unknown author could so successfully contribute to issues of national political importance illustrates the accessibility and appeal of agricultural politics during the late nineteenth century. These letters were followed by *A Memoir of the Goddards of North Wiltshire*, which was reviewed in the *Reliquary and Illustrated Archaeologist: a quarterly dedicated to early pagan and Christian antiquities of Great Britain*. One contemporary contributor who wrote about similar subjects was John Charles Cox. Cox wrote an article in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1874 entitled ‘The Power of the Labourers’ and was a regular contributor to the *Examiner*

⁷⁸ Anon., *Academy*, February 1898, p. 179. Written eleven years after Jefferies’s death, this article was one of many which placed Jefferies’s work alongside other, more celebrated authors. In this instance, Alfred Lord Tennyson and Robert Louis Stevenson.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Jefferies’s children’s novel *Wood Magic*, which is a fable about late nineteenth century politics, but which was overlooked as such by contemporary reviewers.

on subjects such as the condition of agricultural labourers in Dorset and their appeals for higher wages. An authority on political and agricultural subjects, Cox also contributed articles to the *Reliquary*, and was later to take over as editor of the *Antiquary* from Edward Walford between 1890–9. For Jefferies, interest in voicing the present state of agricultural politics was mirrored by an equally strong interest in interpreting the voiceless human past.

Jefferies was writing against a tide of journalism that misrepresented the agricultural labouring classes. From a geological and archaeological point of view, agricultural land had already assumed a new, more dynamic significance, one that was perceived to supersede labourers' conceptions of the soil. For example, an article by John Taylor in *Belgravia* (1871), titled 'Under the Plough' denotes the late-Victorian fascination with 'the world under the soil':

Of all the startling revelations which geology has made known in modern times, perhaps there is none more striking than those which relate to the simplest and most commonplace subjects [...] 'Under the Plough' lies a series of so-called 'sub-soils' — sands, gravel, and clays — which have a history all their own [...] Little do our agriculturalists imagine, when drilling and draining, that they are turning over the debris of another world; that bulbs and cereals, beans and barley, are indebted for the materials of their growth to agencies which were at work with a view to their development hundreds of thousands of years ago. I can readily imagine their laugh of mingled contempt and incredulity when they are told that all these sub-soils are the result of

great ice-sheets, moraines, or icebergs [...] they will tell you that the stones *grow*; that every year the plough turns up a new crop.⁸⁰

Taylor's account of agriculturalists' scientific awareness is not as favourable as that of Jefferies, writing nine years later. *Hodge and his Masters*, first serialised in the *Standard* between 1878 and 1879, was intended by Jefferies to 'remedy [...] the ills of the depression years of the 1870s',⁸¹ which were a result of bad harvests, falling crop prices, and increase in foreign imports. In his account of labouring conditions and the history of farming, Jefferies writes in the knowledge that agriculturalists had — as a partial consequence of the popularisation of archaeology — a general level of awareness of the types, variation and locations of archaeological finds. As Jefferies points out in *Hodge*, the traditional farmer, represented by the character 'Harry', has worked the same tract of land all his life, and 'knew enough of archaeology to be able to tell any enthusiastic student who chanced to come along where to find the tumuli and earthworks on the Downs'.⁸² Harry owned Roman coins, found on his farm, which were 'produced to visitors with pride'.⁸³ The difference between Taylor's and Jefferies's portrayals of the scientific awareness of labourers can perhaps be explained by the rising popularity, and associated kudos, of scientific knowledge within Victorian popular culture during the decade that separates the articles. Yet it can also be attributed to the perceived 'divide' that Shanks and Pearson (2001) speak of between the

⁸⁰ John Taylor, 'Under the Plough', *Belgravia*, February 1871, p. 478.

⁸¹ *Hodge and his Masters*, p. vi.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

scientific and creative imagination. Taylor, a middle-class man of letters, writing from a scientifically informed perspective, makes a sweeping generalisation about labourers and their understanding of the soil. Writing in his own new vein of agricultural journalism, which depended upon direct observation and time spent in the company of farmers and labourers, Jefferies achieves a form of synthesis between the scientific and rural imagination. Taylor 'readily imagine[s]' the labourers' reactions to scientific knowledge, whereas Jefferies's observation that 'Harry really did possess a wide fund of solid, if quiet, knowledge'⁸⁴ illustrates how he sought to represent the spectrum of life as it really was and not only imagined to be. Moreover, such portrayals reveal that awareness and knowledge of archaeology was not limited to the middle classes, but rather could be acquired over time through familiarity with the land; this was something that Hardy explored through his fiction.

While natural history was more immediately and conveniently accessible, with natural phenomena observable in a variety of places including urban parks and gardens, archaeology brought with it a more than compensatory sense of mystery and intrigue. This would appeal to anyone who happened to pass by an archaeological site. The proximity of archaeology to country sports and leisure activities also contributed to the popularity of the science in the periodical press. Jefferies's contributions to the periodical press, although not about archaeology *per se*, were concerned primarily with subjects closely associated with archaeology, including country pursuits, art, theology, natural history, and history. Some of his earliest

⁸⁴ Ibid.

articles about the Wiltshire landscape, which pre-date *The Gamekeeper at Home* concern archaeology. Nineteenth-century technology and improved scientific approaches meant that more discoveries were made, and understood, than in preceding eras. Jefferies's 'The Monkbourn Mystery', a short story published in the *New Monthly Magazine* (1876), mentions the phenomenon of 'unconscious psychic force', as proposed by the scientist Cox.⁸⁵ Strange rappings from the walls of a church, and the subsequent excavation of a hidden chamber, reveal the skeleton of a mediaeval medium who literally holds the lost title deeds to an heirloom (in a metal globe) in her hand. The story associates archaeological discovery with psychic resonance and implicitly imbues death with a sense of potential. The skull of the interred woman is analysed by Ernest, an anatomist, who concludes that 'she possessed extraordinary powers of an animal and subtle character [...] for I have never seen a skull so low in character except the famous Neanderthal head, which belonged to primitive man.'⁸⁶ This reference to the skull relates to debates of the 1870s concerning the discoveries of different sized skulls in British tumuli. Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at Oxford, George Rolleston, developed the idea in his *Bronze Barrows* (1877), written with William Greenwell, that there had existed a narrow-headed race that was physically and mentally inferior, and that this race had been swept away by the taller, stronger, broad-headed people with 'more favourably conditioned' brains who invaded from Scandinavia.⁸⁷ Jefferies's notebooks suggest that he

⁸⁵ Jefferies refers to 'the psychic force proved to exist by Sergeant Cox and his friends' in 'The Monkbourn Mystery', *New Monthly Magazine*, January 1876, p. 5.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁸⁷ George Rolleston and William Greenwell, *Bronze Barrows* (1877) cited from Julien Parsons, 'The Explorations of the Soil is a Voyage in Time: Victorian Participation in the

may have visited the longbarrow at Belas Knap — one of the archaeological sites at the centre of these debates. Belas Knap was described in 1876 as ‘the most remarkable of the longbarrows of the Cotswolds’ after excavations in 1863 uncovered 12 skeletons placed around a circle of stones and ashes, with the remains of up to 38 individuals, all bearing a strange similarity in the shape of their skulls.⁸⁸ The site would have been within an hour’s travelling distance of Swindon, where Jefferies lived until 1876, and even closer to Cirencester where he worked from 1870–1872. The note, dated 1887, which appears to be recalling a visit, reads ‘Tumulus. Gloucester. The bones reared against the wall of colossal stone within — As if I could look back and feel *then*; the sunshine of *then*, and their life.’⁸⁹ The potential Jefferies sensed in objects of the past is evident in ‘The Old Mill’, in which the discovery of a prehistoric quern inspires him to imagine the mill as ‘the oldest machine on earth [...] rivalled only by the potter’s wheel’, and the many centuries of grinding corn for human consumption as ‘the wondrous marvel of life coming out of death’.⁹⁰ In the passing centuries, marked by the bones of warriors ‘long since mouldered into dust’, Jefferies sees the exhaustible production of wheat, which holds no intrinsic value or accumulative worth for the future. He

Excavation of Gloucestershire’s Prehistoric Burial Mounds’, in *The Victorians and the Ancient World: Archaeology and Classicism in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, ed. by Richard Pearson, pp. 93-108 (p. 104). Hardy also alludes to these debates in *A Laodicean* when the architect, George Somerset, considers the original form of the castle: ‘Somerset [...] pointed out where roofs had been and should be again, where gables had been pulled down, and where floors had vanished, showing her how to reconstruct their details from marks in the walls, much as a comparative anatomist reconstructs an antediluvian from fragmentary bones and teeth.’ *A Laodicean*, ed. by Jane Gatewood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 82.

Subsequent references are to this edition.

⁸⁸ Anon., ‘Sir William Guise on the Archaeology of Gloucestershire’, *British Architect*, September 1876, p. 130.

⁸⁹ *The Notebooks of Richard Jefferies*, ed. by Samuel J. Looker (London: Grey Walls Press, 1948), p. 234.

⁹⁰ Richard Jefferies, ‘The Old Mill’, *Landscape and Labour*, ed. by John Pearson (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1979), p. 36.

imagines the landscape and the process of precipitation as a 'sun-mill' that might ease the burden of human labour by storing force. The simple stone relic — a remnant of an agricultural past — thus has profound imaginative implications and implicitly suggests future ways to improve the human condition.

The majority of archaeological accounts in the periodical press focused on rural sites, rather than those discovered within the metropolis, further suggesting that archaeology was twinned with the natural world in its place within late-Victorian cultural consciousness. There is no clear divide between rural and urban archaeology in the nineteenth century. John Hines recognises that contemporary archaeological studies of the Victorian period pay greater attention to urban environments as the layouts of buildings and towns afford significant insight into the constitution of economic and social structures.⁹¹ However, outdoor space — much of which was agricultural land — facilitates a more expansive personal vision of the past. The close relation between agriculture and the archaeological imagination is illustrated by an anonymous contributor to the miscellaneous magazine *Once a Week* (1869), in which the author depicts the imaginative implications of finding a Roman site within an agricultural landscape:

A large arable field on the Huntingdonshire side of the river Neve [sic] [...] is said to be the Roman Durobriva mentioned in the *Antonine Itinerary*. This was the principal Roman encampment of the midland counties, and the mass of coins, and the number of tessellated

⁹¹ Hines, p. 195.

pavements discovered in it, prove how long it must have been occupied. Every now and then, the plough turns up the long-buried refuse heaps of the former kitchens. Broken pottery, shells of the whelk, bones and horns of the red deer, and of a small extinct species of ox, *Bos longifrons*, all mixed up together.⁹²

The orderliness normally associated with domestic habitation — represented by the pottery, the preparation of whelks, and the presence of a refuse site — is brought into direct association with the random and indeterminate churning of the plough. As the author continues, it is ‘these homely things [that] shorten time, and make nearly 2000 years ago seem but as yesterday.’⁹³ The ‘large arable field’ becomes a conceptual holding ground for a more powerful strain of thought and feeling; a fusion between the archaeological imagination and the observation of nature within the landscape, wherein the meeting places between past and present suddenly become tangible. In light of the social and economic uncertainties and associated estrangement from nature posed by the agricultural depression, such clear and direct experiences of the natural world became all the more important. This form of engagement with the natural and human worlds, without a third party — whether a book, machine, or vehicle — provided space away from the idea of linear progress, allowing the mind to momentarily step out of time to reconnect with the environment. In a society aware of encroaching change, engagement with the natural world afforded a tangible link with past generations who had lived and worked in the

⁹² Anon., ‘The Woods in April’, *Once a Week*, 15 May 1869, p. 393.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

same area. This phenomenon was something that Jefferies and Hardy explored in their work through the 1870s and 1880s. For late Victorians the proximity of the human past, and the clear similarities between prehistoric people and their own culture, came as something of a reassurance, defining archaeology as a science that offered the potential to transcend the alienation associated with placing human life in a geological or biological sequence.

2

Archaeological Landscapes as Settings

Archaeology and the Senses

The archaeology of Dorset and Wiltshire is characterised by stone circles, barrows, and earthworks, which have significant visual impact and provide ample opportunity for the enjoyment and study of nature. Hillforts harbour a diversity of species of plants and animals, from wild orchids, growing in the shelter of fosses, to birds of prey which seek the warm thermals above. For Hardy and Jefferies, who were keen walkers, sensory experience deepened emotive engagement with these landscapes, linking their practical experience of archaeology with their imaginative interpretation of it. Such insights added valuable dimensions not only to each author's thought but to their phenomenological understandings of place itself.

In his description of Maiden Castle in 'A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork', Hardy draws from the senses of sight and sound to convey the presence of the site. The memorable first sentence, 'At one's every step forward it rises higher against the south sky, with an obtrusive personality that compels the senses to regard it and consider',¹ introduces the largest hillfort in Europe as a 'creature' that has 'warts', 'high shoulders' and a character of its own; one which demands to be experienced through the senses. Hardy's evocative description of the movement and sounds of the wind within the grasses — 'The grass stems — the grey beard of the hill — sway in a mass close to my stooping face' denotes an atmosphere peculiar to that site. The thistles 'whistl[e]' and 'even the moss speaks, in its humble way', the wind 'raising a

¹ This sentence is reproduced in the *English Heritage Book of Maiden Castle* (1991) ed. by Niall. M. Sharples, and also in Angus Konstam, *The Forts of Celtic Britain* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2006), p. 31.

sound from the whole camp or castle, playing upon it bodily as upon a harp.’ Hardy’s use of the senses evokes vivid contrasts between light and dark, between the cold of the night and the image of soldiers ‘loosen[ing] their sandals and yawn[ing] and stretch[ing] in the sun’, thousands of years before. These contrasts are continued in the changeable climate of the site, which flings hailstones ‘rolling, hopping, ricochetting, snapping, clattering down the shelving banks in an undefinable haze of confusion’, followed by the ‘mild gaze of the moon, which sparkles now on every wet grass-blade and frond of moss’.²

Early- to mid-Victorian science drew from post-Enlightenment thought which privileged sight over other senses, and which came to be seen as the ‘sense of reason’.³ However, the close association between science and the senses had been recognised as early as the seventeenth century. Thomas, drawing from the research of Jones, observes that Francis Bacon, working with the new discipline of science, was wary of relying upon the logic of the mind alone as it was susceptible to misleading imaginings.⁴ To minimise the risk of error, Bacon suggested that the sensory experience of natural things should lead to scientific theorisation. However, as Jones explains, Bacon ‘distrusted the senses almost as much as the mind, considering them to be dull and imperfect,’ and recommended that experiments needed to be constructed carefully so as ‘to maximise the yield of the limited powers of

² Thomas Hardy, ‘A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork’, in *A Changed Man and Other Tales* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1913), pp. 172–77.

³ Bataille (1987) cited in Thomas Heyd and John Clegg, *Aesthetics and Rock Art* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 254.

⁴ Jones (1961), p. 50 in Julian Thomas, *Archaeology and Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 12.

perception and control to the greatest possible degree the wandering tendencies of the mind'.⁵

It has been well documented that Romantic poets used their heightened sensory awareness of the landscape to achieve synthesis between nature and the mind.⁶ Hardy and Jefferies were both familiar with, and inspired by, the work of Romantic poets which was founded on the longer ballad tradition. Jefferies owned a copy of Thomas Percy's *Reliques of English Poetry* which Nick Groom has called 'the seminal, epoch-making work of English Romanticism.'⁷ Jefferies quoted from the book in 'A History of Swindon and Environs', serialised in the *North Wiltshire Herald* (1867–8). In discussing the archaeology of the area surrounding his birthplace at Coate, and the etymology of the place name, he quotes verses from Michael Drayton's ballad, published in 1592. In his description of the neighbouring parish of Lydiard, Jefferies integrates material that is evocative to the senses while maintaining a factual prose style. He also quotes the fourth epistle of Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*, published in 1744, which suggests that greater sensitivity to the human and natural environment can lead to creativity and success: 'I turn'd the tuneful art/ From sound to things, from fancy to the heart'.⁸ A reviewer of Jefferies's *Hodge and his Masters* (1880) recognised the affiliation between Jefferies's work and Romantic poetry: 'there was a time, and not very long ago, when rural tranquillity was [...] the theme of

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ See, for example, Angela Esterhammer, *Romantic Poetry*, vol. 7 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2002), p. 14. Esterhammer discusses how Romantic poetry 'invok[es] the testimony of the senses, notably the sense of sight [...] hearing and touch', and cites Keats's 'Ode to Autumn' (1819), which incorporates all five senses.

⁷ Nick Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), p. 3.

⁸ *Jefferies' Land*, ed. by Grace Toplis (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1896), p. 183.

poets'. This identified the popular transition that Jefferies's style of writing was encouraging, from poetry to rural-themed prose.⁹

The perceived value of sensory awareness in the engagement with landscape began to change during the nineteenth century when developments in science threatened to dispel the mystery of man's relationship with the natural world. In an increasingly industrial and secular society, the interpretive powers of the senses were esteemed to have especial importance as a means of regaining a lost connection with nature. An anonymous article in the *North Eastern Daily Gazette* in 1889 describes Jefferies's love of nature as unusual — 'a passion, an enthusiasm, almost a disease' — and laments the lack of similar responses in late nineteenth century society:

Instead of being too sensitive to the mysteries and beauties of the natural world, most of us are too dull [...] From every point of this divine universe are streaming upon us influences to solace or stimulate, to calm or to quicken. Unfortunately we are not responsive to their touch.¹⁰

Jefferies's response to nature was unusual because it combined sensory and mystical awareness with scientific observations. Letters by Jefferies to the *Astronomical Register* — a magazine for amateur astronomers — three years after he wrote 'A History of Swindon', show that he was, at this early stage of

⁹ Anon., 'Hodge and His Masters', *Edinburgh Review*, July 1880, Art VI, p. 139.

¹⁰ Anon., 'Nature', *North Eastern Daily Gazette*, 20 April 1889, np.

his career, aligning the practical experience of science with its imaginative interpretation, and that the sensory appreciation of nature was central to this process.¹¹ One letter, dated 1871, records Jefferies's experience of seeing a meteor, which lit up surrounding countryside for half a mile. Jefferies wrote that he had:

seen almost all astronomical and meteorological phenomena, but never observed so intense a light emitted by a meteor. It somewhat resembled the effect produced by the coloured rockets at the Crystal Palace *fetes*. I fancied I heard a hissing noise whilst the light continued, but this I consider a delusion, having frequently believed I heard crackling sounds during an aurora, which sound science disbelieves. I put the phenomena down to what I may, perhaps, call homology of the senses, for I notice, if I touch brass and see it, I feel a disagreeable taste in my mouth. Why not, then, upon seeing particular kinds of light, should I not hear, or fancy I hear, sounds? — people sometimes imagine their names are called when someone speaks, as if there were memory of the ear. Now a quick flashing light carries the idea of crackling; the quick passage of a body that of hissing, as a bullet — thus, may not the senses be excited one by the other?¹²

¹¹ During my research I found two previously unknown letters written by Jefferies to the *Astronomical Register*, signed and dated 1870 and 1871, when he was living at Coate Farm, Swindon. These letters are reproduced in Appendix along with a further letter by William Denning.

¹² Richard Jefferies, 'A Brilliant Meteor', *Astronomical Register*, March 1871, pp. 65–6.

To give weight to his theory of the 'homology of the senses', Jefferies refers to different 'kinds' of light and sound, and to the imaginary 'taste' of brass.

Jefferies appears to question the fallibility of 'sound science', testing the boundaries between what is perceived to be real or imaginary. His account of his experience reflects issues in scientific research at the time. Professor John Tyndall,¹³ in *Essays on the Use and Limit of the Imagination in Science* (1870), discusses the interrelation between the senses, memory, and the imagination in the formation of scientific ideas. In a lecture given at South Kensington Museum on 30 April, 1861, Tyndall discourses on the imaginative processes involved in understanding how a strip of steel is magnetised. 'What is it,' he asks, 'that takes place among the atoms of the steel when the substance is magnetised?' He writes that 'imagination [...] is the divining rod of the man of science', and that in the prosecution of science, the 'powers of observation, memory, imagination and inference, are all drawn upon.'¹⁴

A further letter, written by Jefferies to the *Astronomical Register* a year earlier, describes his experience of seeing spots on the sun.¹⁵ In an account of the phenomenon, written later in life, Jefferies suggests that the intensity of the sensory experience deepened its impact and lodged the experience firmly in his memory:

¹³ Tyndall was Professor of Natural Philosophy, and the original inventor of pasteurisation, before Louis Pasteur, as well as the first gas mask, and other acclaimed scientific achievements. He was known for encouraging science to be understood by a wider audience and was the author of a range of publications, including *Fragments of Science for Unscientific People* (1871).

¹⁴ John Tyndall, *Essays on the Use and Limit of Imagination in Science* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1870), p. 4.

¹⁵ Richard Jefferies, 'Spots on the Sun', *Astronomical Register*, April 1870, pp.109–110.

To me it was a wonderful and never-wearying spectacle, evening after evening as I watched it under the low boughs of the russet apple, the great fiery disk slowly dropping beyond the brook and the meadow, beyond the elms on the rise, beyond the distant hills. The green leaves over and the grass under the quiet rush of the brook, the evening song of the birds, the hushing hum of the bees at the hives set just there, I forgot all but these and the sun — by the spot I could touch out almost to it.¹⁶

Taken from manuscript, this piece, written sometime between 1886 and 1887, is one of the only records of Jefferies's early experience of cosmic consciousness. For Jefferies, witnessing the astronomical event made tangible his deep sense of connection with the natural and cosmic worlds. His personal identity momentarily forgotten, he describes himself as a centre from which waves of imaginative understanding undulate towards the greater cosmic space which receives them: 'forces were at work similar to those that shaped the world and I could seem to see the hidden cause of the works of the sky.' The vivid presence of the sunspots encouraged Jefferies to think in wider, cosmic terms — to forge a 'link' between past and future, and between himself and past human societies:

For centuries backwards perhaps no one with the naked eye had seen a sun-spot; for centuries to come no one might see them again; so that

¹⁶ 'Sun Spots' is a short essay reprinted from manuscript in the British Library, published in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 6 (1997), 13.

the moment of my existence in it seemed a link between the illimitable past and future; this moment made more vital, more fierce in its existence by the consciousness the sunspot gave of the long bygone and the endless to be.

Jefferies's aspiration to connect thought with an eternal present beyond the human mind — his belief that it was possible to experience something beyond the visible while remaining grounded in the sentient world — is echoed in the work of the ecologist and philosopher, David Abram. Writing in 1996, in *The Spell of the Sensuous*, Abram considers the potential of sensory experience to restore a weakening connection with the natural environment, suggesting that thinking outside the human condition can widen our perceptions and broaden intelligence:

By acknowledging such links between the inner, psychological world and the perceptual terrain that surrounds us, we begin to turn inside out, loosening the psyche from its confinement within a strictly human sphere, freeing sentience to return to the sensible world that contains us. Intelligence is no longer ours alone, but is a property of the earth.¹⁷

In his later account of witnessing the sun-spots Jefferies distinguishes between his 'youthful' vision of 1870, and his more mature outlook, which had lost some of the earlier vibrancy and mystery: 'if I could only get back those moments they would be to me more precious than gold.' Although Jefferies

¹⁷ David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), p. 262.

wrote the letter to the *Astronomical Register* in 1870, which recorded his scientific observations, his later account of the event, in which he admits, 'I had no scientific thoughts under the apple tree', suggests that he valued the actual experience of the phenomenon and its imaginative possibilities over its scientific significance.

After researching the prehistoric archaeology of his local area in the early 1870s, Jefferies went on to use archaeological sites in his work as settings where the mind was free to imagine back through time, and into the future. In his notebooks Jefferies records that it was near the Bronze and Iron Age hillfort, Liddington Castle, by the burial mound of an ancient warrior, where he began to forge a deeper spiritual relationship with the natural world. In *The Story of My Heart* he lies on the grass by the tomb, and through his senses feels closer to the natural world and to the life of the man interred there:

The sun of the summer morning shone on the dome of sward, and the air came softly up from the wheat below, the tips of the grasses swayed as it passed sighing faintly, it ceased, and the bees hummed by to the thyme and heathbells. I became absorbed in the glory of the day, the sunshine, the sweet air, the yellowing corn turning from its sappy green to summer's noon of gold, the lark's song like a waterfall in the sky. I felt at that moment that I was like the spirit of the man whose body was interred in the tumulus; I could understand and feel his existence the same as my own. [...] Resting by the tumulus, the spirit of the man who had been interred there was to me really alive,

and very close. This was quite natural, as natural and simple as the grass waving in the wind, the bees humming, and the larks' songs.¹⁸

In this passage the spirit of the prehistoric ancestor is as alive to the author as the natural landscape which surrounds him. Although physically separated by death, Jefferies and the warrior are connected through their inhabiting the same landscape. The identity of the interred man — what Jefferies conceives of as 'the abstract personality of the dead' — is known to him through the swaying grasses which grow on the same soil as thousands of years before, the warmth of the same sun, and the singing of the same generations of larks, all of which transcend ordinary time to connect the living with the dead.¹⁹ That Jefferies feels 'the same' as the warrior suggests an ever-present continuum of humanity — one that supersedes death and connects all human life, both in the past and present. The intangibility of this idea — what might only be a feeling to others — Jefferies attempts to put into words, and, more importantly, the presence of the archaeological past facilitates this process. Later in the book, Jefferies imagines the sun shining on him 'as it burned on when the earliest cave of India was carved', and feels 'the immense forces of the universe, and beyond these the sense of the eternal now, of the immortal.'

¹⁸ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 28–9.

¹⁹ In 'To a Skylark' Percy Shelley describes the lark as 'a star of heaven': 'Waking or asleep, / Thou of death must deem / Things more true and deep / Than we mortals dream'. *Percy Bysshe Shelley: The Major Works*, ed. by Zachary Leader and Michael O'Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 463-65. Hardy recalls this poem in 'Shelley's Skylark': 'The dust of the lark that Shelley heard, / And made immortal through times to be;— / Though it only lived like another bird, / And knew not its immortality'. Thomas Hardy, *Collected Poems*, Fourth Edition (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 92. Subsequent references are to this edition.

The passing time between ancient and present human activity beneath the same sun is 'nothing' and the same human belief endures.

Despite the fundamental importance of the senses in human experience, and the recognition of the place of imagination in science during the nineteenth century, archaeologists were more concerned with finding visual evidence of the activities of past human societies, and — at least in formal reports and proceedings — tended to overlook the role of the senses. However, the rising popularity of archaeology in the public domain and the periodical press during the late nineteenth century encouraged the sensory appreciation of archaeological sites. Activities of the Cardiff Naturalist's Society in August 1874, as recorded in the *Western Mail*, included walks around picturesque countryside, amongst 'shady lanes' and 'green hedgerows' with views of the Bristol Channel 'glittering like gold in the summer sun', scenery which the author notes to have 'evoked rapturous feelings in the minds of the naturalists.'²⁰ On their excursion they visited some cromlechs on the Duffryn Estate, where their vice president — 'standing on the huge moss-covered stone which formed the roof of one of these cromlechs' — read a paper on the origins and purpose of the monuments. The connection between the 'minds' of the naturalists and the genial nature of the scenery encouraged a more sympathetic vision of the remote past:

Here were deposited, in a remote period of history, the remains of British chieftains, of parents whose burial may have caused many a

²⁰ Anon., 'The Cardiff Naturalists' Society', *Western Mail*, 1 August 1874, p. 6.

scene of sorrow — deep and touching as the scenes so frequently witnessed in our modern cemeteries.²¹

In comparing the ancient burial ground to the ‘modern’ cemetery, the author perceives similarity between the emotional responses of past and present societies. This response was part of an emerging trend which recognised the humane qualities of ancient societies. Fading notions of barbarous druids began to give way to increasingly informed and sensitive interpretations of past cultures, and the perception of past societies’ sympathetic relation to the landscape contributed to growing environmental awareness.

Thus it was during the late nineteenth century that the value of sensory perception and imagination in the interpretation of the archaeological record was first realised. The archaeological imagination, enhanced through the senses, offered a more exploratory way of understanding past societies and suggested a different type of knowledge, in between practical science and nebulous conjecture. In trying to avoid the mistakes of previous decades, late-Victorian archaeologists, naturalists and authors understood archaeological sites not only through what was visible or what might have once been visible, but through the imaginative reconstruction of climate — geographical, meteorological and emotional. Human activity in the landscape had changed, but as Hardy perceived in ‘Tryst’, the character of the landscape itself, and its implications for human experience, retained an essential continuity.

²¹ Ibid.

Part of what has attracted critics to Hardy's engagement with the past is his suggestion of a psychic dimension existing beyond the visible world — one that could alter the perception of time and the world around. In *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) Hardy hints that the imagination withholds potential for perceiving this different sort of time, and the place of the self within it. When the Mellstock Quire walk to Stinsford Church after carol singing, the sights and sounds of the night, coupled with the mystery of the church atmosphere, fosters more imaginative awareness of the surroundings than might be expected from the practical, rustic characters:

They now crossed Mellstock Bridge, and went along an embowered path beside the From towards the church and vicarage, meeting Voss with the hot mead and bread-and-cheese as they were approaching the churchyard. This determined them to eat and drink before proceeding further, and they entered the church and ascended to the gallery. The lanterns were opened, and the whole body sat round against the walls on benches and whatever else was available, and made a hearty meal. In the pauses of conversation there could be heard through the floor overhead a little world of undertones and creaks from the halting clockwork, which never spread further than the tower they were born in, and raised in the more meditative minds a fancy that here lay the direct pathway of Time.²²

²² Thomas Hardy, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 36.

Hardy hints at a larger thought-world accessible through the 'little world of undertones and creaks' which is part of the 'direct pathway of Time' itself. He creates a sensuous development to this imagining: the bridge over the River From; the 'embowered path'; the 'hot mead and bread-and-cheese'; the lighting of the lanterns, and finally, the noises of the 'halting clockwork'. The magnification of these sounds in the darkness, and the sensual journey which the group undertakes along the river, gather pace and fill the 'pauses of conversation' with a deeper sense of reality. Although made by the machinery of the clock, that these noises are 'born' denotes an otherworldly edge to their manifestation; something beyond the purely mechanical. The ambiguous sphere of unknown time momentarily becomes tangible through the atmosphere and noises created by human time.

Later in the novel, Hardy describes the progressive unfolding of the 'revelry' of a country dance, as perceived through the senses:

It was the time of night when a guest may write his name in the dust upon the tables and chairs, and a bluish mist pervades the atmosphere, becoming a distinct halo round the candles; when people's nostrils, wrinkles, and crevices in general, seem to be getting gradually plastered up; when the very fiddlers as well as the dancers get red in the face, the dancers having advanced further still towards incandescence, and entered the cadaverous phase; the fiddlers no longer sit down, but kick back their chairs and saw madly at the strings,

with legs firmly spread and eyes closed, regardless of the visible world.²³

The notion of the evening's progression through a series of stages — 'becoming [...] gradually [...] advanced' — is one of many examples in Hardy's work which echoes Darwinian thought. However, although drawing from scientific terminology — the 'halo' around the candles echoing haloed stars, and the 'incandescence' of the dancers' faces — Hardy's description essentially points away from, and beyond, the scientific. The *Oxford English Dictionary* traces the use of the term 'incandescence' to the scientist, Joseph Hutton, in 1794, and digital searches in nineteenth-century periodicals suggest that the word came into popular use during the 1860s. The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites John Tyndall, who used the term in 1860 to describe the light of meteorites being caused by friction with the atmosphere, and Spottiswode in 1881 in the journal, *Nature*, who described the Edison gas lamps, which were lit by the incandescence of a fine thread of carbon. In Hardy's narrative, the accumulating heat in the dance tent not only becomes evident in the reddened faces of the dancers, but is simultaneous with the accumulating emotion and desire between Dick and Fancy Day: 'Again and again did Dick share his Love's hand with another man, and wheel round; then, more delightfully, promenade in a circle with her all to himself, his arm holding her waist more firmly each time'.²⁴ The implied association between heightened sensory awareness and scientific processes suggests that Hardy,

²³ *Under the Greenwood Tree*, pp. 54-5.

²⁴ *Under the Greenwood Tree*, p. 55.

at this early stage of his career, was using scientific knowledge to illumine the subtleties of human emotion and mind.

In *The Return of the Native* (1878) Hardy again refers to the senses in the context of a country dance. When Eustacia and Wildeve are temporarily reunited to dance together, Eustacia feels ‘a new vitality enter[ed] her form’. Dusk, says Hardy, creates ‘a certain degree and tone of light which tends to disturb the equilibrium of the senses, and to promote dangerously the tenderer moods’, heightening ‘the emotions to rankness’ and making reason ‘sleepy and unperceiving in inverse proportion.’ The atmosphere of the dance stimulates the senses and emotions, and weakens reason, thus altering, and temporarily displacing, ordinary logical perception. Eustacia is carried away in the world of the dance — the experience ‘divided like a tangible fence [...] from her experience without it.’ Her soul has ‘passed away from and forgotten her features, which were left empty and quiescent, as they always are when feeling goes beyond their register.’²⁵ Hardy suggests that, through the ‘motion’ of the dance, and the ‘tropical’ sensory world it creates, Eustacia’s soul moves ‘beyond’ and ‘away from’ the ordinary visible world into a different sort of receptive space. Hardy equates her experience with ‘enter[ing] a brilliant chamber after a night walk in a wood’, and encountering the light of an entirely different atmosphere.

However, at the height of sensory awareness — where the mind moves towards an altered state beyond ordinary consciousness — there is nothing to sustain the experience. Like the temporary illumination of ‘the planet Mercury surrounded by the lustre of sunset’ Eustacia’s ‘brilliancy’ goes

²⁵ Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 256.

unnoticed, and soon fades. Hardy uses astronomical terminology, and the wonder associated with it, to suggest the presence of larger unknown spheres of thought and experience, which, due to the gravitational pull of mundane circumstances, remain essentially remote. He comments on the restrictive nature of the social conditions from which the couple are allowed temporary freedom: 'The dance had come like an irresistible attack upon whatever sense of social order there was in their minds, to drive them back into old paths which were now doubly irregular.'²⁶ Hardy perceived such perceptions to be so deeply rooted in social and psychological influences that, for Eustacia, the suspension of these influences is only temporary and cannot be sustained. In discussing the 'positive value' of human feeling in Hardy's work, Pearl R. Hochstadt wrote that 'for Hardy, love's private, psychic dimension could never be isolated from larger social and psychological concerns.'²⁷ Indeed, the human desire to seek experience outside of the visible seems to have no place in the ordinary visible world. In his description of the dance – a commonplace, rural event — Hardy subtly refers to the tensions between practical and imaginative thinking, which at the time — in light of increasingly materialism — was a contentious subject. Like Jefferies, Hardy would have been aware of these discussions, regularly featured in the magazines and papers which he both read and contributed to. The antiquarian, Harold Bayley, writing retrospectively in 1920, said of John Tyndall — who assumed a central role in these debates — that '[he] has observed that imagination, bounded and conditioned by co-operant reason, is the mightiest instrument of

²⁶ Ibid., p. 264.

²⁷ Pearl R. Hochstadt, 'Hardy's Romantic Diptych: a reading of *A Laodicean* and *Two on a Tower*', *English Literature in Transition, 1880–1920*, 26, 1 (1983), 23–34 (p. 24).

the physical discoverer.²⁸ For the conceptual discoverer, too, the imagination was fundamental, but the notion of being bound and conditioned by reason was more problematic. For Hardy, writing forty years earlier, the tensions between the transcendent potential of the imagination and the cold logic of reason were more difficult to resolve, and seemed to displace and threaten the credibility of established human social norms.

In *Two on a Tower*, Hardy explores the relation between the astronomical imagination and the senses — within a prehistoric setting — and highlights inherent tensions between them. A folly on a prehistoric fortification called ‘Rings Hill Speer’ is the setting for the developing relationship between Viviette and her younger lover, the astronomer Swithin St. Cleeve, who uses the tower as a vantage point for his studies. One night during their courtship, when watching the stars from the folly, Swithin warns of the alienation and fear which contemplation of the cosmos can evoke:

For all the wonder of these everlasting stars, eternal spheres and what not, they are not everlasting, they are not eternal; they burn out like candles. You see that dying one in the body of the Greater Bear? Two centuries ago it was as bright as the others. The senses may become terrified by plunging among them as they are, but there is a pitifulness even in their glory. Imagine them all extinguished, and your mind feeling its way through a heaven of total darkness, occasionally striking against the black, invisible cinders of these stars [...] if you are cheerful,

²⁸ Harold Bayley, *Archaic England: An Essay in Deciphering Prehistory from Megalithic Monuments, Earthworks, Customs, Coins, Place-names, and Faerie Superstitions* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1920), p. 74.

and wish to remain so, leave the study of astronomy alone. Of all the sciences, it alone deserves the character of the terrible.²⁹

In contrast to the dances in *The Return of the Native* and *Under the Greenwood Tree*, where the dancers' senses are moved to stir deep emotions, astronomical science opens a 'terrible' window into a dark world where there is no heat, light or colour to stimulate the senses. Unlike the dancers, who feel the 'grass under their feet' and see the light of the moon, for the astronomer the emptiness and silence of the void of sky above serves only to 'terrify' the senses. Hardy perceived that for Swithin, the rational scientist, thought was ultimately conditioned by the social and psychological context in which it arose — rather than the cosmic — causing the sight of the dying star to seem 'terrible'. In contrast to the alienation of astronomy, the continuity between past and present human cultures, which is suggested in the novel through the setting of the hillfort, made the study of anthropology and archaeology more appealing.

The role of the senses in the formal interpretation of archaeology has been overlooked during the last century, not least as a precaution against the dangers of reaching incorrect conclusions — a precedent set by the guesswork of early archaeologists. Chris Gosden, writing in 2001, observed that ideas of art and aesthetics have long been part of archaeological debates, 'but few, if any, of these discussions focus on the links between

²⁹ Thomas Hardy, *Two on a Tower*, ed. by Suleiman M. Ahmad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 34–35.

objects, embodied experience and the senses.³⁰ In the first publication of its kind, Robin Skeates in *An Archaeology of the Senses* (2010) recognises that the sense of sight has dominated archaeological theory and practice, to the exclusion of almost all others.³¹ David Abram writes that ‘to return to our senses is to renew our bond with this wider life, to feel the soil beneath the pavement, to sense — even when indoors — the moon’s gaze upon the roof’.³² Drawing from this emergent ecological philosophy, it is possible to consider a wider sensory context for the human past. The senses expand awareness of the emotional and psychological impact of past events in the landscape on the societies which experienced them.

The beginnings of these ecological interpretations of the past can be seen in the late-nineteenth-century observations by authors and naturalists who knew their natural and archaeological landscapes well. Hardy had firsthand experience of how a deep sensory perception of an archaeological site, and the imaginative recreation of the circumstances of its past inhabitants, could contribute to interpreting the material record. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, written when Hardy was a member of the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club in the 1880s, the Neolithic henge and Roman Amphitheatre, Maumbury Rings, functions as a significant feature of the landscape, much as it had done for centuries. A place of reunion for the estranged Henchard and his wife Susan, the Ring — dark, remote and forboding — is heavily reminiscent of a violent human past, specifically the

³⁰ Chris Gosden, ‘Making Sense: Archaeology and Aesthetics’, *World Archaeology*, 33, 2 (October 2001), 163–167 (p. 163).

³¹ Robin Skeates, *An Archaeology of the Senses: Prehistoric Malta* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), preface.

³² David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, p. 273.

execution of the young Mary Channing in the seventeenth century, and the themes of trial and retribution are accordingly present throughout.³³

In 1908, Hardy attended the first excavations at Maumbury Ring. A report of the event in *The Times* records that ‘Mr. Thomas Hardy, whose house, Max Gate, is but a mile from the Rings, has been a frequent and interested visitor during the work.’³⁴ In an article written for *The Times*, Hardy records in detail his responses to the excavations, writing that ‘the blood of us onlookers went cold’ when prehistoric finds, including chipped flints and horns were recovered, casting sudden doubt over the idea of Roman occupation.³⁵ ‘The obvious explanation’, reassures Hardy, ‘to those who are not specialists, seems to be that here, as elsewhere, the colonists to save labour, shaped and adapted to their own use some earthworks already on the spot.’ The article goes on to list the phases of human history that the site has withstood, noting the ‘congregational masses’ that have gathered there over centuries for different reasons. The strong interpretative capacity of this article, which a report in the *Antiquary* termed ‘non-archaeological’,³⁶ would today have a place in landscape archaeology, a subject in its own right that was not recognised as such until the 1950s.³⁷ Hardy’s concern that these excavations validated the Roman use of the site as a gladiatorial arena suggests that his

³³ For a closer reading of the function of Maumbury Rings in the novel see Andrew Radford, ‘Excavating an Empire of Dust in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*’, *Thomas Hardy Journal*, XXV (2009), 48–70 (p. 57).

³⁴ Anon., ‘The Excavations at Maumbury Rings’, *The Times*, 29 September 1908, p. 8.

³⁵ Thomas Hardy, ‘Maumbury Rings’, *The Times*, 9 October 1908, p. 11.

³⁶ An article in the *Antiquary* acknowledges Hardy’s article in the *Times* wryly commenting that Hardy’s reference to the director of the project, Mr St. George Gray, underplays the degree of technicality and responsibility that his supervision entails (Anon., ‘Notes of the Month’, *Antiquary*, November 1908, p. 402).

³⁷ In *Interpreting the Landscape: Landscape Archaeology and Local History* (London: Routledge, 1997), archaeologist Michael Ashton addresses the features and changes in the landscape in a factual manner, recognising that much of what is visible today in Britain’s landscape is the result of a chain of social and natural processes.

own understanding of that spot — as explored and expressed through the writing of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* — was not only informed by archaeology, but by his sensory experience of the site. Hardy was aware that the excavation of a spot so long used by the inhabitants of Dorchester altered public and personal perceptions of the site.³⁸ The article suggests a sense of security in the knowledge of the origin of Maumbury Ring; a security reinforced by the years during which Hardy had regularly walked past the spot, which in a moment during excavation suddenly became threatened by the throwing up of prehistoric implements. Ralf Hertel writes in *Making Sense*, in his discussion about reading novels, that ‘the senses always imply more than merely a physical perception and are closely linked to emotions and thoughts [...] Thus, physical experience is a precondition for emotional and intellectual activity.’³⁹ Hardy’s sensual experience of archaeology in a landscape deepened the imaginative potential of discovery.

An article by Jefferies in the *Graphic* in 1877, about the use of flints as stone tools on the Wiltshire Downs, offers an insight into how the archaeological imagination could lead to profound insights about the place of humans in the world. The narrative is structured around the simple action of picking up a flint and a subsequent digression into the prehistory of man. Jefferies imagines ‘those strange times’ that have yet to be written, sensing an inherited knowledge of the use of stone in the landscape. In imagining the

³⁸ Maumbury Ring is situated on the Weymouth Road, on the edge of Dorchester and is easily accessible on foot from the town centre. The site has been used for centuries as a meeting place and venue for public events. Hardy grew up in Dorchester and knew Maumbury Ring as a child. He returned to live in Dorchester in 1882, when he designed the house at Max Gate.

³⁹ Ralf Hertel, *Making Sense: Sense Perception in the British Novel of the 1980s and 1990s* (London: Rodopi, 2005), p. 10.

progress of Victorian archaeology, Jefferies directly associates the practical investigative element of archaeology with the process of authorship, stating that ‘the chapters are being slowly spelt out word by word, in caves, in *tumuli*, by stones and flints, and shell mounds, and carved horn and ivory; just as the cuneiform inscriptions were deciphered by patient ingenuity’. The article goes on to consider some of the geological characteristics of flint and the process of crystallisation which, on another flint, has given shape to a fossilised fern. Jefferies considers the changing role of flint in society, to the time when ‘our forefathers, in their powdered wigs and gaiters [...] lit their candles by the aid of flint and steel for long long generations.’ The article ends with a reflection on the star, Arcturus, which was watched and written about ‘in the old-world days’ by Job ‘the great poet’.⁴⁰

Writing about the interpretation of flint hand-axes, the archaeologists Hodder and Hutson recognise the importance of imagining past cultural customs:

cultural forms are interpreted in terms of previous cultural forms, backwards until we get to the first stone-tool ever made, in the temporal mists of the Palaeolithic. [...] There is something in all of us of the decisions made in the flaking of the very first hand-axe. Only archaeology can achieve this grand design. But even when we get to

⁴⁰ Richard Jefferies, ‘The Commonest Thing in the World’, *Landscape and Labour*, ed. by John Pearson (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1979), pp. 34–5.

the origin of some idea it is not reduced to something outside itself. The cultural form remains created, specific and irreducible.⁴¹

The handling of an object, crafted from natural materials, reveals tangible continuity between present and past cultures, a 'grand design', whose architecture began to be realised in the late nineteenth century. The rudimentary form of the hand-axe was not a type that vanished, but is ever-present as an idea in the increasingly sophisticated technology which has evolved over centuries. The suggestion that 'there is something in all of us [...] of the very first hand-axe' directly connects humans with the 'decisions' of our prehistoric ancestors, suggesting that — as the object has endured time — so has the human desire to explore and understand the world around. In archaeology this desire leads us to recover and interpret objects created thousands of years ago, which in turn echo back to us the desires, traditions and aspirations of our predecessors. Through this cyclical phenomenon, whereby objects and ideas engage in a process of continual and simultaneous exchange, we have gradually built up a richer, more sophisticated picture of how early societies lived and died.

The archaeologist Sven Ouzman observes that the properties of stone have held fascination for humans over a long period of time, with 'hardness, durability, colour, coarseness, size and situation in larger landscapes' being some of the qualities that have stirred imagination and curiosity.⁴² Ouzman

⁴¹ Ian Hodder and Scott Hutson, *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 12.

⁴² Sven Ouzman, 'Seeing Is Deceiving: Rock Art and the Non-Visual', *World Archaeology: Archaeology and Aesthetics*, 33, 2 (2001), pp. 253–269 (p. 251).

observes that in understanding past cultures it is becoming increasingly important to reconstruct more imaginatively the rich and multifarious environment in which they lived. Rock that appears to have been sculpted, chipped and crafted to produce sound and tactile experience has been considered as having a purely visual function in prehistoric societies. By looking beyond the visual impact of ancient rock-art and combining its non-visual appeal with the ideas of 'questing' and 'desire', Ouzman suggests that we can perceive how 'body, landscape and mindscape combined in an aesthetic and sensory articulation.'⁴³

In archaeology and literature, sensory experience deepens imaginative understanding of original contexts. Ouzman suggests that the 'signs and symbols' of prehistoric societies can be more clearly understood when placed in the context of the senses. In literature, reading is considered to be what the cultural theorists Gunter Gebauer and Christoph Wulf term a 'mimetic process' whereby sense perception creates a fictional world in the mind of the reader, blurring the distinction between fiction and reality.⁴⁴ The act of reading distances the mind from the everyday world, and opens up new avenues of thought. In archaeology an analogous process takes place, whereby interpretation of the archaeological record opens the mind to new imaginative possibilities, and, as Ouzman, Jefferies, and Hardy have shown, the senses facilitate this process. As the signs and symbols of prehistoric societies remain, the written word — itself a product of the same creative life process which motivated older societies — remains for the reader to interpret and,

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Gunter Gebauer and Christoph Wulf, *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), cited in Ralf Hertel, p. 9.

through sensory experience, construct a context that reflects the original intention of their creator.

Mapping Ancient Landscapes: Hardy's and Jefferies's archaeological experience of place

When realist fiction was emerging as the dominant genre in the mid-nineteenth century, the practice of archaeology was yet to universally endorse excavation. Following the example of early antiquaries such as William Stukeley, many archaeologists mapped ancient landscapes with a view to identifying the size, location, and material condition of relics. These cartographical studies, with accompanying (mostly speculative) analysis, covered areas as large as that of Robert Knox's *Eastern Yorkshire* (1855). An article in the *Antiquary* (1890) by Reverend Maule Cole, records that while many late eighteenth century archaeologists could accurately record the location and condition of archaeological monuments, they were far less accurate in their interpretations of the societies which once occupied them. The antiquary John Burton, M.D. of York, a contemporary and friend of Francis Drake in 1745 (also a historian and antiquarian) estimated some Roman entrenchments in Yorkshire to enclose 4,185 acres of land, and quoted Burton's surmise that 'it is evident here must have been a large Army.' Cole goes on to disprove Burton's theory that these communities were accustomed to the use of bronze, commenting that 'on the whole, Dr. Burton's map, as a map, is most valuable, but his conclusions are utterly erroneous'. As early archaeologists mapped out ancient landscapes, without being able to fully comprehend the significance of what lay beneath the soil, Hardy and Jefferies explored the imaginative and emotional possibilities of setting fiction in prehistoric landscapes.

Hardy claimed to be the first to revive the Anglo-Saxon name 'Wessex' for Dorset, and has subsequently been recognised as introducing the term into popular use. Throughout his career Hardy drew maps of Wessex, as did his literary critics, under headings such as 'Tess Country' and 'Sketch Map of the Scene of the Story' for *The Return of the Native*. By the time he published *Jude the Obscure* in 1895 he had extended his fictional Wessex to include north Dorset (Upper Wessex), and parts of Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, Hampshire, much of Berkshire, and some of Oxfordshire, with the most northerly point being Oxford (renamed 'Christminster' in the novel). These areas overlapped with what became known as 'Jefferies' Land' — the title of Grace Toplis' edition of Jefferies's early writings on the antiquities and topography of Wiltshire, also published in 1895. Jefferies's Land covers a forty-mile radius from Swindon up to the Berkshire Downs, and includes the Iron Age hillforts, Liddington and Barbury castle — two major prehistoric fortifications on the ancient Ridgeway. The Ridgeway, the oldest known path in the world, begins at Avebury, south of Jefferies's hometown, Swindon, and runs through Oxford, connecting Jefferies's and Hardy's real and fictional landscapes. The main highway out of Dorset — now part of the longer Wessex Ridgeway which runs from Lyme Regis to Ashmore on the Dorset/Wiltshire border — is the route taken by the fleeing Tess and Angel Clare to Stonehenge in Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

Like Jefferies's land, Hardy's Wessex included major archaeological landmarks, such as Stonehenge, the Iron Age hillfort, Pilsdon Pen, the prehistoric stone circle called The Nine Stones, the Iron Age farmstead Round Pound, Maiden Castle, and Maumbury Rings. The relationship between the

geography of Dorset and Hardy's imagined Wessex continues to be well documented (see for example, Tony Fincham's *Hardy's Landscape Revisited*, and Andrew Radford's *Mapping the Wessex Novel*).⁴⁵ For Hardy and Jefferies, the archaeological imagination linked the practical observation of the Wessex landscape with its fictional representation. When both authors were writing in the 1860s and 1870s, the chief topographical accounts of the antiquities of Wessex were John Hutchins's *The Antiquities of Dorset*, which Hardy possessed an annotated edition of, and Canon J. E. Jackson's revised edition of *Wiltshire: the Topographical collections of John Aubrey F.R.S. A.D. 1659–70* (1862), a copy of which Jefferies owned.

From 1867–1873 Jefferies was researching and documenting the antiquities of Swindon and the local area, and writing histories of Malmesbury, Cirencester, and Swindon, published serially in the *North Wiltshire Herald* between 1867 and 1868. From 1869–1872 Jefferies corresponded with Canon Jackson and Reverend F. Goddard, who were both archaeologists and members of the Wiltshire Natural History and Archaeological Society. Jefferies's letter of introduction to Canon Jackson on 27 April 1869 asks for assistance in obtaining papers relating to the history of Cirencester, Jefferies having learnt that Jackson was cataloguing papers in the library of the Marquis of Bath. Jefferies writes 'I too am an antiquarian', noting that Jackson has subscribed to his two histories in the *North Wiltshire Herald*. In a letter to Rev. Goddard in September the same year, Jefferies writes that 'for some

⁴⁵ See also Arthur McDowall, *Nature and Men* (New York: F.A. Stokes, 1924).

years past I have interested myself more or less in archaeology, and more particularly in the antiquities of my immediate neighbourhood'.⁴⁶

When Jefferies returned from travelling on the continent in 1870 he had no money, was estranged from his family, and was seeking to establish himself as an author. His ambitions were realised in November 1872 when his letters to *The Times* on the socio-political topic of the agricultural labourers received sudden national acclaim, and he was subsequently employed by *Fraser's Magazine* and other agricultural journals to write articles on rural subjects. During these years, for which there is little biographical material or known publications, Jefferies continued to research the archaeology of the Swindon area. Jefferies's letters to Jackson, only recently discovered, suggest that Jefferies considered archaeology as a potential means of achieving recognition as an author. In one letter, dated 21 May 1872, Jefferies refers to having read Jackson's work on John Aubrey and proposes to help him write an updated account of the archaeology of Wiltshire:

I have often wondered while looking through your work on Aubrey why you have not since extended that record so as to embrace the whole of North Wiltshire and so form in point of fact a history of this division. There are so many parishes Aubrey never visited. Your work is now out of print. If ever you should contemplate a re-issue on a more

⁴⁶ Richard Jefferies to Canon Jackson, 27 April 1869, London, Society of Antiquaries Manuscript Library, MS Rood Ashton-Tisbury, continued to Wroughton 817, fol. 11.

extended scale and if I could be of any use however slight in collecting material, I should be most happy.⁴⁷

Jefferies goes on to suggest his suitability for this proposed project, noting his 'central position' and that being 'known to almost everyone' he has 'very good opportunities'. The final paragraph of the letter contains an account of some excavated coins from Liddington church. Jefferies says a person remembers seeing fifty coins and cites the event as 'unusual', reassuring Jackson that he is 'making enquiries with a view to elucidating the matter'. Jefferies continued to correspond with Jackson throughout 1872, as Jackson assisted him in deciphering Latin inscriptions from bell rubbings in the local area. This was part of the research Jefferies carried out for his genealogical account *A Memoir of the Goddard Family* (1873).

In May 1872 a further letter to Jackson from Jefferies suggests that Jefferies was carrying out archaeological fieldwork on his behalf, mapping out key archaeological features of his local area. Jefferies writes that he has discovered Blackman's Barrow — a tumulus near Day House Lane at Coate, Swindon — and intends to open it.⁴⁸ He mentions visiting the old road discovered near Aldbourne, noting that 'one of the most important particulars could be its direction'. Jefferies also refers to his 'idea' that Gipsy Lane, in the local parish of Chiseldon, was 'the remains of an old British Track' which led to the Iron Age hillfort, Barbury Castle, and noted further barrows and

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

earthworks near the Marlborough Road.⁴⁹ Jefferies was also the first to notice and record Day House Stone Circle, a ring of nine stones in the meadows at Coate which is no longer intact. Jefferies's interests in the local area culminated in a paper delivered to the Wiltshire Natural History and Archaeological Society in 1873 about the antiquities of Swindon.

In a letter to the editor of the *New Quarterly Magazine* in 1876, Jefferies expresses his desire to use his archaeological experience to write articles which were more than ordinary natural history — a series that would express his imaginative awareness of the topography and ancient character of the Coate area. Jefferies refers to having read the work of Charles Lyell, and to the shaping influence of geology on his perception of his home landscape:

There is at Coate a reservoir — it is sixty years old, and looks quite as a lake — of some eighty acres of water. I think I could write a whole book on that great pond. I mapped it, and laid down the shallows and sand-banks, when I was a schoolboy, and I learnt how to manage a sailing boat on it. Even the mussels slowly crawling on the bottom, I believe, have taught me something. You can trace the action of the rain and frost and the waves on its banks, just as Lyell⁵⁰ delineates the effect of the ocean on our coast line; of course, on a smaller scale, but the illustration is perfect. You can trace the action of the brook which feeds it.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Jefferies owned a copy of *An Introduction to Geology* by Robert Bakewell, 1813, signed 'R. Jefferies Coate' (Matthews and Trietel, p. 81).

⁵¹ Oswald Crawford, 'Richard Jefferies: Field-Naturalist and Litterateur', *Idler; an illustrated monthly magazine*, October 1898, p. 290.

Echoing the ideas of the Greek philosopher Anaximander the First, who defined archaeology as the search for beginnings and sources of things which have no origin, Jefferies traces the source of the reservoir to the 'brook which feeds it'. Likely referring to Bakewell's *Introduction to Geology*, a copy of which he owned, Jefferies suggests that he can 'learn' from observing the habits and manners of the natural world. His mapping of the local area, with a view to writing about it, further recalls the work of Anaximander who is known to have drawn the first map of the world and constructed the first globe. Jefferies goes on to discuss the style that he would adopt for these proposed articles, stating that '[he] would endeavour to bring in some of the glamour — the magic of sunshine and green things and calm waters'. This suggests that he already perceived a strong link between the representation of the natural world and the imaginative interpretation and experience of it.

For Hardy and Jefferies mapping their local areas afforded a means of more deeply understanding and experiencing the landscape, and the place of humans within it. In the process of authorship their fictional landscapes are mapped onto prehistoric landscapes, once intricately planned and understood by prehistoric communities. Camps, tumuli, and stone circles — former cornerstones of prehistoric communities — which once functioned as ceremonial and trade routes connecting different parts of the country, feature in both author's works as places of solace. Within the protective ramparts or walls of stone, away from the ordinary pace of living, Hardy and Jefferies could reflect upon the implications of Victorian change and progress.

In *The Return of the Native* Hardy describes the road near the Rainbarrow as intermittently ‘over[laying]’ ancient tracks:

The [...] highway traversed the lower levels of the heath, from one horizon to another. In many portions of its course it overlaid an old vicinal way, which branched from the great Western road of the Romans, the Via Iceniana, or Iknild Street, hard by. On the evening under consideration it would have been noticed that, though the gloom had increased sufficiently to confuse the minor features of the heath, the white surface of the road remained almost as clear as ever.⁵²

In nineteenth-century archaeology many of what were termed ‘ancient British track-ways’ were ‘discovered and laid down in maps’ by Sir Richard Colt Hoare in his *Ancient History of North and South Wiltshire* (1812–1819), and his contributions to the 11 volumes of the *History of Modern Wiltshire* (1822–1844).⁵³ In the above passage Hardy imbues the road with a ‘clear’ durability, highlighting its importance as a means of travel and communication in the otherwise ‘confuse[d]’ and otherworldly heath.

In the nineteenth century ancient trackways were still travelled by foot, although wealthier people were increasingly making use of stagecoaches and the newfound steam railways. Hardy knew the direction and identity of the ancient tracks in Dorset, noting that for the first time in human history, since the introduction of new farming techniques, industrialisation, and more

⁵² *The Return of the Native*, p. 12.

⁵³ Anonymous, ‘London in the Woods’, *New Monthly Magazine*, February 1865, p. 237.

sophisticated means of communication, some prehistoric paths were ceasing to be used. In *Jude the Obscure*, set in Wiltshire, the place where the ancient Roman Road, the Icknield Way (what Hardy termed 'Icknield Street'), crosses the ancient Ridgeway on the way to Oxford — is imbued with imaginative significance for the young aspiring Jude:

Not a soul was visible on the hedgeless highway, or on either side of it, and the white road seemed to ascend and diminish till it joined the sky. At the very top it was crossed at right angles by a green 'ridgeway' — the Icknield Street and original Roman road through the district. This ancient track ran east and west for many miles, and down almost to within living memory had been used for driving flocks and herds to fairs and markets. But it was now neglected and overgrown.

[...] till now he had had no suspicion that such a wide, flat, low-lying country lay so near at hand, under the very verge of his upland world. The whole northern semicircle between east and west, to a distance of forty or fifty miles, spread itself before him⁵⁴

The location of Jude's family in Lewton Bassett near 'Alfredston' (Wantage) — near the ancient Ridgeway — appears to have been carefully chosen by Hardy as the setting for his most controversial novel. This crossroads — the site of the Brown House 'a weather-beaten old barn' — is used in the novel as a metaphorical crossing point in various stages of Jude's development: as a

⁵⁴ *Jude*, p. 15.

boy, first glimpsing Oxford through the mist, then as an adolescent courting the flirtatious Arabella, and finally, on his broken-hearted return from his failed union with Sue Bridehead.

Each event in Jude's life which facilitates his encounter with the spot — whether real or figurative — denotes a further development in his own journey. The ancient route is 'neglected' and has imaginative connotations for Hardy's depiction of marriage throughout the novel. Hardy often uses distances, landmarks, and local villages to locate the 'Brown House', which features in varying moods and circumstances associated with Jude's female relationships. Allison Adler Kroll, citing the work of archaeologist Christopher Tilley, notes that:

because the pasts of locales and landscapes are 'crucially constitutive of their presents', the paths which traverse such spaces accrue meaning as well; 'a journey along a path' in fact constitutes 'a paradigmatic cultural act, since it is following in the steps inscribed by others whose steps have worn a conduit for movement which becomes the correct or 'best way to go'.⁵⁵

Kroll recognises that the ways in which paths feature in Hardy's work aligns his 'archaeological vision' with that Tilley's. Kroll highlights the Roman road and highway in *The Return of the Native*, the road surrounding Casterbridge in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the path leading into Little Hintock in *The*

⁵⁵ Tilley, p. 31 in Allison Adler Kroll, 'Hardy's Wessex, heritage culture, and the archaeology of rural England', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 31, 4 (2009), 335–52 (p. 347) <doi: 10.1080/08905490903445502>.

Woodlanders, the route through Blackmoor Vale in *Tess*, and the road toward Marygreen in *Jude* as ‘paths [which] make and remake local history in their respective narratives.’⁵⁶ In *Jude*, the story of the acrimonious parting of his parents at the Brown House, where the Ridgeway crosses the modern road — imparted to him by his grandmother — becomes a memory of his own, reinforced by passing the spot as he walks to work, and becomes internalized by his fiancé, Sue Bridehead, as an ill-omen to their impending marriage. Further suggestion of Hardy’s recognition of the cartographical significance of the area in relation to marriage occurs when Sue, the unconventional and rebellious heroine, travels to Oxford to see a display of Biblical Archaeology. Here she questions the validity of a reconstructed ‘tumulus’ of Jesus at Calvary, calling it ‘a very imaginary production’: ‘how does anybody know that Jerusalem was like this in the time of Christ? I am sure this man doesn’t.’ Her colleague and soon-to-be husband, the schoolmaster, Phillotson, responds by saying that ‘it is made after the best conjectural maps, based on actual visits to the city as it now exists’. A chance encounter with Jude at the exhibition encourages Sue to express her inner feelings:

‘I know your meaning,’ said Jude ardently (although he did not).

‘And I think you are quite right.’

‘That’s a good Jude — I know *you* believe in me!’ She impulsively seized his hand, and leaving a reproachful look on the schoolmaster turned away to Jude, her voice revealing a tremor which she herself felt to be absurdly uncalled for by sarcasm so gentle. She

⁵⁶ Ibid.

had not the least conception how the hearts of the twain went out to her at this momentary revelation of feeling, and what a complication she was building up thereby in the futures of both.⁵⁷

The act of considering the past defines key differences between the two men: Phillotson's immediate defence of the need to associate his present with the Christian past reveals his conventionality and unsuitability for Sue as a husband, whereas Jude's support of her opinion overrides his own interest in the subject. The presence of the past — as understood through the reconstruction — precipitates a 'momentary revelation' whereby Sue 'build[s] up' a new emotional future for both men.

In Jefferies's *Wild Life in a Southern County* (1879), the relationship between the archaeology and topography of the Swindon area is used more imaginatively than in his former topographical work. Similar route crossings of the Wiltshire Ridgeway are observed by Jefferies, but are perceived as conduits to a more holistic experience of the landscape than in Hardy's work. Jefferies describes the Ridgeway as 'a broad green track' which is itself crossed by waggon tracks and 'is distinct from the hard roads of modern construction which also at wide intervals cross its course, dusty and glaringly white in the sunshine'.⁵⁸ In contrast to Hardy's depiction of the same area in *Jude* — in which the modern road is crossed intermittently by ancient 'ridgeways'⁵⁹ — Jefferies, writing from the perspective of the natural historian

⁵⁷ *Jude*, pp. 109-10.

⁵⁸ Richard Jefferies, *Wild Life in a Southern County* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 52.

⁵⁹ In *The Return of the Native* Hardy writes that the modern road 'overlaid the old vicinal way', suggesting that the former was of greater significance (p. 12).

travelling on foot, identifies the Ridgeway itself as the most direct route across the Wiltshire Downs, bearing its own 'course', and being 'entirely independent of the roads of modern days'. He goes on to recount the history of the track through different archaeological epochs:

The origin of the track goes back into the dimmest antiquity; there is evidence that it was a military road when the fierce Dane carried fire and slaughter inland, leaving his 'nailed bark' in the creeks of the rivers, and before that when the Saxons pushed up from the sea. The eagles of old Rome, perhaps, were borne along it, and yet earlier the chariots of the Britons may have used it — traces of all have been found; so that for fifteen centuries this track of the primitive peoples has maintained its existence through the strange changes of the times, till now in the season the cumbrous steam-ploughing engines jolt and strain and pant over the uneven turf.⁶⁰

This track, which has endured the 'strange changes of the times', is not only a route to travel on foot, but also a metaphysical route which encourages the thinker to consider the prehistoric significance of the landscape, and the implications of this for the modern mind. Jefferies refers to the 'great earthwork', Liddington Castle, the spot where he would go to think. Surrounding the earthwork is an archaeological landscape which has grown

⁶⁰ *Wild Life in a Southern County*, p. 53.

into and around the natural world; akin to Hardy's barrows 'almost crystallised to natural products by long continuance' in *The Return of the Native*:⁶¹

I turn my face once more towards its distant rampart, just visible, showing over the hills a line drawn against the sky. Here, whence I start, is another such a camp, with mound and fosse; beyond the one I have more closely described some four miles is still a third, all connected by the same green track running along the ridges of the downs and entirely independent of the roads of modern days. They form a chain of forts on the edge of the downland overlooking the vale. [...] cornfields approach, extending on either hand — barley, already bending under the weight of the awn, swaying with every gentle breath of air, stronger oats and wheat, broad squares of swede and turnip and dark-green mangold. [...] Mile after mile, and still no sign of human life — everywhere silence, solitude. Hill after hill and plain after plain. Presently the turf is succeeded by a hard road — flints ground down into dust by broad waggon-wheels bearing huge towering loads of wool or heavy wheat. Just here the old track happens to answer the purposes of modern civilisation.⁶²

Beside the track, which conceals hares in the long grass at its edges, steam engines appear as incongruous animals which 'jolt and strain and pant over the uneven turf', representing a new form of labour which has diverted away

⁶¹ *The Return of the Native*, p. 12.

⁶² *Ibid.*

from the course of prehistoric tradition. The introduction of steam traction engines, which ‘tore up’ the ground, threatened this sense of continuity in the way in which people worked and experienced the land. The place where the old track ‘happens to answer the purposes of modern civilisation’ is thus a sudden, accidental occurrence; much as for rural populations in Wiltshire, traditional ways of farming continued until they were forcibly eclipsed by modern techniques. In ‘Patchwork Agriculture’,⁶³ Jefferies describes the ‘patchwork’ effect of old and modern farming techniques, where in one field an old man and a boy walk slowly beside oxen pulling a plough — a ‘true primitive and prehistoric original’, which is similar to those ‘depicted upon the monuments of Egypt — and in an adjacent field a steam plough tears noisily up and down.’⁶⁴ As the ancient Ridgeway continued to connect sites which were thousands of years old — despite the unpredictable threats of modern change — the archaeological imagination afforded a stable avenue for the late-Victorian thinker; one that tangibly connected past and contemporary ways of living through the landscape.

In *The Return of the Native*, Hardy distinguishes between the earthly form of the prehistoric Rainbarrow on Egdon Heath and the unknown space of the sky above:

⁶³ This is from an article I have identified by Jefferies in the *Examiner*, dated 1875, and signed ‘Richard Jefferies’. This discovery affirms the *Examiner* as a magazine to which Jefferies contributed. A further article in the *Examiner*, titled ‘Hodge and his Master’ (1872), unsigned, may also be by Jefferies. Further unknown and undocumented articles, which may be Jefferies’s work, are listed, with documentary evidence, in Rebecca Welshman, ‘Jefferies Discoveries’, *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 19 (2010), 32–45.

⁶⁴ Richard Jefferies, ‘Patchwork Agriculture,’ *Examiner*, 31 July 1875, p. 855.

As the resting man looked at the barrow he became aware that its summit, hitherto the highest object in the whole prospect round, was surmounted by something higher. It rose from the semiglobular mound like a spike from a helmet. The first instinct of an imaginative stranger might have been to suppose it the person of one of the Celts who built the barrow, so far had all of modern date withdrawn from the scene. It seemed a sort of last man among them, musing for a moment before dropping into eternal night with the rest of his race.

There the form stood, motionless as the hill beneath. Above the plain rose the hill, above the hill rose the barrow, and above the barrow rose the figure. Above the figure was nothing that could be mapped elsewhere than on a celestial globe.⁶⁵

The image of a map connects the limited topographical knowledge of the mind of man with the larger unknown space of the sky above, similarly linking the grounded experience of the human being, lodged in the present, with the ambiguous activities of his Celtic ancestors. Hardy describes the barrow as occupying the 'loftiest ground of the loneliest height that the heath contained', suggesting that, for the individual mind 'adrift on change' and seeking to secure itself, this height afforded greater potential for imaginative insight than the lower lying heathland. This distinction between low and high ground was something widely appreciated by prehistoric societies, who engineered earthworks of great heights as a means of protection from attack, but also, as

⁶⁵ *The Return of the Native*, p. 17.

in the case of Hardy's Rainbarrow, for prominence — the visibility of a barrow in a landscape keeping alive the memory of the ancestor interred within it.

As Venn watches, a chain of agricultural workers make a pile of furze faggots on the summit of the tumulus and set it alight. The event of the fire brings life to the still barrow, and alters the sense of ordinary time:

It was as if these men and boys had suddenly dived into past ages, and fetched therefrom an hour and deed which had before been familiar with this spot. The ashes of the original British pyre which blazed from that summit lay fresh and undisturbed in the barrow beneath their tread. The flames from funeral piles long ago kindled there had shone down upon the lowlands as these were shining now. Festival fires to Thor and Woden had followed on the same ground and duly had their day.⁶⁶

The innate impulse to light fires in the landscape transcends cultural change to connect the agricultural workers with their environment and with the activities of their prehistoric ancestors. In imagining back, to 'prehistoric times' the past becomes fluid — enough to 'dive [*sic*] into.' The accumulated soil strata, which contain ashes from the similar practices of ancient communities, strengthen the physical 'height' and presence of the monument and imbue it with symbolic significance. Just as fire, as a source of light and warmth, was a connective force within prehistoric communities, and was important in some prehistoric burial traditions, so it continues to facilitate human interaction in

⁶⁶*The Return of the Native*, p. 20.

late nineteenth-century agricultural society. The reddleman's observations from his resting place, which connect him with the great tradition of human activity in the area, implicitly suggest that it is only his cultural status — his class and occupation — which are becoming eclipsed by social and agricultural change, whereas the inclination to continue certain rituals in the landscape remains. Allison Adler Kroll suggests that these funereal monuments in Hardy's landscapes 'collectively shape and are shaped by the human activities that take place around them', a process which facilitates continued cultural engagement with the land over time.⁶⁷ Perhaps more than this, Hardy's observation of how the barrow is used by farming communities over time suggests that the human mind has the ability to transcend the linear boundaries of distance and time and connect with the past consciousness of the prehistoric people who shaped the landscape. In doing so, Hardy implicitly suggests that this connection with the past affords partial consolation for the rapid changes which were causing crises in personal, social and cultural identities.

Although this process facilitates continued cultural engagement with the land over time, there is — in the presence of these monuments in the landscape and in the text — a potentially more profound agency at work. It was Jefferies, writing of his experience beside a tumulus in *The Story of My Heart*, who imagined a form of personal, rather than collective, engagement with the past. Jefferies records 'feel[ing] and understand[ing] the spirit of the man whose body was interred in the tumulus [...] the same as my own.' Gillian Beer cites the same passage in *The Story of My Heart* from the

⁶⁷ Adler-Kroll, p. 342.

paragraph which follows: 'Only by the strongest effort of the mind could I understand the idea of extinction; that was supernatural, requiring a miracle; the immortality of the soul natural, like the earth'.⁶⁸ Beer quotes Jefferies in relation to her suggestion that the concept of extinction is coupled with the idea of an absolute mortality, and that in contemporary secular society people have 'very contracted life spans compared with Victorian believers':

far fewer could now share Jefferies' assurance of the naturalness of the immortal soul, though he well pinpoints the fundamental resistance of the living being to imagining extinction. The loss of belief in a personal eternity shifts the time-scale of human fears and brings everything within the single life span.⁶⁹

Beer speaks of the 'terror of extinction' facing contemporary societies; a fear only just being realised in the late nineteenth century. What Beer terms the 'bring[ing] within the single life span' of existential fears was keenly felt by Hardy and Jefferies, whose characters struggle to come to terms with what Hardy termed the 'ache of modernism'.⁷⁰

Adler Kroll writes that for Hardy, local archaeological sites:

renewed contact with the nexus of indigenous human and environmental relations from which they themselves have arisen, and

⁶⁸ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 48 cited in Gillian Beer, 'Darwin and the Uses of Extinction', *Victorian Studies*, 51, 2 (2009), pp. 321–31 (p. 326).

⁶⁹ Beer, p. 326.

⁷⁰ Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, ed. by Juliet Grindle and Simon Gattrell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 129.

thus a source of meaning capable of countering the alienating effects of a modern consciousness not 'at home' in the world.⁷¹

Kroll quotes the following passage from *The Return of the Native*, when Clym crosses Egdon Heath:

His imagination would then people the spot with its ancient inhabitants: forgotten Celtic tribes trod their tracks about him, and he could almost live among them, look in their faces, and see them standing beside the barrows which swelled around, untouched and perfect since the time of their erection. Those of the dyed barbarians who had chosen the cultivable tracts were, in comparison with those who had left their marks here, as writers on paper beside writers on parchment. Their records had perished long ago by the plough, while the works of these remained. Yet they all had lived and died unconscious of the different fates awaiting their works. It reminded him that unforeseen factors operate in the evolution of immortality.⁷²

For Kroll these 'traces of past human presence' 'enchant' and 'enliven' the heath, 'enabling its continued engagement in the human activities taking place upon it.'⁷³ However, Kroll's suggestion that this passage indicates Hardy's 'moral imperative' — that 'the more we invest metaphysically in the physical

⁷¹ Adler-Kroll, p. 343.

⁷² *Return of the Native*, p. 373.

⁷³ Adler-Kroll, p. 343.

world which defines us, the more claim we will have to a record in the store of cultural memory' — overlooks the inherent affinity between scientific and creative thought which underlies the writing. Hardy compares prehistoric people who worked the land and left no trace to 'writers on paper', and those who built monuments to 'writers on parchment', directly associating prehistoric thinking with the act of authorship, and inferring the enduring quality of human belief — whether visible or invisible. For Clym, that 'they all had lived and died unconscious of the different fates awaiting their relics [...] reminded him that unforeseen factors operate in the evolution of immortality.'⁷⁴ More than simply reinforcing a process of cultural memory over time, the presence of the barrow in the landscape, and in the mind, affords a moment of increased visibility at the intersection of the scientific and literary imagination, inferring longevity — in the broadest sense of the word — for those who create; an insight afforded by archaeological science.

For Jefferies, the imagined life of the Celtic tribesman on the Wiltshire Downs is 'as real' two thousand years later as those who are living,⁷⁵ whereas Hardy's Clym, more cautiously, 'could *almost* live among them' [emphasis added]. Although Hardy refrains from taking that further imaginative leap to where the mind can dwell *in* the past, 'immortality', when considered in the grander context of archaeological time, has an 'evolution' of its own, wherein 'unforeseen factors' have new and dynamic possibilities. For Jefferies these

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ The dead man is, in some form, 'as existent' as the modern thinking man. This concept of continuity between one state and another echoes the work of mid nineteenth-century physicist, James Joule, who by this time had invented the first law of thermodynamics — that 'energy cannot be created or destroyed, it can only be changed from one form to another.' A version of this law appeared in an article in the *Quarterly Review* in 1900 about the speed of ocean going liners, in which the author writes 'the truth lies in a nutshell: energy cannot be created, it can only be transformed.' (p. 155)

possibilities are made tangible through the natural world — where the lone author treads the same ground as the warrior:

Listening to the sighing of the grass I felt immortality as I felt the beauty of the summer morning, and I thought beyond immortality, of other conditions, more beautiful than existence, higher than immortality.⁷⁶

Immortality is only one link, or phase, of a larger sequence of existence — akin to the ‘chain of forts’ which runs through Wiltshire — which endures both visibly within the landscape and invisibly within the mind.

For both authors the ‘lofty’ human aspiration for immortality remained, despite the archaeological chronology which had passed, and yet was threatened by encroaching artificiality and scientific explanations of life. Both authors recognised that the mapping of new ideas onto old systems of belief, in the context of archaeological settings — where evidence of former human life ‘mingled’⁷⁷ with the Victorian — afforded a unique form of personal and cultural engagement. Within these open spaces, amidst the lingering structures of prehistoric engineering, the mind could begin to work through the psychological tensions between old and new which characterised the late-Victorian movement towards Modernism.

⁷⁶ These lines follow directly on from Gillian Beer’s quotation, but are not quoted by her in the article.

⁷⁷ See Hardy’s description of Susan Henchard’s ‘dust’ in the Romano-British burial ground in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (London: Penguin, 1994), p. 153.

Part 2

Thomas Hardy: Archaeology and the Emotions

3

“Prehistoric Times”: Hardy and the Bronze Age

In 1865 Sir John Lubbock published *Prehistoric Times*, a major contribution to the new science of prehistoric archaeology. An appraisal of the book in the *London Review* described the subject as an inquiry into ‘the early history of man, his age as a race, his primeval condition, and the dawn and progress of civilisation’, topics which were ‘problems of surpassing interest from their bearing on the questions of the degree of perfectibility of the human species, and its ultimate destiny on the globe’.¹ The ambition of archaeologists to seek answers from prehistoric times to discern the ‘ultimate destiny’ of the human race was echoed by Hardy’s ambition to explore the emotional and imaginative depths of the mind. Late-Victorian thought was disturbing ground — in a practical and metaphysical sense — at an unprecedented rate.

Like Jefferies, Hardy was drawn to the reconstructive potential of archaeology and its capacity to bridge the present and the past. Having grown up in what was once the Roman capital of the southwest, Durnovaria, Hardy was familiar with the archaeological sites of Dorset. These include Maiden Castle, the largest Iron Age hillfort in Europe, Maumbury Rings, a Roman Amphitheatre, and numerous hilltop forts, such as High Stoy, and Woodbury Hill, the site of Greenhill Fair in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Michael Millgate notes how Hardy’s interest in local archaeology developed alongside other local interests during the 1880s when Max Gate was built.² In laying the foundations for the house, significant discoveries were made of Romano-British human remains and grave goods, which formed the subject of a paper

¹ Anon., ‘Prehistoric Times’, *London Review of Politics, Society, Literature, Art, and Science*, 23 December 1865, p. 671.

² Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy: A Biography Revisited* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 238.

Hardy gave to a meeting of the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club on 13 May 1884.³ Hardy's name and address appear in the membership lists for the club during the period 1882–1892, and he was later made an honorary member. His interest in the archaeology of his local area fostered friendships and acquaintances — with H. J. Moule, curator of Dorset County Museum, and Edward Cunnington, whose excavations of prehistoric Wiltshire rediscovered the Neolithic site called 'The Sanctuary', not seen since the work of William Stukeley in the eighteenth century.

One of Hardy's most significant friendships that contributed to his developing interest in archaeology was with his neighbour and mentor, William Barnes. When Hardy was staying in lodgings in Dorchester in 1883, waiting for the construction of Max Gate to be completed, he visited Barnes with Edmund Gosse. It is likely that Hardy would have discussed the archaeology found at Max Gate with Barnes, who had led the Archaeological Institute excursion to Maiden Castle during the first week of August 1865, and who was a member of the Somerset Archaeological Society and the London Archaeological Institute.⁴ Hardy's early career as an architect suitably prepared him to explore the meaning of Ancient British constructions, such as Stonehenge, to the late-Victorian imagination.⁵

The archaeologist Rooke Pennington wrote in 1873 of his work in prehistoric archaeology, that 'the answers to the questions I have propounded

³ This paper was published in the *Detroit Post* in 1885, and was later reprinted in the club's proceedings in 1890, with a note referring to its omission in the proceedings of 1884.

⁴ Anon., 'Archaeological Institute', *Gentlemen's Magazine*, September 1865, p. 331.

⁵ The term 'Ancient British' was used in the nineteenth century to refer to prehistoric monuments of unknown age. See Rebecca Welshman, 'Imagining the Ancient Britons: Victorian Adventures in Wye-Land', *Victoriographies*, 2 (2012), 31-43.

to myself are very far from being complete'.⁶ For Hardy, the emotional human condition was also far from being completely understood; a concern echoed in his work which recognised the complexities of human nature, where invisible 'currents' bring suppressed thoughts and feelings to the surface with sudden and dramatic consequences.⁷ Prehistoric sites feature in Hardy's work as enclosures in which to set dramatic events, where thousands of years of human history are contained beneath the surface. Hardy saw in these concealed strata a metaphor for gradually accumulating emotions, which circumstances can suddenly bring to the surface. The distinction that Hardy makes between the human who is outwardly whole but inwardly fragmented echoes the late-Victorian concern that the mind, estranged from the security of orthodox religion in an increasingly secular world, was weak and without foundation. In continuities between past and present cultures, Hardy perceived significant imaginative possibilities — ancient settings providing a new form of literary space through which to explore the complex relations between past and present, and between inner and outer. Yet consonant with this insight was a fear of knowing more about the depths of the imaginative mind, where the implications of emotional pressures could not be predicted, and where the self, when faced with disintegration, might become swamped by the uncertainty of an essentially unknowable future.

In Hardy's work, historic settings dislodge emotional responses to past events, bringing new and sudden implications for the present. In 1878, at the

⁶ Rooke Pennington, 'Notes on a Barrow Opening near Castleton', *Relinquary*, October 1873, p. 85.

⁷ Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders*, ed. by Dale Kramer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 132.

beginning of *The Return of the Native*, Hardy uses Lubbock's phrase 'prehistoric times':

To recline on a stump of thorn in the central valley of Egdon, between afternoon and night, as now, where the eye could reach nothing of the world outside the summits and shoulders of heathland which filled the whole circumference of its glance, and to know that everything around and underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead, gave ballast to the mind adrift on change, and harassed by the irrepressible New.⁸

To the late-Victorian mind 'adrift on change', in the midst of scientific reappraisal of the age of the earth and the newfound antiquity of mankind, the earth itself contained the only potentially reliable records of ancient human history. The continuity of Egdon Heath, the endurance through time of its characteristics — the same 'summits and shoulders' once gazed on by prehistoric man — was reassuring to Hardy, who perceived the more turbulent emotional nature of the human condition to be essentially unfitted to the world.⁹ The unexcavated Dorchester landscape echoes the unknown emotional territory of the thinking, feeling human being. Hardy reminds us that:

⁸ *The Return of the Native*, p. 12.

⁹ In 1881 Hardy wrote in a notebook entry that 'the emotions have no place in a world of defect, and it is a cruel injustice that they should have developed in it' Thomas Hardy, *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy*, ed. by Michael Millgate (London: Macmillan, 1984), p. 153.

it was impossible to dig more than a foot or two deep about the town fields and gardens without coming upon some tall soldier or other of the Empire, who had lain there in his silent unobtrusive rest for a space of fifteen hundred years. He was mostly found lying on his side, in an oval scoop in the chalk, like a chicken in its shell.¹⁰

As Andrew Radford has observed, the human skeleton ‘like a chicken in its shell’ has the embryonic potential to emerge into the modern moment in new and surprising ways.¹¹ In the layered terrain of Hardy’s novels ‘it is impossible to dig down’ without finding thoughts and feelings associated with past events. Hardy’s fascination with the past was encouraged by his friend and mentor, Henry Joseph Moule, the eldest son of the well known Reverend Moule who co-founded the Dorset County Museum. Millgate notes that the current Museum opened under the younger Henry Moule’s curatorship in January 1884, and that Hardy was a ‘frequent visitor’.¹² Karl Baedeker wrote in 1906 that the Dorset County Museum contained one of the best provincial collections of antiquities in England.¹³ As a result of continuing local excavations, the archaeological collections were frequently supplemented. Finds from prehistoric burials in Dorset, which were discovered during Hardy’s lifetime, include, for example, a bronze chisel, pottery, urns, bronze beads, bones, and a chariot wheel. Some of these were discovered by Hardy’s friend,

¹⁰ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 80.

¹¹ Radford, *Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 37.

¹² Millgate, *A Biography Revisited*, p. 227.

¹³ Karl Baedeker, *Great Britain: Handbook for Travellers* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1906), p. 100.

General Pitt-Rivers.¹⁴ The influence of these liaisons on the writing of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* can be seen in the following passage which describes Elizabeth-Jane visiting her mother's grave in Fordington Churchyard:

She seized on these days for her periodical visits to the spot where her mother lay buried — the still-used burial-ground of the old Roman-British city, whose curious feature was this, its continuity as a place of sepulture. Mrs. Henchard's dust mingled with the dust of women who lay ornamented with glass hair-pins and amber necklaces, and men who held in their mouths coins of Hadrian, Posthumus, and the Constantines.¹⁵

In describing the hour when Elizabeth-Jane visits as 'a time when the town avenues were deserted as the avenues of Karnac',¹⁶ Hardy compares the streets of Dorchester with Carnac in Brittany, the largest collection of pre-Celtic stones in the world. Hardy's interest in the site may have been encouraged by the architect Thomas Roger Smith, his former London employer and fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Hardy's own affiliation with the RIBA began in November 1862 when he was elected as a fellow, and he later won two RIBA prizes, including the Silver Medal.¹⁷ At this time, before Hardy had chosen a career as an author, Smith and the architectural historian, James Fergusson, were his seniors in the architectural

¹⁴ For further information about the locations of these finds see John Abercomby, *A Study of the Bronze Age Pottery of Great Britain & Ireland, and its Associated Grave-goods*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 89.

¹⁵ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 153.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Martin Ray, *Thomas Hardy Remembered* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 75.

profession, and their work on prehistory may have been an influence. Hardy attended meetings of the RIBA at which both men were likely to have been present — Fergusson as a former Vice-President, and Smith as a member of Council.¹⁸ Furthermore, both men were colleagues of Hardy's friend and employer, Sir Arthur Blomfield, President of the RIBA, who nominated Hardy for election.¹⁹ On 7 June 1878 Smith delivered a lecture to the RIBA concerning the alignment and structure of the Carnac site, which was reproduced in a two-part article in the *British Architect*. The article highlights the increasing prominence of prehistoric building in the profession of architecture and provides a commentary on Fergusson's *Rude Stone Monuments* (1872).

Fergusson, an architectural historian, argues that prehistoric monuments had their own style, in a manner similar to Egyptian or Classical architecture.²⁰ Smith furthers Fergusson's treatise by suggesting that prehistoric monuments are of greater antiquity and by encouraging others to reconsider the importance of the structures:

I invite your attention to a series of structures comparatively neglected though within easy reach of our doors, possessing all the charm of mystery and not a little dignity, solemnity, and impressiveness. In short,

¹⁸ See Royal Institute of British Architects, *The Proceedings* (RIBA, 1883), which lists Blashill (Fellow) alongside Fergusson (Fellow), and Professor T. Roger Smith (Member of Council) (p. 143). The *Architect*, Vols. 11-12 (London: Gilbert Wood, 1874) also records that Smith and Fergusson were part of the Committee for Architectural Designs (p. 108).

¹⁹ Claire Tomalin notes that Blomfield was an influence on Hardy — the two men 'got on well enough to form a friendship later in their lives'. *Thomas Hardy: A Time-Torn Man* (London: Viking, 2006), p. 69.

²⁰ James Fergusson, *Rude Stone Monuments in all Countries: their age and uses* (London: John Murray, 1872), preface, p. 10.

I wish to induce you to look upon these works as really and truly having a claim to be considered architecture²¹

Smith also makes a passionate appeal to his readers to feel national pride in Britain's prehistoric sites, which may have encouraged Hardy to consider the unique significance of the Wessex sites and how he might incorporate them into his fiction:

We cannot take leave of these monuments, and especially of the noble ones remaining in our own islands, without feeling some pride in the work of those far-off people [...] Yet living in the full glare and busy rush of a civilisation which, if enlightened and advanced, is not the less tumultuous and distracting, it is almost refreshing to cast our eyes back into the darkness of the far-off past and to try to fancy who and what the men were who did such astonishing works; and I am not without the belief that, if we realise how well they did the work, it may prove instructive also.²²

Smith notes that the Carnac stones are arranged into a 'series of avenues' similar to Avebury in Wiltshire. Hardy's comparison between Dorchester and Carnac may also have been prompted by the similarities between the two settings. Like the tree-lined avenues of Dorchester, which in Hardy's time extended in all four directions out of the town, the Kerlescant alignments at

²¹ Smith, 'Rude Stone Monuments', 21 June, 1878, p. 293.

²² Smith, 'Rude Stone Monuments', 28 June, 1878, p. 307.

Carnac run East to West.²³ Smith describes Carnac as situated on ‘open breezy heath’ and the stones as having a ‘solemn, wild, unearthly, impressive dignity, standing alone, grey and weather-beaten’.²⁴ This setting is similar to the heath and farmland that surrounded Dorchester. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Maumbury Rings is described as ‘melancholy, impressive, lonely’ — perhaps recalling Smith’s terminology — and ‘accessible from every part of town’. Given the unusual shape of the site, and the convergence of surrounding roads to it, it is conceivable that Hardy imagined the tree-lined streets of Dorchester to resemble the stone avenues of Carnac, and that this conception stemmed from the work of Smith.²⁵ That Susan Henchard’s ‘dust mingled with the dust of women who lay ornamented with glass hair-pins’ again recalls Smith, who describes how, in French cave sites, ‘human remains are mingled with the bones of the mammoth, the cave bear, the hyaena, and the reindeer’.²⁶

Millgate associates Hardy’s interests in antiquities with the middle period of Hardy’s career.²⁷ Yet the similarities with Smith’s work, and Hardy’s association with some of the leading theorists of prehistory, suggests an earlier genesis for these interests, and perhaps, for *The Mayor of*

²³ Smith (28 June 1878) writes that ‘the first series of avenues, called the lines of Kerlescant, run almost true east and west, though their lines suffer a slight bend’ (p. 306).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Smith’s account of Carnac reads: ‘when complete, the arrangement of this part of the monument was that the parallel avenues should lead up to a large enclosure of square shape, dominated by a mound’. Smith’s terminology again appears in Hardy’s novelette, *The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid* in which the words ‘solemn’, ‘wild’, ‘unearthly’, and ‘impressive’ are used to describe an earthwork.

²⁶ Reginald Smith, 21 June 1878, p. 294. Smith also uses the archaeological phrase ‘remote period’. Hardy uses this phrase in *A Laodicean* (1881) to describe the advent of the telegraph to the ancient De Stancy Castle: ‘a glance at the still ungrassed heap of earth round the foot of each post was, however, sufficient to show that it was at no very remote period that they had made their advance’ (p. 21).

²⁷ See earlier reference: Millgate, *A Biography Revisited*, p. 238.

Casterbridge. In early 1878 Hardy moved to Tooting, from where he became more socially active in the cultural and publishing sectors, and in May that year he was elected to the prestigious Savile Club, the main literary club of the time.²⁸ Hardy also happened to be in London at the time when Smith gave his lecture. However, Hardy's association with Smith has a more poignant significance for his career as a whole. Fergusson's *Rude Stone Monuments* was published in 1872 — the year when Roger Smith invited Hardy to return to work for him in London. Hardy was in Cornwall at the time, working on the restoration of St. Juliot Church, and the decision to decline Smith's offer was reached during a discussion with Emma.²⁹ Millgate considers this to be the point when Hardy effectively abandoned architecture and committed himself to a career as a novelist.³⁰

Hardy remarks that a 'curious feature' of the Dorchester burial ground was its 'continuity as a place of sepulture', suggesting that he perceived this function to connect the Romano-British and Victorian eras. These passages are likely to have been informed by the lowering of Fordington Cemetery in 1838, which uncovered the Romano-British burial ground. An account of the event is given in *Weymouth as a Watering Place*, produced by The Royal Library in 1857 as a guidebook for the area:

The ground was thickly occupied with bones, with relics mostly of Roman wearing and workmanship. Among them were some beads of glass and amber, and British pearls, and pins of glass, with armlets and

²⁸ Millgate, p. 182.

²⁹ Millgate, p. 134.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

amulets of Kimmeridge coal, and some coins; one of which (a coin of Constantine) was found in the mouth of a skeleton, and is believed to have been an obulus given him to pay Charon, the ferryman of souls over the Styx. These are in the County Museum, to which they were kindly presented by the Reverend Henry Moule, vicar of Fordington.³¹

As a close friend of the Moule family, Hardy may have heard of these discoveries first hand from Henry Moule, or from his son, Horace. However, the similarities between Hardy's passage and the extract suggest that he may also have used the Weymouth book as a source. Both accounts mention glass hair pins and amber bead necklaces, and, notably, the discovery of a coin from Constantine's rule inside a mouth of a skeleton. Although there is no evidence that Hardy owned a copy of the Weymouth book, it is listed in Charles Herbert Mayo's *Bibliotheca Dorsetiensis: being a carefully compiled account of printed books and pamphlets relating to the history and topography of the county of Dorset*, which Hardy subscribed to in 1885 while he was writing *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.³² The volume was primarily of archaeological interest and among the other subscribers were a number of clergymen, many of whom were antiquaries, and several archaeologists.

These included General Pitt-Rivers, William Barnes, H. J. Moule, and Canon

³¹ The Royal Library, *Weymouth as a Watering Place* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1857), pp. 114–15.

³² See Charles Herbert Mayo, *Bibliotheca Dorsetiensis: being a carefully compiled account of printed books and pamphlets relating to the history and topography of the county of Dorset* (London: C. Whittingham and Co., 1885). *Weymouth as a Watering Place* is listed on p. 250 alongside a note that although published in London, the book was also published locally, in Weymouth, by D. Archer. Another notable subscriber to Mayo's volume was Robert Williams, son of Robert Williams (1811-90), MP for Dorchester from 1835–41 and a partner of Dorchester Bank. Robert Williams Junior lived at Bridehead House, Dorchester, and became the first baronet of Bridehead. The name Bridehead features in *Jude the Obscure* as the surname of the heroine, Sue.

Jackson, who had corresponded with Richard Jefferies the decade before. The same volume listed another similar guidebook that Hardy had in his possession titled *Wheeler's Guide to Weymouth, and Neighbourhood, with Map and Plan of Melcombe Regis*.³³

As Hardy's allusion to the Fordington Churchyard suggests, his perception and representations of the Wessex landscape were informed and shaped by early antiquarian research in the area. In 1803, three years after Hardy's great grandfather built the house at Higher Bockhampton, archaeologist William Cunnington³⁴ excavated an early Bronze Age round barrow at Upton Lovell in Somerset. Known as the 'Golden Barrow' for its rich grave goods — including 13 gold beads, a plaque, and a bronze dagger — these excavations placed Bronze Age societies at the forefront of antiquarian research. B. L. Cunnington — descendant of William Cunnington — became a curator of the Dorset County Museum during the time Hardy lived in Dorchester, and his wife, Maud Cunnington, became one of the first and most successful female archaeologists. Although excavation techniques at this time involved the experimental digging up of sites and often resulted in the collapse of earthworks, they precipitated the rise of systematic archaeology. Cunnington wrote that he opened the barrow 'by a trench of considerable length and breadth; near the centre, at the depth of nearly three feet' without

³³ Michael Millgate, 'The Library of Thomas Hardy': 'Bookplate; lightly marked and annotated; evidently used for *Dynasts*. (First Edition 33/166)' <<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/fisher/hardy/>> [accessed 25 November 2012].

³⁴ William Cunnington (1754–1810), great grandfather to Edward Ben Howard Cunnington. Hardy is known to have corresponded with Edward — also known in Hardy's letters as 'B.H. Cunnington' — who was the honorary curator of Devizes Museum for sixty years. Edward Cunnington's wife, Maud, was made CBE in 1948 for her lifetime's work in archaeology.

any specific measurements or plans.³⁵ By the mid-nineteenth century — when the Neolithic barrow at Belas Knap, Gloucestershire, was left ransacked by barrow diggers — it had been suggested that more care should be taken in the preservation and excavation of precious and unique material remains, and in 1882 the first Ancient Monuments Act was passed.³⁶

In the paper delivered to the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club in 1884, Hardy spoke on the issues of damage and theft occurring during excavation, in which he criticised the integrity of local archaeologist, Edward Cunnington, calling him the ‘local Schliemann’ after Heinrich Schliemann, the disreputable archaeologist working in Greece in the 1860s. In the poem ‘The Clasped Skeletons’, written after the opening of an ancient barrow near his house, Hardy considers the excavation to be an intrusion into the sacred resting place. The poem describes an instance where the emotional human condition is in part preserved by the material remains; where a skeleton lies not alone in the soil but actively ‘clasps’ another in a final, yet infinite expression of feeling:

O why did we uncover to view
So closely clasped a pair?
Your chalky bedclothes over you,
This long time here! [...]

³⁵ William Cunnington, ‘Account of tumuli opened in Wiltshire’ (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1806), p. 123.

³⁶ Julien Parsons, ‘*The Explorations of the Soil is a Voyage in Time: Victorian Participation in the Excavation of Gloucestershire’s Prehistoric Burial Mounds*’, in *The Victorians and the Ancient World: Archaeology and Classicism in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, ed. by Richard Pearson, pp. 93-108 (p. 101).

So long, beyond chronology,
Lovers in death as 'twere,
So long in placid dignity
Have you lain here!³⁷

The heading to the poem notes 'Surmised Date 1800 B.C', which nineteenth-century historians, following the Swedish archaeologist Oscar Montelius, recognised as marking the beginning of the Bronze Age.³⁸ By observing the 'placid dignity' of the remains, Hardy demonstrates an empathic and imaginative reaction to the material record which is not limited to a scientific perspective.

In the case of Belas Knap the context of the site was the determining influence in its interpretation and classification. As this approach was inevitably imbued with ambiguity, there existed greater scope for imaginative interpretation in place of reliance on scientific fact. The rich grave goods discovered by William Cunnington forty years earlier had already given support to this idea that Bronze Age societies had been highly developed, with a hierarchical and perhaps even monarchical structure. Despite its uncertainties, late-Victorian study of the material record began to establish points of similarity — and of difference — between contemporary nineteenth-century cultures and prehistoric cultures. This allowed for a less dissociated contemplation of the past.

³⁷ *Collected Poems*, pp. 833–34.

³⁸ Montelius, three years Hardy's junior, had such admiration for Bronze Age culture that upon his death in 1921 he was buried with his wife in a 'stendös' grave, a type that had been commonly used during the Swedish Bronze Age.

In *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), and *A Laodicean* (1881), Hardy experiments with the ideas of context and excavation in relation to the emotional human condition. As recognised by late nineteenth-century archaeologists, the employment of the imagination offered a means of better understanding and engaging with material surroundings. For Hardy, this element of archaeology created an almost tangible distance between the point of the individual life and the sweep of time — what he terms in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) as opening the ‘fan of time’. The relationship between Henry Knight and Elfride has strong correlations with Hardy’s courtship of his first wife, Emma, at St. Juliot, Cornwall in 1870, and draws on Hardy’s knowledge of and interest in archaeology. An example in the novel where the imagination transcends the terms of a given context occurs when Henry Knight, having lost his footing on the ‘Cliff without a Name’, becomes stranded and waits for Elfride to come to his rescue:

it was by one of those familiar conjunctions of things with which the inanimate world baits the mind of man when he pauses in moments of suspense, opposite Knight’s eyes was an imbedded fossil, standing forth in low relief from the rock. It was a creature with eyes. The eyes, dead and turned to stone, were even now regarding him. It was one of the early crustaceans called Trilobites. Separated by millions of years in their lives, Knight and this underling seemed to have met in their death. It was the single instance within reach of his vision of anything

that had ever been alive and had had a body to save, as he himself had now.³⁹

This event describes a moment when the past and present meet through circumstances that are sudden and not fully understood — what Hardy terms a ‘familiar conjunction of things’. The context of Knight being about to plummet to his death is suddenly transformed into a visionary moment where Knight — while gazing at the trilobite — contemplates the eras in earth’s history that ‘knew nothing of the dignity of man’. This is what Richard Jefferies was to term in 1880 the ‘crooked sequence of life’.⁴⁰ Hardy defines this occurrence as ‘familiar’ rather than ‘strange’.⁴¹ The word is significant on a two-fold level: first, it refers to the death of the creature through its failure to adapt as a species, a fact familiar to Knight through his own study of evolution; second, and more important, these circumstances are familiar

³⁹ Thomas Hardy, *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 213.

⁴⁰ Richard Jefferies, *The Story of My Heart* (Portland, ME: Thomas B. Mosher, 1905), p. 16.

⁴¹ In his analysis of this passage Andrew Radford inserts the words ‘strange conjunction of phenomena’ — perhaps recalling ‘strange conjunctions of circumstances’, used earlier in the novel (p. 56) in the kiss Elfride overhears in the garden — in place of ‘familiar conjunction of things’. Radford writes:

‘Through a ‘strange conjunction of phenomena’ Knight notices that he is looking into the dead eyes of a fossilized trilobite, a distant cousin of crustaceans which Charles Darwin highlighted as an example of sudden extinction through failure to adapt. The armour-plating of didactic aphorism, which Knight wears with such aplomb in polite society, is useless to him now as he dangles by his fingertips in the concavity of the cliff, reduced to the same level as a rudimentary life-form.’ This failure to recognize the context as ‘familiar’ — which is what Hardy intended — potentially overlooks the idea that the Trilobite exists as a sort of symbolic parallel to Knight (the Trilobite at the peak of its adaptation and the man — who might, or might not — have further to go), where the slow turn of earth’s evolutionary progress is deliberately compared to mankind’s accelerating acquisition of knowledge and abilities. The Trilobite’s inability to adapt any further relates directly to Hardy’s own concerns that the human emotional state is unfitted to the world in which humans live. The acquisition of knowledge might thus be seen as its own evolutionary phase — peculiar to the human species — that can contribute towards better adaptation, and the avoidance of failure as a species. Thus, rather than Knight being ‘reduced to the same level as a rudimentary life-form’, the comparison is one of greatness, not littleness: the suggestion being that the trilobite is not so low after all, and is thus presented more as an equal that regards Knight through ‘eyes’ of its own. See Andrew Radford, *Thomas Hardy and the Survivals of Time* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2003), p. 52.

because the creature and the man share the same context: both are physically 'spitted' upon the cliff face; both share a physical kinship through evolution. What is a 'dreadful juncture' for Knight, is, for Hardy, a chance to explore his own imaginative understanding of potential meeting places between past and present. Hardy states that Knight and the creature have 'met in their death', and that through sharing this same context they simultaneously exist in a form of equilibrium between past and present — where Knight sees 'the lifetime scenes of the fossil [...] [as] a present and modern condition of things'.⁴² Hence, the fossil is described as an 'instance' that regards Knight, rather than a passive remnant of the past. This was an idea that Hardy was to explore further in the short story 'A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork', where he describes Maiden Castle as looming 'out of the shade by degrees, like a thing waking up and asking what [he wants] there'. When a relic or remain incites a strong enough emotional response, time assumes fluid motion and Hardy 'can almost hear the stream of the years', 'strange articulations' sounding like 'human voices [...] the lingering air-borne vibrations of conversations uttered at least fifteen hundred years ago'.

That the cliff of Knight's misadventure is ambiguously termed the 'Cliff without a Name' suggests that Hardy designed the cliff to remain anonymous so that it might represent the unclassifiable, unknown past, contrasting — more obviously — with the scholarly Knight to whom classification represents order, knowledge, and safety. Historian Charles Harper wrote in 1904 that Willapark Point in Cornwall was the rock's true identity, yet it is necessary for Hardy to strip away these formations of identity to expose how the paucity of

⁴² *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, p. 214.

mankind's acquired knowledge can be acted on by the imagination to visionary ends. Knight's imaginary roaming through the ages — where he sees 'fierce men, clothed in the hides of beasts [...] [and] dragon forms and clouds of flying reptiles' — is more than a 'fictional remoulding' of the 'Retrospect' of Algernon Mantell's *The Wonders of Geology*.⁴³ It is a powerful observation on the implications of knowledge and how knowledge can help to contextualise the place of man on earth. Knight cannot see a complete picture of earth's history — he can only imagine a crude representation made known through his own study of the material and written record. That the resemblance to Mantell's work is so close suggests an intentional effort by Hardy to comment on how mankind is both conditioned and liberated by the parameters of knowledge. Knight's ability to place his own life in a sequence helps to secure his position so that 'he perseveringly held on'. As Jacquetta Hawkes, writing later in 1951, said on the idea of unity between man and his environment achieved through study of the natural world:

I see modern men enjoying a unity with trilobites of a nature more deeply significant than anything at present understood in the processes of biological evolution; I see a land as much affected by the creations of its poets and painters as by changes of climate and vegetation. The nature of this unity cannot be stated, for it remains always just beyond the threshold of intellectual comprehension. It can only be shown as a

⁴³ This is discussed by Patricia Ingham in 'Hardy and The Wonders of Geology', *Review of English Studies*, 31, 121 (1980), pp. 59–64 and by Andrew Radford in *Thomas Hardy and the Survivals of Time*, pp. 54–8.

blurred reflection through hints coming from many directions but always falling short of their objective.⁴⁴

What differs in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *A Laodicean* is that the kind of smallness experienced in the contemplation of the universe does not overwhelm the individual, as in other novels — *Jude*, for example, where the emotional condition is seen as a weakness allowing the ‘little cell called your life’ to be ‘shook’ and ‘warped’ by a natural law that is altogether too alien and unjust to account for.⁴⁵ In both novels under discussion the emotional human condition may yet cause the individual to remain essentially unfitted to the world, yet there exists an emotional resilience that contributes to maintaining an equilibrium with the natural world — something that transcends the shock at the age of the earth.

In *A Laodicean* Hardy presents an experimental affiliation with the material remnants of a family and a castle whose bygone days are rooted in the Romantic tradition. For Paula, heiress not only to the castle, but also to the more general modern condition of things, it is the ‘antiquarian’ desire to become part of an ancient genealogy that attracts her to Captain De Stancy. Paula is the daring antiquary of Hardy’s imagination, seeking to make contemporary sense of the past, while being held under what Hardy terms ‘a strange spell’ where it was ‘as if the historic past had touched her with a yet living hand’.⁴⁶ Hardy explores this imaginative connection with the still-living

⁴⁴ Jacquetta Hawkes, *A Land* (London: Cresset, 1951), preface.

⁴⁵ Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, ed. by Patricia Ingham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 13.

⁴⁶ *A Laodicean*, pp. 205–6.

past when De Stancy wears a suit of armour in front of her and Charlotte.

Standing in the place of one of his ancestors, he:

looked so much like a man of bygone times that neither of them replied, but remained curiously gazing at him. His modern and comparatively sallow complexion, as seen through the open visor, lent an ethereal ideality to his appearance which the time-stained countenance of the original warrior totally lacked.⁴⁷

The older man shines briefly through the countenance of the contemporary, the word 'ideality' suggesting that Captain De Stancy, through representing Paula's romantic ideals, gives sudden, yet momentary, life to the past. In *A Laodicean*, Hardy attempts to get past the defective world, where relationships are fated by the ill-timed decisions of his characters, and experiments with the idea of disowning tradition, where the modern woman summons her courage at the critical moment to pursue the object of her changed desires. In her search for George Somerset amidst the streets of Lisieux, Paula imagines ancient ways of existence as they might have been:

She was transported to the Middle Ages. It contained the shops of tinkers, braziers, bellows-menders, hollow-tuners [...] A blue misty obscurity pervaded the atmosphere, into which the sun thrust oblique staves of light. It was a street for a mediaevalist to revel in, toss up his hat and shout hurrah in, send for his luggage, come and live in, die and

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 189–90.

be buried in. She had never supposed such a street to exist outside the imaginations of antiquarians. Smells direct from the sixteenth century hung in the air in all their original integrity and without a modern taint. The faces of people in the doorways seemed those of individuals who habitually gazed on the great Francis, and spoke of Henry the Eighth as the king across the sea.⁴⁸

The archaeological imagination dominates this passage; the modern moral condition of things that in other circumstances would cause Paula's actions to be inappropriate is forgotten. Hardy imbues the surroundings with a sense of the past that is not altogether imaginative but present in the very shapes and forms of the streets. As Paula discovers, contact with the past is not limited to the 'imaginations of antiquarians', but can be experienced by the lone individual, independent of any particular historical or archaeological knowledge of the immediate environment. So, for example, Hardy refers generally to the 'faces of people in the doorways', and to 'smells of the sixteenth century' rather than to specific details. Ironically, Paula's 'antiquarian desire', manifested through her plans to reinvent the De Stancy castle, becomes most vibrantly alive when she is removed from the context of the castle — when she is rushing through the streets of a foreign city, and encounters her vision of the past by accident.

That many archaeological discoveries around the time that Hardy was writing occurred by chance was something that attracted Hardy to the study of the material record. In his excavation notes on a long barrow on Oldbury Hill,

⁴⁸ *A Laodicean*, p. 399.

William Cunnington commented that ‘on visiting the spot it appeared that in digging for chalk for the purpose of making whiting, the workmen had trenched on a barrow.’ He also states that the presence of wood ashes in a cist devoid of any human remains can most likely be attributed to them falling in ‘accidentally’ when the barrow had been ‘rifled at some former period’ — an event for which there is no record.⁴⁹ The probability that these ashes were present due to chance determines the archaeologist’s interpretation of past events, leading him to the conclusion that the barrow’s evidence had either been removed or destroyed before his excavation. In Hardy’s writing, chance discoveries often lead to the unearthing of buried traumas and secrets, where what could be termed an emotional record is intrinsically linked to the presence of the material record; where close association to relics or remains precipitates a change in the emotional circumstances of the individual. That these links are sudden and unexpected is illustrated by the case of Knight and the fossil, and again later, a chance discovery that leads to an excavation — both physical and emotional — occurs when Knight accidentally unearths the body of the widow Mrs Jethway from the rubble of the collapsed masonry at the local church. This excavation from the material remains, and Knight’s subsequent visit to the widow’s cottage, serve to reinforce Knight’s doubts concerning Elfride’s innocence, and indirectly leads to her emotional demise. As William Cunnington went about his excavations ‘in hopes of meeting with something that might supersede conjecture’,⁵⁰ so Hardy sought to write with

⁴⁹ William Cunnington, ‘Notes on a Long Barrow on Oldbury Hill’, *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*, 13 (1872), pp. 103–4.

⁵⁰ ‘Notes on a Long Barrow on Oldbury Hill’, p. 104.

the intention of establishing spontaneous links between humankind and the material environment.

The phenomenon of the small object of study bearing greater significance occurred widely in scientific developments of the late nineteenth century; not just in astronomy and biology with the development of more sophisticated telescopes and microscopes, but in palaeontology and archaeology too. More so than the larger grave goods, which were often collected by more unscrupulous archaeologists as trophies, such as urns, bronze metalwork and weapons, smaller remains often possessed deeper implications for the study of past human societies. Fragments of bone, pollen grains, tools, and beads informed archaeologists about the sophistication of past societies, including trade links with Europe, methods of subsistence, and religious practices. Excavations by archaeologists such as Wake Smart in the 1870s were part of a newly emerging consciousness of the significance of small remains, the interpretation of which potentially had far greater implications for the understanding of human progress. For example, a collection of shale beads unearthed by William Greenwell during his excavations at the Aldbourne Four Barrows in the late 1880s was recognised as having been procured and manufactured on the Dorset coast at a much earlier date. Aldbourne formed part of a chain of archaeological sites along the Ridgeway to Stonehenge, the scene of the finale in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and is known best for its Bronze Age finds, including incense cups, a dagger, and a gold plaque. As late-nineteenth-century archaeologists worked with the developing understanding that the small could have greater consequences for understanding human activity within a landscape, so Hardy

wrote with recognition of the importance of the most minute details of the material world — and the significance of that scale in understanding the human condition.

Hardy's interest in the process and consequences of excavation encouraged him to explore the imaginative implications of locating objects in buried places. When Knight discovers Elfride's lost earring lodged in a rock, their little stone seat, a naturally formed shelf in the cliff, is imbued with a greater importance, akin to that of a cave or burial chamber:

Many people who lose a trinket involuntarily give a momentary look for it in passing the spot ever so long afterwards. They do not often find it. Elfride, in turning her head, saw something shine weakly from a crevice in the rocky sedile. Only for a few moments during the day did the sun light the alcove to its innermost rifts and slits, but these were the minutes now, and its level rays did Elfride the good or evil turn of revealing the lost ornament.⁵¹

The progress of the sun, briefly coinciding with Elfride's inclination to turn her head, results in a 'few moments' of illumination on the lost earring, which have transformative and longer lasting consequences for her relationship with Knight. The 'rocky sedile' — from the Latin 'sedilia' meaning seat of a religious leader — can also be translated as the resting place of a holy one.⁵²

Nineteenth-century awareness of Bronze Age patriarchal society derived from

⁵¹ *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, p. 309.

⁵² In the early church the sedilia, the seat of the bishop-president, was considered as important an item of church furnishing as the altar.

the opening of barrows where certain individuals were buried with precious materials such as bronze daggers, cups, and in some cases, earrings. In late Bronze Age culture, it was customary for both men and women to wear pierced earrings, and it was a custom of Bronze Age burials to orientate the body with the head to the south, men facing the east, towards the rising sun, and women facing west, towards the setting sun. Archaeologists surmise that this was to allow the corpse to see the sun at a particular time of day.

The scene involving the earring may also have been inspired by Emma Hardy's knowledge of a gold lunette — an early Bronze Age necklace — discovered in the parish of St. Juliot before her marriage. During the 1860s several of these ornaments were found in Cornwall, and their probable Irish origins drew the attention of archaeologists nationwide. While Emma was living in Bodmin with her family, a lunette was discovered by a workman on the Hennet Estate, less than a mile from the Rectory where she would soon move to live with her sister. The incumbent, Reverend Caddell Holder, married Emma's sister in 1868. An article in the *Antiquaries Journal* in 1921 recounts the history of the lunette, as discovered by the meticulous research of George Penrose, Curator of the County Museum in Truro. Having first been passed along a chain of owners for shillings, the lunette's importance was realised and it was sold in 1866 for £50 to John Douglas Cook, Editor of the *Saturday Review*.⁵³ This event reached the national newspapers, where it was recorded in the *Times* as a 'valuable discovery':

⁵³ Reginald A. Smith, 'Irish Gold Crescents', *Antiquaries Journal*, 1 (1921), pp. 131–139 (pp. 133–4) <doi:10.1017/S0003581500002092> [accessed 3 January 2011].

A gold ornament, discovered in excellent preservation, by a workman in drainage works in the parish of St. Juliot, Cornwall, about five feet from the surface, has, within the last few days, been sold for 50l.⁵⁴

It is possible, considering that members of the clergy often happened to be antiquaries, that Reverend Caddell Holder may have taken an interest in this discovery and passed the story on to Emma. However, it is of greater significance that Emma mentions John Douglas Cook in her *Recollections*, a manuscript dated January 4 1911, when she was aged 70, which was published after her death. Emma writes that 'there was a great and important visitor in the village of Tintagel, who came periodically every summer, Mr. Cook the then Editor of the *Saturday Review*, about 1866, I think'. She notes that 'poultry was fatted for him', that he had his own cook, and that his evening meal was 'considered a very banquet'.⁵⁵ She also observes that 'Tintagel was a very remote place then, and the inhabitants expected few visitors.' Cook was known to have owned a house at Tintagel and was buried in the churchyard there in 1868,⁵⁶ and in his journal for March 1870, one of the only surviving few notes from his first visit to Cornwall, Hardy notes that the Holders knew Douglas Cook.⁵⁷

Emma's specific reference to 1866, despite alluding to Cook's yearly visits, suggests that this date was of some significance to her, and that this somehow relates to Cook's purchase of the lunette. This was clearly the case,

⁵⁴ Anon., *The Times*, 2 October 1866, p. 4.

⁵⁵ Emma Hardy, *Some Recollections*, ed. by Evelyn Hardy and Robert Gittings (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 26.

⁵⁶ Smith, 'Irish Gold Crescents', p. 132.

⁵⁷ Millgate, *The Life*, p. 78. The western window of Tintagel church is dedicated to the memory of Cook.

as in July the following year (1912) Emma attended a meeting of the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club with Hardy, where she presented to the members a ‘beautifully-finished coloured drawing, made by herself, of a gold torque or collar’, which Millgate states to have been drawn before her marriage to Hardy, over 40 years ago:⁵⁸

It was, she said, found at Boscastle years ago by a diligent investigator, who called it an Irish chieftain’s collar. Captain Acland observed that there were a great many of such collars to be seen in Ireland, and it was interesting that this specimen had been found at Boscastle, one of the nearest points to Ireland.⁵⁹

The ‘diligent investigator’ would seem to be either George Penrose or John Douglas Cook. The significance of Emma publicly producing her drawing of the lunette in the year of her death is discussed in the concluding part of the thesis. At the very least the legend of the lunette seems to have been treasured as a memory of her former life in Cornwall, and possibly had resonance for her courtship with Hardy which continued, despite the distance between Cornwall and London, from 1870 to 1874.⁶⁰

For Elfride, based on the young Emma, the few ‘minutes’ of sunlight glinting on the lost ornament symbolise a certain alignment — a critical ‘juncture’ where her sudden emotional impulse occurs within

⁵⁸ Millgate, *A Biography Revisited*, p. 444.

⁵⁹ ‘Second Winter Meeting’, *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club* (Dorset: Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club, 1912), p. xiii.

⁶⁰ A further allusion to a lost object occurs in the poem ‘Under the Waterfall’, which recounts an incident in Cornwall when Hardy and Emma, out picnicking, lost a tumbler among the rocks of a waterfall.

astroarchaeological time, and changes the direction of her future. At the time Hardy was writing *A Pair of Blue Eyes* there had already been significant developments in establishing a relationship between astronomy and archaeology. For example, British antiquarian William Stukeley, who first recognised an astrological orientation in the design of Stonehenge, commented in 1740 that ‘the principle line of the whole work [points to] the northeast whereabouts the sun rises when the days are longest.’⁶¹ Stukeley found that by standing in the centre of Stonehenge on the morning of midsummer the sun would rise over the ‘heel’ stone — a large sarsen stone standing two hundred feet away from the stone circle. This concept was later written about by Sir Norman Lockyer, founder and editor of *Nature* journal, in his 1909 publication that discussed the astrological alignments of British Stone monuments. That prehistoric cultures had orientated specific stones or chambers in line with the sun was also discussed after antiquarian James Farrer’s 1853 excavations at Maes Howe in Orkney — where it was found that the midwinter sun rays travel a considerable distance along a passageway to light up the furthest wall of the burial chamber for only a few days of the year. Local schoolmaster Magnus Spence first recorded an astronomical intention behind the building of Maeshowe in 1893, when he observed an alignment of the midwinter sun at sunset from the chamber to a large standing stone that was too remarkable to be accidental.

In Hardy’s narrative the excavation process of Elfride’s earring is brought to fruition by Knight’s improvisation, as he ‘instantly took a penknife

⁶¹ See Gerald S. Hawkins and John B. White, *Stonehenge Decoded* (New York: Dell, 1965), p. 20.

from his pocket, and by dint of probing and scraping brought the earring out upon open ground'.⁶² In both examples, Knight is the one to instigate the excavations, while Elfride is the passive recipient of their consequences. What Hardy is suggesting is that through the close study of material things, and their written records, humans can establish a link between the emotional inclination to understand their world and the physical reality of the universe. Knight is thus an example of how mankind can thoughtfully adapt to survive a difficult situation, in contrast to Elfride who cannot master her emotions sufficiently to survive.

In *Two on a Tower* published in 1882, Hardy places the relationship between heroine Viviette and her younger lover, Swithin St. Cleeve, in the grander scale of astronomical and archaeological time. A folly on a prehistoric earthwork called Rings-Hill Speer, where the astronomer Swithin conducts his research, is a place of rendezvous — a secret space away from ordinary time — where the couple are temporarily freed from the emotional implications of their illicit relationship. The folly itself conceals records of past human hopes, dreams and loss, rising 'like a shadowy finger pointing to the upper constellations.' It is a spot remote from the everyday presence of people where, Hardy says, 'many ancient Britons lie buried'; a place described as 'a moaning cloud of blue-black vegetation' 'isolated', and 'intensely dark'. In a wooden cabin at the foot of the hill, Swithin prepares himself to marry Viviette:

⁶² Hardy, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, p. 309.

It was a strange place for a bridegroom to perform his toilet in, but considering the unconventional nature of the marriage a not inappropriate one. What events had been enacted in that earthen camp since it was first thrown up nobody could say; but the primitive simplicity of the young man's preparations accorded well with the prehistoric spot on which they were made. Embedded under his feet were possibly even now rude trinkets that had been worn at bridal ceremonies of the early inhabitants. Little signified those ceremonies to-day, or the happiness or otherwise of the contracting parties. That his own rite nevertheless signified much was the inconsequent reasoning of Swithin, as it is of many another bridegroom besides; and he like the rest went on with his preparations in that mood, which sees in his stale repetition the wondrous possibilities of an untried move.⁶³

To Swithin, marriage is an 'untried move' with 'wondrous possibilities'. He is unaware of the activities of his predecessors — the Ancient Britons — whose 'trinkets' from bridal ceremonies lie 'embedded under his feet'. The emotional histories attached to these objects are irretrievable but not lost altogether; they remain in a nebulous form, lending what Hardy terms a 'primitive simplicity' to Swithin's preparations, which 'accorded well with the prehistoric spot on which they were made'. There is the obvious contrast between the new generations of rabbits which observe Swithin, and what Hardy terms the 'stale repetition' of his actions. Yet within this ostensible disenchantment there is a form of reassuring continuity in the marriage rite that has been performed

⁶³ *Two on a Tower*, pp. 117–18.

by men through the ages. Hardy suggests that the act of marriage and its emotional implications, which cannot be understood through scientific analysis of the buried objects, is best understood through personal experience — even if that experience leads to similar conclusions.

The ultimate challenge for a married couple to escape the bonds of the past occurs in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. When Tess, bereft of her child and pursued by her tormentor, Alec D'Urberville, is working the steam-threshing machine, she is 'shaken bodily by its spinning' and 'thrown [...] into a stupefied reverie, in which her arms worked on independently of her consciousness.' The threshed straw forms a 'yellow river' which unnaturally 'runs uphill',⁶⁴ the antithesis to her 'whimsical fancy' that 'would intensify natural processes around her till they seemed a part of her own story'.⁶⁵ Tess's alienation from the machine symbolises her social predicament as an unmarried mother and 'fallen woman'. As a product of her family's misplaced adherence to a faulty aristocratic system, Tess loses her independence and eventually her life. Hardy's implicit suggestion that ancestral social structures were an outdated product of civilisation was a view already in debate during the 1850s. An article in the *Manchester Times* (1851) discusses how 'we are acknowledged to be the most aristocratic people on earth' with 'various grades of nobility'; this characteristic of the nineteenth century had been absent from prehistoric societies — the 'democratic character' of which had 'preserved [...] the original spirit of the race, the spirit of individual independence'.⁶⁶ The land was farmed and managed under this hierarchical structure until the agricultural revolution

⁶⁴ *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, pp. 322–3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁶⁶ Anon., 'Manners and Customs of our Ancestors', *Manchester Times*, 18 October 1851, n.p.

brought new types of squires who had connections in the city, and sometimes overseas, and who did not necessarily have an ancestral seat in the area.⁶⁷

For Tess's husband Angel Clare, farming abroad in the Colonies promises 'independence without the sacrifice of [...] intellectual liberty.'⁶⁸

Tess's inability to feel 'at home' in the world is finally, yet only temporarily, resolved when she and Angel flee from the police to Stonehenge, the largest megalithic monument in Europe. When she lies on the altar stone she states: 'One of my mother's people was a shepherd hereabout, now I think of it. And you used to say at Talbothays that I was a heathen. So now I am at home.'⁶⁹ The altar stone symbolises freedom from the laws and expectations of nobility; a liberty associated with the Neolithic people who constructed it. Despite the myths surrounding its purpose and construction, nineteenth-century accounts identified the monument as a centre of religious and economic importance for Britain's earliest farmers. Angel's identification of the 'lofty stone set away [...] in the direction of the sun'⁷⁰ implies his knowledge of these former times when the land had been managed in accordance with solar and lunar cycles. Within the complex 'web'⁷¹ of Victorian class and social structure this form of fertile and meaningful engagement with the natural world — which Tess had glimpsed as a 'Pagan fantasy of [her] remote forefathers'⁷² — is no longer possible. With the loss of these centuries-old traditions, the ancestral system — represented by the

⁶⁷ For further reference see Anon., 'Old Squires and New', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, December 1879, pp. 723–739.

⁶⁸ *Tess*, p. 121.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 340.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 109.

mouldering D'Urberville tombs — offers only a 'half-dead' and barren psychic ground without light or potential. Kingsbere, the ancestral seat of the D'Urbervilles, is a 'half-dead townlet [...] where lay those ancestors of whom her father had spoken and sung to painfulness.'⁷³ Thus, Tess perceives her ancestors as 'useless' and 'she almost hated them for the dance they had led her.'⁷⁴ Tess's condition as a fallen woman and murderess has no place in the present, yet finds a 'home' in the lawlessness of the prehistoric setting, where former 'sacrifice [...] to the sun' celebrated the relationship between life and death.⁷⁵ Hardy writes that 'the clouds seemed to settle almost on their heads, and the night grew as dark as a cave.' The couple move 'gropingly' through the darkness until Clare suddenly 'became conscious'. From this 'cave' the couple emerge, as did the primitive cave dwellers in Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*, to face the dawn of a new consciousness; a world without the other in it — a world after death. Within this natural enclosure of ancient architecture which is 'without joint or moulding' — what Clare calls 'a very temple of the winds' — the couple perform a final rite of reconciliation and farewell. From a landscape and mindscape of 'open loneliness' and 'black solitude' the reunion within the stones allows the couple to face the unknown future and their greatest challenge yet. In the ancient enclosure and burial ground, where prehistoric societies once celebrated death, Tess makes the greatest sacrifice of all — not that of her own life — but her letting go of her husband so that he might be free to live on without her and marry her sister Liza-Lu. Lying on the altar stone, warmed by the sun, Tess implores Angel to marry her sister:

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

'O I could share you with her willingly when we are spirits! ... She has all the best of me without the bad of me; and if she were to become yours it would almost seem as if death had not divided us [...]

In the far north-east sky, he could see between the pillars a level streak of light. The uniform concavity of black cloud was lifting bodily like the lid of a pot, letting in at the earth's edge the coming day, against which the towering monoliths and trilithons began to be blackly defined.⁷⁶

The ritual landscape, invoked further by Hardy's image of the sky as the lid of a pot, harbours 'reserve, taciturnity, and hesitation' — three critical characteristics of Tess herself which have contributed to her demise. Her faltering effort to seek out Angel's parents at Emminster, and her reserve in telling Clare about her history sooner, have gathered, like the 'band of silver paleness' at dawn, to form a compressed stratum of emotions which, in the act of killing Alec D'Urberville, burst through the surface of their containment. In this setting, where prehistoric societies once celebrated death, Tess has the courage to consider Angel's life without her. Hardy thus hints that connections between past and present people, which for the most part exist on a subterranean unconscious level, can be illuminated through dramatic moments in the landscape where the human past suddenly becomes tangible.

In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the enclosed settings of prehistoric earthworks again provide an alternative form of containment to the domestic setting — a space in which to perform rites which have no place 'at home'.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Maumbury Rings — the Neolithic and Roman site on the edge of Dorchester, which Hardy calls 'The Ring' — is the setting for Henchard's reunion with his estranged wife, Susan, whom he sold at a fair twenty years before:

Melancholy, impressive, lonely, yet accessible from every part of the town, the historic circle was the frequent spot for appointments of a furtive kind. Intrigues were arranged there; tentative meetings were there experimented after divisions and feuds. But one kind of appointment — in itself the most common of any — seldom had place in the Amphitheatre: that of happy lovers.

[...] some old people said that at certain moments in the summer time, in broad daylight, persons sitting with a book or dozing in the arena had, on lifting their eyes, beheld the slopes lined with a gazing legion of Hadrian's soldiery as if watching the gladiatorial combat; and had heard the roar of their excited voices [...]

Just before eight he approached the deserted earthwork, and entered by the south path which descended over the *débris* of the former dens. In a few moments he could discern a female figure creeping in by the great north gap, or public gateway. They met in the middle of the arena. Neither spoke just at first — there was no necessity for speech — and the poor woman leant against Henchard, who supported her in his arms.

'I don't drink,' he said in a low, halting, apologetic voice. 'You hear, Susan? — I don't drink now — I haven't since that night.' Those were his first words.⁷⁷

Amidst past echoes of lives lost in gladiatorial combat, the two struggle to contain the emotional pressure of their own past — Henchard's 'low, halting, apologetic voice' indicating his turbulent inner nature. Perhaps more importantly, the qualities of the earthwork itself — 'Melancholy, impressive, lonely' — befit this 'man of character'; the repentant and inarticulate Mayor who has lost his family. The Ring is an enclosure which conceals Henchard's reunion with Susan from the outside world: Hardy writes that 'as Mayor he could not invite her to come to his house', suggesting that there is no place for a meeting of this kind 'at home'. The couple meets in the centre of the circle, Henchard encircling Susan in his arms, engaging in a rite of marital reunion which occurs on a deep emotional level and cannot be articulated. That Henchard follows a path 'over the *débris* of the former dens', where the wild beasts were caged in advance of gladiatorial combat, identifies him with the savage elemental spirit, which it was the object of gladiating to extinguish.

One of the creatures most frequently tormented in the gladiatorial arena was the bull. Various theories exist as to why animals were used in this way, including connections with other religions which idolize the bull, as found in Egyptian, Middle Eastern and Minoan cultures. Millgate writes that 'both impulses — to recreate the local past and project the truths of human

⁷⁷ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, pp. 82–3.

experience — are powerfully present in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.⁷⁸ At the time, Hardy was familiarising himself with local and wider archaeological researches, and it is almost certain that he would have been aware of the Egyptian bull cult through the work of Flinders Petrie. The writer and anthropologist, Edward Clodd,⁷⁹ friend of Hardy, held literary gatherings at his house in Aldeburgh where Hardy first became acquainted with him in 1899. In 1915, Petrie and his wife visited Maiden Castle, Dorset, and called on Hardy.⁸⁰ *The Life of Thomas Hardy* refers to this visit and mentions that Hardy 'had known [Petrie] but not seen [him] for many years.'⁸¹ That Hardy was familiar with Petrie's work is also proven by a notebook entry for 14 July 1888 with respect to having attended 'Flinders Petrie's Egyptian exhibition', where Hardy noted 'the full curves of [Gladstone's] Roman face.'⁸² This exhibition contained mummies, portraits and numerous items retrieved from Petrie's excavations in the Fayoum. An account in the *Star* suggests that this exhibition made a striking connection between archaeology and literature. On display were pieces of papyrus 'taken from under the head of a coffinless mummy', which contained lines from the Second Book of Homer's *Iliad* written 'in a large Greek hand of great antiquity'. The paper further speculates that 'there is no reason to doubt that when the rest of the papyrus is opened it will be found to present the oldest MS of the great Greek poet'.⁸³ Notably, Petrie held an earlier exhibition in London in 1884, the year that Hardy was writing

⁷⁸ Millgate, *A Biography Revisited*, p. 233.

⁷⁹ Clodd was also President of the Folklore Society.

⁸⁰ Margaret S. Drower, *Flinders Petrie: A Life in Archaeology* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), p. 338.

⁸¹ Millgate, *The Life of Thomas Hardy*, p. 371.

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 212.

⁸³ Anon., 'Antiquities from the Fayoum', *Star*, 26 June 1888, n. p.

The Mayor of Casterbridge, concerning his explorations of the ancient city of Zoan, Egypt. Although Hardy's movements that year included two 'busy' trips to London,⁸⁴ it is not known whether he attended Petrie's exhibition.⁸⁵

Graham Harvey remarks on the circular and repetitive nature of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* by suggesting that 'the concept of moral consequences and the revolution of Fortune's Wheel are rooted in the rash choices' which Henchard made when he was young, but which remain unmediated by the passage of time.⁸⁶ At each 'critical juncture' of his life Henchard is associated with a rite of passage — an event closely linked to prehistoric ceremony through the use of the ring symbol. At Weydon Priors Fair — based on Weyhill Fair in Hampshire — Henchard finds his wife's wedding ring on the ground, and a few hours later swears to abstinence. The Weyhill Fair was the largest sheep fair in the country, which also proffered the exchange of labourers for hire, horses, pigs, cattle, and food products.⁸⁷ The site lies at the intersection of eight ancient trackways, used to transport, animals, gold and tin before the Middle Ages, and became a meeting point as early as 1500 BC.⁸⁸ The hilltop forms a natural arena for exchange, fortified by submerged earthworks, which attracts people to the same spot each year. The repetition associated with the fair invests the place with a sense of ritual that is mirrored

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ A report in the *Standard* reads: 'The Exhibition of Egyptian Antiquities now opened by the Egyptian Exploration Fund in the rooms of the Royal Archaeological Institute, in Oxford Mansions, Oxford-Street, is sure to prove attractive to all students of the life and manners of the past'. Anon., *Standard*, 3 October 1884, p. 3.

⁸⁶ Graham Harvey, *Thomas Hardy: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 75.

⁸⁷ The Sombourne and District Society, 'The History of the Weyhill Fairground' <http://www.thesombornes.org.uk/village_org_page.php?page_id=274> [accessed 25 November 2012].

⁸⁸ Ibid.

in Henchard's decision to sell his wife and its endless implications for the course of his life and happiness.

The symbol of the prehistoric enclosure is again present at 'The Three Mariners', the public house 'chosen by Henchard as the place for closing his long term of dramless years'. Here, Hardy describes the circle of men's cups as 'a ring [...] like the monolithic circle at Stonehenge', thus signifying Henchard's initiation back into the destructive cycle of alcoholism. For Hardy, whose imagination was deeply grounded in his Wessex landscape, the ring at Stonehenge would have been a powerful symbol of past human life in the area. The site is implicitly present in his description of the Bull Stake in Dorchester, which is a generous square, approached by 'an arched thoroughfare' — a place where 'oxen had formerly been tied for baiting with dogs to make them tender before they were killed in the adjoining shambles'.⁸⁹ A clash between Henchard's loaded waggon, and that of his rival, Donald Farfrae, which takes place in this narrow passage, precipitates a chain of events that lead to the revelation of Henchard's past. The site of the Bull Stake carries ritualistic significance as a place where bulls were tortured over centuries, and serves to anticipate the following scene where Henchard is baited — by overhearing Lucetta's pledge of love to Farfrae in the harvest field — to demand for her hand in marriage. Radford suggests that the bull-stake is an unwholesome reminder of the cruelty endured in the interests of public entertainment.⁹⁰ Yet more than this, the layout of the site is reminiscent of a ceremonial avenue leading to a stone circle. The thoroughfare, with

⁸⁹ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, pp. 219–20.

⁹⁰ Radford, *Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 42.

arches leading to a large open area, and 'a stone post [that] rose in the midst', recalls types of ceremonial structures which had a ritual stone at the centre. Evidence for an avenue and altar stone at Stonehenge had been accounted by Flinders Petrie in *Stonehenge: Plans, Descriptions, and Theories* (1880), and as John Abercromby wrote in 1912, 'the structure of Stonehenge is so well known that I take it for granted that all archaeologists are familiar with it'.⁹¹

Perhaps the most compelling use of the ring symbol occurs in the scene involving an escaped bull. After Henchard's past is spontaneously revealed by a defendant in court who witnessed him sell his wife, Lucetta secretly marries Farfrae, without severing her pledge to Henchard. On the day when she expects her husband's return from the north she wanders the highway towards Bridport and encounters an aggressive bull. The scene is set at a crossroads between 'an old by-way' and the Roman Road, then a turnpike road, to Bridport. With no sight of Farfrae on the horizon, Lucetta turns to make for home, only to see Elizabeth-Jane walking towards her, and to her right, a bull ambling along the by-way. Hardy writes that the creature had 'descended from the hills', which would refer to Maiden Castle and the rise of the adjoining fields, which were dotted with tumuli. Although not many of these tumuli survive, historical accounts reveal that the area was once one of the largest prehistoric burial grounds in Europe. Thomas Reynolds wrote of

⁹¹ John Abercromby, *A Study of the Bronze Age pottery of Great Britain & Ireland and its associated grave-goods*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 92. Abercromby inserts the plan drawn by Sir Richard Colt Hoare.

Maiden Castle that ‘for sight of barrows [it is] not to be equalled in the world, for they reach ten miles’.⁹²

The bull is ‘a large specimen of the breed’ with horns ‘thick and tipped with brass’, and nostrils ‘like the Thames Tunnel as seen in the perspective toys of yore’. The Thames Tunnel, which was considered one of the greatest feats of engineering of the mid-nineteenth century, seems an unusual choice of simile for a rural scene. However, it is perhaps better understood in the context of the tunnel’s purpose. The *Illustrated London News* termed the construction, which was achieved through Isambard Brunel’s ingenious design of a sinking shaft, a mastermind of ‘excavation’.⁹³ After earlier failed attempts dating to the previous century, the successful completion of the tunnel was considered almost miraculous:

In Egypt, where a new country is rising, phoenix-like, upon the ashes of the old world, the progress of the Tunnel has been regarded with unabated interest — in a participated, indeed, throughout the civilized world. Had not modern ingenuity extended “the wonders of the world” to seventy times seven, the Thames Tunnel would long rank as the *eighth* wonder; for this bold attempt to effect a communication between the shores of a wide and deep river [...] will have, no parallel for many ages. When and where are likely again to combine the necessities, physical and commercial; the resources, pecuniary and scientific; the

⁹² Thomas Reynolds, *Iter Britanniarum* (London: J. Burges, 1799), p. 375.

⁹³ Anon., ‘The Company’s Medallion of Sir Isambert Brunel, Supported by One of the Tunnel Excavators’, *Illustrated London News*, 1 April 1843, p. 226. See a drawing of the tunnel in Appendix 3.

rational hope of remuneration; and the courage and energy necessary to the conception and production of such a work?⁹⁴

The article describes the tunnel's overriding importance as a 'new mode of communication' between the two banks of the Thames. Maiden Castle, the largest Iron Age hillfort in Europe, which dominated the skyline, was likewise a feat in engineering. It was also part of an ancient communication network whereby inhabitants signalled to other hilltop sites through beacon fires. The dramatic fire on the top of Rainbarrow in *The Return of the Native* would seem to suggest Hardy's familiarity with prehistoric signalling.⁹⁵ The tunnel and the hillfort therefore seem to be connected by their shared function of improved communication and as associated markers of human progress.

Through the bull's nose is a 'stout copper ring, welded on, and irremovable as Gurth's collar of brass', to which is attached an ash staff.⁹⁶ This is an allusion to Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, in which the servant, Gurth, is described as wearing 'a brass ring, resembling a dog's collar, and without any opening, and soldered fast round his neck.'⁹⁷ *Ivanhoe* depicts one of the last Saxon noble families during the Norman era. Gurth wears a 'primeval vestment' made of animal hide and is introduced in the book at a 'Druidical [...] circle of rough unhewn stones, of large dimensions'.⁹⁸ Beside him is

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Contemporary research has validated the use of hillforts as sites of communication. See, for example, a BBC news story, 'North Wales hillfort test of Iron Age communication', 20 March 2011 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-east-wales-11832323>> [accessed 30 November 2012].

⁹⁶ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, pp. 236–37.

⁹⁷ *Ivanhoe*, *The Complete Works of Sir Walter Scott*, vol. 3 (New York: Conner and Cooke, 1833), p. 10.

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 7–8.

another slave, Wamba, also wearing a collar, and seated on one of the fallen standing stones. By using the prehistoric site as a setting for the introduction of the slaves, Scott implicitly suggests that the Saxon characters are not only enslaved to their Norman masters, but also, through the decisions of their ancestors, to the past itself. In his notes to the drawings of the book, Joseph Strutt Horda notes that Gurth's collar refers to the Anglo-Saxon custom of putting collars around the necks of slaves.⁹⁹ This would seem an appropriate allusion in the context of Hardy's Wessex, for which he revived the original Anglo-Saxon name. Horda also highlights Gurth's collar to be 'one of the best known details of the novel',¹⁰⁰ indicating its importance as a literary symbol.¹⁰¹

Hardy's association between the bull and the human slave blurs the imaginative boundaries between human and animal. This connection is developed in the novel so that Henchard later refers to himself as a bull. When he meets Jopp beneath the archway to the Bull Stake he says 'brokenly to himself' of Farfrae: 'he drove me back as if I were a bull breaking a fence'.¹⁰² The bull has a number of different religious and spiritual meanings. Its significance for Celtic societies was widely understood through the recovery of bronze bull statuettes associated with moon worship. It was also customary for Celtic people to wear twisted collars of bronze in recognition of the lunar shape of the bull's horns. Similarly, in Mesopotamia, bulls were lunar

⁹⁹ Joseph Strutt Horda, in Sir Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, ed. by Graham Tulloch (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), p. 510.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 498.

¹⁰¹ In the nineteenth century it was common for animals to wear metal collars. An account of the discovery of the gold torque at St. Juliot states that the workman initially believed the object to have been a sheep's collar: 'The finder regarded it as a sheep's collar and gladly parted with it for a trifling sum to his employers.' R. A. Smith, 'Irish Gold Crescents,' *Antiquaries Journal*, April 1912, p. 133.

¹⁰² *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 311.

symbols due to the shape of their horns. Carol Andrews writes that in Egypt, the bull was a powerful symbol of human fertility and strength, and as such was incorporated into the royal dress code.¹⁰³ The Egyptian Bull cult is discussed in *Ancient Egypt*, in a description of King Rameses III bearing a name that translates as ‘the strong bull, the great one of kings’.¹⁰⁴ In 1884, the year Hardy was writing *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a map of Africa was published, just in advance of the Berlin Conference of 1885, at which Europe’s dominant powers claimed African territories as part of the New Imperialism. Previous maps (1872, 1876, 1879, 1882 and 1883) displayed some native territories, state borders and areas which had been claimed by European countries. However, the 1884 map was the first to illustrate and name the native tribal lands of the Zoolus, Hottentots, Loango, and Houssa. For the West African Houssa tribe, the bull god was ‘the supreme deity’, and had a wife named Ra, mistress of the sun.¹⁰⁵ In *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies hints at his awareness of the Assyrian bull cult by alluding to ‘Nineveh and the bearded bulls of stone’, discovered by Laynard in the late-Victorian era along with bas-reliefs of a bull-man.

Hardy would have been familiar with the local Dorset interest in the bull-man as expressed by the Dorset mummers and their use of the Ooser. This half-man, half-bull creature was worn as a mask at pagan ceremonies and during mumming dances, and was a likely fertility symbol. William Barnes described it as ‘a mask as with grim jaws, put on with a cow’s skin to frighten

¹⁰³ Carol Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), p. 61.

¹⁰⁴ Anon., *British School of Archaeology* [no month] 1914, p. 23.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

folk'.¹⁰⁶ What was thought to be the original mask was discovered at a house in Melbury Osmond, the hometown of Hardy's mother, Jemima, and the village upon which he based Little Hintock in *The Woodlanders*.¹⁰⁷ It is possible that Hardy had the Ooser in mind when drawing the character of Michael Henchard. Henchard's 'grotesque' and 'new-moon-shaped grin' would seem to recall the strange leer of the Ooser and the crescent shape of its horns. In the opening pages, Henchard is described as having an unusual 'facial angle so slightly inclined as to be almost perpendicular'; he wears a jacket 'of brown corduroy' a 'fustian waistcoat with white horn buttons', and 'tanned leggings' — similar to the 'rich dun' colour of the bull he later subdues. Further suggestions of Henchard's association with the Ooser include his large, bearded, face that 'darken[ed] with an expression of destructiveness', his 'large build', 'coarse features', 'flashing black eye, and dark, bushy brows', and 'large mouth'. Evelyn Hardy wrote that Henchard was 'a wild bull roaming the hillside', with eyes that 'dig into men's souls'.¹⁰⁸ Yet beyond the more obvious connotations of character, Henchard's connection with the bull in the proximity of Maiden Castle suggests an enduring link with the prehistoric and folkloric past. Henchard's association with the Ooser, an unchanging rite that is repeated each year, suggests his inability to change and his enslavement to the past. This is further voiced by Lucetta, who, seeking to avoid the revelation of her involvement with Henchard, vehemently declares that she 'won't be a slave to the past'.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ William Barnes, *A Glossary of the Dorset Dialect* (London: Toucan Press, 1970), p. 85.

¹⁰⁷ Charles Herbert Mayo describes the mask in *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, vol. ii (1891), p. 289, and provides a photograph. See Appendix 4.

¹⁰⁸ Evelyn Hardy, *Thomas Hardy: a Critical Biography* (London: Hogarth Press, 1954), p. 197.

¹⁰⁹ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 204.

In his assessment of the bull scene, Norman Page comments that ‘one has to agree with Hardy that there are episodes in this novel (for example, Henchard’s rescue of Lucetta from a bull) which seem to serve little purpose beyond the need to ‘get an incident’ into the installment in question’.¹¹⁰ Pamela Dalziel observes the extensive shortening of the scene involving the bull, which in its original form more obviously defined Elizabeth-Jane as a heroine who keeps the bull away for a considerable time before Henchard’s appearance.¹¹¹ Dalziel suggests that Hardy reduced Elizabeth-Jane’s role in the incident in order to present her as a more conventional heroine. Previous analyses seem, however, to have overlooked the significance of the location of the scene. The bull’s line of approach is along what is now Damer’s Road. The barn where the two women take refuge is shown on historic maps to have been Damer’s Barn.¹¹² Damer was the name of a historic landowning family, to which the barn likely belonged, and it seems the place had significance for Horace Moule, who painted a watercolour of the barn as part of a series.¹¹³ A threshing barn, set amidst the countryside, the building may be understood as a half-way structure between the human world and the land; a territory that is not quite wild and yet not wholly humanised. As in the scene at Maumbury Rings, the form of enclosure isolates the characters, and momentarily suspends them from their social and personal circumstances. The act of saving Lucetta from the charging bull temporarily allows Henchard to become

¹¹⁰ Norman Page, *Thomas Hardy* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1977), p. 26. Hardy was here referring to the constraints of writing for serial publication.

¹¹¹ Pamela Dalziel, ‘Whatever happened to Elizabeth Jane?: Revisioning Gender in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*’, in *Thomas Hardy: Texts and Contexts*, ed. by Phillip Mallett (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 78.

¹¹² See Appendix 5 — maps dated 1890s and 1900s.

¹¹³ This painting is part of the Dorset County Museum collections.

himself. He takes hold of the wooden staff attached to the bull's nose and 'wrenched the animal's head as if would snap it off [...] so violent that the thick neck seemed to have lost its stiffness and to become half-paralysed, whilst the nose dropped blood.' Hardy adds that 'the premeditated human contrivance of the nose-ring was too cunning for impulsive brute force'.¹¹⁴ Henchard's 'impulsive' nature, unfitted to ordinary circumstances, and partially reflected by the wild nature of the animal, suddenly becomes useful and acceptable. When the light through the doors shows Henchard, not Farfrae, Lucetta expresses her surprise: "'You — have saved me!' she cried [...] 'How comes it to be you — you?'"¹¹⁵ Lucetta's repetition of 'you' further suggests the becoming of Henchard's real self in his moment of heroism.

However, although the ring symbol seems at times to empower Henchard, it is also ominously present in the scenes depicting his demise. When he sees his effigy from a Skimmington ride floating face down in the circular weir, he experiences the final and perhaps worst rite of all — the loss of his identity:

In the circular current imparted by the central flow the form was brought forward, till it passed under his eyes; and then he perceived with a sense of horror that it was *himself*. Not a man somewhat resembling him, but one in all respects his counterpart, his actual double, was floating as if dead in Ten Hatches Hole.

¹¹⁴ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 238.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

The sense of the supernatural was strong in this unhappy man, and he turned away as one might have done in the actual presence of an appalling miracle. He covered his eyes and bowed his head. Without looking again into the stream he took his coat and hat, and went slowly away.¹¹⁶

In this ancient watercourse Henchard witnesses his 'actual double' — his old self, the successful mayor — already there in the circular enclosure of the pool called 'Ten Hatches Hole'. The symbol of the ring, and the emotions associated with it, are embodied in the tightening concentric force of the swirling pool, which Henchard has no control over. Social circumstances have converged to drown the identity of the respectable Mayor, which he had worked so hard to preserve, and he is already 'floating as if dead'.

Hardy's decision to set the scene at Ten Hatches Hole was likely due to the notoriety of the place as a suicide spot. The inclusion of the episode may also relate to the actual suicide of a man at Ten Hatches in 1854:

On Friday Morning last, between seven and eight o'clock, the body of a man was found in the water called "Ten Hatches," near the Grey's Bridge, on the London-road. His countenance and appearance, however, had undergone such a change that, although several hundreds saw the body, not one could identify him. Mr. Superintendent Pouncy arrived, and caused the body to be removed to the Dorchester Union House, when a son of the deceased recognised the body of his

¹¹⁶ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 342.

father. The man was between forty and fifty years of age, and had been in the town for many years. It appeared at the coroner's inquest that the unfortunate man was seen a little before six o'clock in the morning of Friday last, by a cow-keeper, who spoke to him near the place where his body was found. The jury returned a verdict of Found Drowned.¹¹⁷

In July 1854 the fifteen-year-old Hardy was living at the cottage in Higher Bockhampton and attending school in central Dorchester.¹¹⁸ The death of a gentleman's servant to a well-known family would have been a significant event for a small market town. Moreover, the commotion over the man's identity — 'several hundreds saw the body, not one could identify him' — suggests that the event involved a large percentage of the local population. That Hicks's body was unrecognisable may relate to Henchard witnessing 'his counterpart, his actual double'. Henchard's life has become 'unendurable', and his preparations for jumping into the water — the removal of his coat and hat, and his position by the water's edge — mark his departure from his former self. The continuity of the ancient watercourse that is 'formed by the wash of centuries' contrasts poignantly with Henchard who recognises that his own past has caught up with him to destroy the present.

Significant similarities between the two accounts, aside from the location, include the time of day and year, and the ages of the two men. The

¹¹⁷ 'Death by Drowning', *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, 8 July 1854, p. 7. At Victorian inquests the verdict 'Found Drowned' was often discreetly given in place of 'suicide'.

¹¹⁸ The name 'Hicks' may relate to John Hicks who employed Hardy two years later in 1856. As a builder, Hardy's father was a business associate of the Hicks family.

opening chapter of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* sets the action in the first third of the nineteenth century, around 1830, when Henchard is twenty one. By the time of the Ten Hatches scene, Henchard has reached the end of his temperance pledge of twenty years, making him similar in age to Hicks, who is 'between forty and fifty years of age'. Both accounts involve a herdsman. Hardy writes that 'the next morning [...] the effigy was discovered by a cowherd'.¹¹⁹ The newspaper reports that 'the unfortunate man was seen a little before six o'clock in the morning of Friday last, by a cow-keeper'. The Skimmington ride and the subsequent death of Lucetta, which lead to Henchard's discovery of the effigy in the weir, occur during the evening and night following a Royal visit at which Henchard is publicly humiliated.¹²⁰ Hardy writes that preparations for the visit 'stirr[ed] the depths of [...] society simultaneously with the preparations for the skimmington', and that the event would 'leave a permanent mark' on the town — 'as a warm summer permanently marks the ring in the tree-trunk corresponding to its date.'¹²¹ Hardy's alignment of the Ten Hatches scene with the Royal visit lends support to the hypothesis that both events were based on actual occurrences. Although both events happened in midsummer, the fictionalised events occur at least three months earlier. Henchard running after Farfrae 'in the moderate darkness of this spring night', and Hardy's allusion to 'the upper parts of the luxurious chestnut trees, now delicate in leaves of a week's age', would set the scene at the end of April. However, these descriptions would seem to be

¹¹⁹ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 344.

¹²⁰ This royal visit is likely based on Prince Albert's visit to Dorchester on 25 July 1849. See Anon., 'Laying the First Stone of the Portland Breakwater by Prince Albert', *Standard*, 27 July 1849.

¹²¹ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. 302.

at odds with the breaking of dawn at four o'clock — when Henchard makes 'the last of his calls' — when sparrows are flitting around in the street 'in the steely light of dawn' and day is breaking over the moor.¹²² Hardy's description befits a summer's day, as does his allusion to the Royal entourage arriving 'in a cloud of dust', which would be more appropriate to the dry, summer months.¹²³ The events surrounding Hicks's suicide in Dorchester took place on the last day of June and the first week of July 1854. Thus it seems that Hardy adjusted the timing of both events to coincide with the serial installment of the novel on 1 May 1886 in the *Graphic*.¹²⁴

In the preface, Hardy asserts that the novel rests upon three real-life incidents: the selling of a wife at a local fair, a Royal visit, and the repeal of the Corn Laws.¹²⁵ The suicide of a well-known local, which would also have left 'a permanent mark', could feasibly have been a fourth event too sensitive to mention. Whatever the role of Hicks's suicide in the novel, Hardy's manipulation of actual events blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction, and between the present and the past. This treatment of the past is pertinent to *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, which of all Hardy's novels is most concerned with local and wider archaeology. Hardy engages in his own form of literary archaeology — reinventing and restoring past events and working them into a narrative with longevity well beyond his own lifetime.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 333.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 306. At the end of April, when chestnut leaves have opened, the sun rises at 5. 30 AM. In late July, it rises at 5 AM. The latter would match the break of twilight at 4 AM.

¹²⁴ See 'The Mayor of Casterbridge', *Graphic*, 1 May 1886, pp. 477–79.

¹²⁵ *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, p. v.

4

Recovering the Primitive: Ecology and Prehistory in
The Woodlanders

In *Gone Primitive*, Marianna Torgovnick observes that it was only towards the end of the eighteenth century that the word 'primitive' became synonymous with prehistoric peoples. Torgovnick aligns 'primitive' with 'an aura of unchangeability, voicelessness, mystery, and difference'.¹²⁶ For late-Victorian authors, the perceived lawlessness of prehistory enabled a form of personal liberty that allowed temporary transcendence from social restrictions. This desire was epitomised by the then well-known novelist, Mrs Alexander Fraser, in *A Maddening Blow* (1877), in which her heroine, fettered by the mundane struggle of daily life, aspires to 'the delicious freedom of primitive existence'.¹²⁷ Hardy, writing ten years later in *The Woodlanders*, created a similar wish in his heroine Grace Melbury, who experiences a desire for 'revolt [...] against social law, her passionate desire for primitive life'.¹²⁸ In science this idea was acknowledged by anthropologists and archaeologists who emphasised the ritual importance of stone monuments, and was accompanied by the unprecedented level of Victorian public interest in megalithic and prehistoric burial sites. This cultural shift towards greater acceptance of ancient human history to some extent reinforced the Victorian idea of progress and the great leap of Western civilisation, which was perceived to have left behind other cultures.

For Hardy, the prehistoric landscapes of the south west offered fascinating and rich settings for his fiction and poetry. *The Woodlanders* combines his archaeological knowledge of Dorset with his imaginative

¹²⁶ Marianna Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 20.

¹²⁷ 'Mrs. Alexander Fraser', *Novel Review*, 21 September 1877, pp. 225–256.

¹²⁸ *The Woodlanders*, p. 205.

awareness of prehistory to explore the relations between mind and environment, man and woman, and the rural community and the wider world. *The Woodlanders* was first published in March 1887, the same month and year that Richard Jefferies published his rural novel, *Amaryllis at the Fair*. Neither is a straightforward story of country life, and both are unconventional in considering the relationship between the characters and their environment. Dale Kramer writes of *The Woodlanders* that ‘the balance of forces affecting manifestations of sexuality — community and individual, authority and impulse, role and self-concept, love and passion — is more finely struck than in any of Hardy’s other novels.’¹²⁹ Hardy explores the psychological implications of containment within the ‘wooded slopes’ of High-Stoy, a fictional hamlet in Dorset near the prehistoric hillforts, Hambledon Hill (5 miles north of Blandford Forum) and Bulbarrow (5 miles west of Blandford Forum). Kramer notes that Hardy originally set the story near Bubb Down Hill, with Mrs Charmond’s house being based on Melbury House. However, wishing to avoid offending the Ilchester family (which owned Melbury House) through his depiction of Mrs Charmond, Hardy relocated the story several miles east and based it around High-Stoy Hill.¹³⁰ Bubb Down Hill is close to the village Melbury Bubb, and is part of the pre-Roman trackway between East Anglia and the South Coast at Seaton known as the ‘Ridgeway’ or Northern Trackway. The southern edge of the Parish of Melbury Bubb lies on the top of the ridge which forms the watershed between the English Channel and Bristol Channel. When Hardy relocated the story he was careful to keep the focus

¹²⁹ *The Woodlanders*, p. xiv.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.

trained on the centre point of a large hill, and in both instances he chose an archaeologically significant site.

High-Stoy, the final choice of setting, was a favourite walk of his. There is the place known as the Cross-in-Hand, marked by a stone monolith which in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* 'stands desolate and silent, to mark the site of a miracle or a murder, or both'.¹³¹ Various modern theories have been put forward by archaeologists as to the function and origin of the stone, many of which recall Hardy's description in *Tess*:

The place took its name from a stone pillar which stood there, a strange rude monolith, from a stratum unknown in any local quarry, on which was roughly carved a human hand. Differing accounts were given of its history and purport. Some authorities stated that a devotional cross had once formed the complete erection thereon, of which the present relic was but the stump; others that the stone as it stood was entire, and that it had been fixed there to mark a boundary, or place of meeting.¹³²

Hardy lists previous antiquarian speculations about the monument, seemingly aware that his own knowledge will contribute to the legacy of ambiguity surrounding the monument. The 'rude' simplicity of stone monuments suggested an uncomplicated ideal, a world away from the social and cultural complexities of Victorian Britain. Hardy is perhaps drawing from similar

¹³¹ Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, ed. by Juliet Grindle and Simon Gatrell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 302.

¹³² *Ibid.*

archaeological terminology as Jefferies,¹³³ who aligned ‘rude stones’ with ‘thought’ in his autobiography — an image that came to him at Pevensey Castle.

Hardy’s poem ‘Under Stoy Hill’ suggests the hill’s importance to his thought, and perhaps the reason why he chose the spot as a setting for *The Woodlanders*. The poem describes him walking up the hill with three others — none of whom know ‘what might lie behind’ as they grow older. Each stanza presents a scene set later, when the natural scenery remains the same, but of the four only Hardy himself is eventually left, burdened with the knowledge of what has passed during the interim. The steady cyclical movement of the moon ‘that still meets that tree-tipped height’ contrasts with the ambiguity and linear temporality of the human future. The natural phenomena ‘meet’ each other in a process of indefinite exchange, but the humans who once ‘laughed beneath the moonlight’ must be content with transient relationships necessarily curtailed by the sombre fact of mortality.

In an article in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, Clive Holland describes walking with Hardy to visit some of the well-known landmarks from his work. Holland writes that from High-Stoy Hardy looked down across the valley and recalled, with a tinge of sadness, the loss of possession of similar tracts of land from his family:

¹³³ See earlier and later references to the architect James Fergusson’s *Rude Stone Monuments*, published in 1872.

He pointed out to me a beautiful well-timbered vale, running south-westward, in the direction of the Channel, which had once belonged to his own family.

“In a measure,” Mr. Hardy said, “the story of the D’Urbervilles is the story of the Hardys and of many another ancient Wessex family, who by reason of apathy on their own part, or fraud or injustice on the part of others, became dispossessed of the lands which had been held by them for centuries.”¹³⁴

Holland goes on to describe the extreme elevation of High-Stoy and its views across ‘some of the most fertile land in England’. On the hill, ‘one experiences almost the silence of an Alpine peak’, with there being ‘no indications of life to be seen or heard’ apart from the odd sound of a lark or rabbit. He notes High-Stoy to be a ‘favourite haunt’ of Hardy’s, suggesting that ‘one would imagine it almost rivalling in his affections the dourer and severer grandeur’ of Egdon Heath.¹³⁵ In Holland’s account the ancient permanence of the hill elicits a personal response from Hardy, encouraging him to associate his own family history directly with the fictional family of the D’Urbervilles. This suggests that, for Hardy, the experience of the landscape was a connective force between the literary and personal imagination that could generate a response that was sudden, spontaneous and revealing. Hardy’s deep engagement with the past at hilltop sites is also suggested by the poem ‘Wessex Heights’, in which the

¹³⁴ Clive Holland, *Pall Mall Magazine*, November 1905, p. 540.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

'liberty' and isolation of Bulbarrow and Pilsdon Pen afford space away from the frenetic human world.¹³⁶

In *The Woodlanders*, the rural community, based on traditional pre-agricultural revolution industries, exists in a hub of its own creation, and in summer becomes obscured beneath a canopy of leaves that neither the sun nor the stars can penetrate. Early in the novel Hardy makes it clear that these types of hidden landscape can harbour extraordinary perceptions in the minds of those who inhabit them. In contrast to the elevated hillforts and barrows which feature in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *The Return of the Native*, places of habitation are 'sunk in a concave' or 'in a hole' — 'snipped out of the woodland'. Hardy describes Little Hintock as:

one of those sequestered spots outside the gates of the world where may usually be found more meditation than action, and more listlessness than meditation: where reasoning proceeds on narrow premises, and results in inferences wildly imaginative; yet where, from time to time, dramas of a grandeur and unity truly Sophoclean are enacted in the real, by virtue of the concentrated passions and closely knit interdependence of the lives therein.¹³⁷

In the *Academy* (1910), in a discussion about Hardy's prose, Henry David Clark quotes this passage as evidence of Hardy's superior 'prose artist[ry]'.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Thomas Hardy, *Collected Poems* (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 301.

¹³⁷ *The Woodlanders*, p. 8.

¹³⁸ Henry David Clark, 'Beauty and Emotion in Language', *Academy*, 12 February 1910, p. 161

Clark argues that Hardy combines ‘the very marrow of the Anglo-Saxon tongue with the pure essence of the classical languages; thereby attaining to balanced style of emotion and beauty.’¹³⁹ Quoting the above passage, Clark suggests that the phrase ‘outside the gates of the world’ is ‘purest Anglo-Saxon’, and that ‘sequestered’ is the ‘most beautiful and perfectly classical’.¹⁴⁰ According to Clark, this combination produces ‘the most perfect prose style that we can boast of in the language’.¹⁴¹ Clark’s analysis suggests that although the late-Victorian world may yield little evidence of former ages, attempts to trace Anglo-Saxon lineage may yet succeed through innovation in language.

Within the microcosm of Hintock, Hardy explores the effects of introducing an ‘outsider’, the doctor — Fitzpiers — into the community and into the heart of the rustic-born and finely educated, Grace Melbury. The ‘impressionable’ Fitzpiers, whose ‘mind was accustomed to pass in a grand solar sweep throughout the zodiac of the intellectual heaven’, conducts research into the small hours of the night; his light catches Grace’s attention from her window. Hardy tells us that ‘he had lately plunged into abstract philosophy with much zest’ and that ‘his keenly appreciative, modern, unpractical mind found this a realm more in his taste than any other.’¹⁴² Fitzpiers identifies a conceptual world almost within touching distance and yet, even within the timelessness of the woodland community, essentially remote. His isolation at High Stoy encourages him to go further in his inner exploration

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 162.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² *The Woodlanders*, pp. 122–23.

than the distractions of city living would allow. Hardy notes that the rays of Fitzpiers' lamp illuminated more books of 'emotion and passion' than 'books and *materiel* of science', associating the doctor more with the warm, and sometimes irrational, world of thought and feeling than the cold rationality of science.¹⁴³

In *The Woodlanders*, the presence of 'abstract' thought adds a further dimension to ordinary experience. Hardy develops the tentative recognition of cosmic consciousness delineated in *Two on a Tower* into a more determined exploration into the potential reaches of the psyche. Throughout the novel, by means of the metaphor of the forest, Hardy explores varying shades of perception — between 'dark grey [and] light grey'.¹⁴⁴ When Fitzpiers first notices Grace, his routine is upset and he is unable to concentrate on the study that had previously interested him. Hardy writes that 'the self-contained position he had lately occupied, in which his whole attention was given to objects of the inner eye, all outer regard being quite disdainful, seemed to have been taken by insidious stratagem.' Fitzpiers paces between the windows of the room, aware that 'the most irksome of solitudes is not the solitude of remoteness, but that which is just outside desirable company.'¹⁴⁵ The weather without — 'half snowy, half rainy' — reflects his state of mind that has been distracted and is somewhere between submitting to the dreaminess of romantic feeling and his resolve to focus on the practical absorption of private study. Fitzpiers's loneliness reflects his status as an outsider, on the periphery of the woodland community. For Fitzpiers the

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 123.

¹⁴⁴ *The Woodlanders*, p. 94.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 124.

weather snows enough 'to make the woodland grey without ever achieving whiteness', a further symbolic allusion to his inability to commit to one feeling or person.¹⁴⁶

Giles, too, is associated with the colour grey. When he offers to cut branches from the elm which is causing Mary South's father's nervous illness, he happens to see Grace walking beneath. When he perceives her intention to keep her distance from him he climbs higher up the tree, almost becoming one with the greyness of the lunar world — a 'dark grey spot on the light grey zenith'. Mr. South perceives the tree as having 'human sense', and it 'haunts him like an evil spirit.' In a world shaped by woodland, the trees intermingle with the psyche, and in South's case even cause his death:

Whenever the wind blew, as it did now, the tree rocked, naturally enough; and the sight of its motion, and sound of its sighs, had gradually bred the terrifying illusion in the woodman's mind. Thus he would sit all day, in spite of persuasion, watching its every sway, and listening to the melancholy Gregorian melodies which the air wrung out of it. This fear it apparently was, rather than any organic disease, which was eating away the health of John South.¹⁴⁷

South's fear is likened to a fungus 'eating away' his health. As he sits in the same place all day, watching the tree, he consistently exposes himself to the same habitual thoughts, thus leaving his mind open to attack of fear — much

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ *The Woodlanders*, p. 92.

as fungus is opportunistic and grows in damp vulnerable places. In his analysis of the significance of the elm tree, Andrew Radford mentions a letter from Henry Moule to Hardy in which Moule refers to the 'elm tree totem'. Radford constructs a compelling case for Hardy's deliberate twist of the traditional tree-worship into a degenerate 'neurasthenic torment which controls and exhausts the spirit instead of ennobling it.'¹⁴⁸ This reading might be expanded to recognise that South's 'death by fear' is an example of Hardy's deliberate association of the organic with the primitive to reflect the loss of our primitive reactions and our relationship of balance with the environment.

Writing in 1903 on characteristics which modern man was perceived to have inherited from prehistoric ancestors, George R. Wilson referred to 'the stigmata of a prehuman ancestry', and encouraged his readers to consider the 'vestiges of the prehistoric consciousness in [their] consciousness of to-day.' Wilson described the general familiarity with physical remnants of former times, such as the gills in a foetus and tailbones in the human skeleton, but made the point that 'no phase through which consciousness has evolved is wholly obliterated' and that 'each leaves an organic legacy to the race.' He encourages his reader to imagine back to primeval times, when man 'battled' for himself and his family 'whom he loved with the fierce passion of a beast'. In prehistoric times, he argues, men's survival relied upon their acute sense of danger, suggesting that the responses of fear, caution, suspicion, and anxiety featured prominently in the primitive mind and have been 'transmitted as a

¹⁴⁸ Andrew Radford, 'Dethroning the High Priest of Nature', in *A Companion to Thomas Hardy*, ed. by Keith Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), pp. 313–327 (p. 316).

physical endowment' through generations.¹⁴⁹ Recognising the abstract nature of his suggestion, Wilson writes:

Here we arrive upon that vast field of speculative psychology the functions of subconsciousness. For these vestiges of which I speak make a contribution to personality which is vague and occasional, not clearly apprehended, not lending itself to analysis, not recognised by us as part of our normal or typical mental equipment.¹⁵⁰

He refers to the influence of this inherited primitive consciousness on the creative mind — specifically to Robert Louis Stevenson's belief in 'little people' who helped him work through his plots at night and sent him words when he couldn't find them. Wilson goes on to explain in detail the evolution of man's consciousness, likening it to a woven fabric of many strands and fibres, which has resulted in 'the brain and subconsciousness of today [...] an epitome of man's history and of pre-human experience.'¹⁵¹ Part of this inheritance is a fear, derived from 'instincts that our fathers knew and needed' but for which we have little or no explanation. This is not to say that fear is necessarily prescriptive or a weakness, rather that it can be considered to help both animal and human life on earth.

In *The Woodlanders* Hardy explores how these manifestations of fear are expressed by different characters. The emotional and aristocratic Felice

¹⁴⁹ George R. Wilson, 'The Sense of Danger and the Fear of Death,' *Monist*, 13 (1903), 352–69 (pp. 359–60).

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 361.

Charmond is fettered by her fears of herself: 'When my emotions have exhausted themselves, I become full of fears, till I think I shall die for very fear.' She refers to 'the terrible insistencies of society — how severe they are, and cold, and inexorable — ghastly towards those who are made of wax and not of stone.'¹⁵² Grace's father, Melbury, is also unable to transcend his own anxieties and, while trying to help save Grace's marriage, is described as 'oppressed between whiles with much fear.'¹⁵³ By contrast, Grace's stolidity becomes noticeable when she and Felice become lost in the woods: "You are frightened," says Grace to her companion, "but there is nothing to fear: I know these woods well." Later in the novel, when Grace flees to Giles, away from Fitzpiers, she is immune to the 'weak lidless eyes', 'strange faces and figures', 'sheeted shapes', and 'cloven tongues' of the woodland; Hardy writes that her 'fear just now was not imaginative or spiritual.'¹⁵⁴

Anthropological research during the 1880s led scientists to make comparisons between tribal cultures and primitive cultures. What were recognised as uncivilised tribal communities, living away from the influences of the western world, afforded insight into the condition of primitive man.¹⁵⁵ The seminal book of late-nineteenth-century research into primitive societies was Edward Burnett Tylor's *Primitive Culture; Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, art, and Custom* (1871). The *Pall Mall Gazette* described the book as 'one of a kind' that

¹⁵² *The Woodlanders*, p. 196.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

¹⁵⁵ Examples of these communities include the South American tribes of the Amazon — the Pygmies — and notably communities which lived under forest canopies.

assembled more knowledge than ever before about the subject.¹⁵⁶ Tylor also wrote *Researches into the Early History of Mankind, and the Development of Civilisation* (1861), and *Anthropology: An Introduction to the Study of Man and Civilization* (1881). Tylor's works were reviewed across a wide range of periodicals which Hardy both read and contributed to; these established Tylor as the founder of modern anthropology. *Primitive Culture* presents a theory of societal progression through a sequence of evolutionary stages, and Tylor's 'doctrine of survivals' explains how qualities of earlier societal stages could be discernible in living cultures. *Primitive Culture* is also known for its contribution to what became a serious anthropological debate about the origins of religion, suggesting an evolutionary progression from animism to monotheism.

The debates surrounding the value of science in the interpretation of prehistory and the more general investigation into the purpose of mankind continued to be thrashed out in the periodical press throughout the 1870s and 1880s. The archaeologist James Farrer, who was the first to excavate Maes Howe, the Neolithic chambered tomb in Orkney, in 1861, recognised that scientific developments were causing a divide between old and new ways of seeing and relating to the world. He wrote in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1883 that 'the spread and increase of knowledge naturally dispel many a conception of nature that lent a certain charm to the older-world's philosophy of the universe', and that science and poetry are 'antagonistic forces in human life.' With the scientific influence shaping a 'newer reading of our daily surroundings', it was becoming increasingly possible to perceive the loss of

¹⁵⁶ Anon., 'Tylor's Primitive Culture', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 30 January 1872, p. 403.

poetic feeling at the hands of science.¹⁵⁷ Farrer argued that the knowledge afforded by developments in human intellect more than compensated for this as it shed new light on old ways of responding to our environment:

When we compare civilised life with its ruder beginnings, it is a satisfaction to think that our ancestors, whose fancies about such things so far represented their actual thoughts that the very languages of Europe to this day bear the impress of them in their construction, had this advantage over our later and truer knowledge, and so much compensation for having lived at a time in no respects more miserable than in this, that there was not yet laid up that capital of enjoyment accumulated from the past which gives to civilised life the greater part of its zest and interest.¹⁵⁸

The perceived presence of the past enriches human life and is a part, if not largely the driver, of what Hardy termed the 'psychological phenomenon' that is life.¹⁵⁹ Farrer suggests that the later era of humanity has progressed because we no longer understand natural phenomena to be threatening forces. We have, in some sense, come to understand more about the reality of matter, thus surmounting our primitive fears. It is unlikely that scientific knowledge could simply extinguish these fears, which could themselves be considered deep manifestations of the human condition. In this respect, Farrer

¹⁵⁷ J.A. Farrer, 'Animal Mythology; or, Stories of Birds and Beasts', *Cornhill Magazine*, April 1883, pp. 463–482. (p. 463).

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ Quoted from Michael Irwin, 'Thomas Hardy and the Moon', *Thomas Hardy Journal*, XXIV (2008), pp. 23–33 (p. 32).

overlooks the possibility that the function of fear may simply have shifted and instead become tangible through conscious personal and social manifestations. He states that ‘the red sunset no longer sends us dreams of worlds of fire’, but this does not mean that the connection between the cosmos and the psyche had become obsolete or was merely a relic of a former condition of mind.¹⁶⁰

Sir John Lubbock’s *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man: the Mental and Social Condition of Savages* was first published in 1870, several years after *Prehistoric Times*, and used anthropological research of ‘inferior races’ to inform ‘conclusions’ concerning the ‘nature and destiny of man’.¹⁶¹ Lubbock writes that the late-nineteenth-century perception of the relationship between the past and present state of mankind is yet to be clearly defined. He asks:

Is there a definite and assured law of progress in human affairs — a slow and gradual ascent from the lower to the higher? and was that low condition of humanity, of which we have the prehistoric traces, and which is illustrated by the present condition of savage races, the starting-point of this ascent? Or was primeval man a developed and superior being, who has retrograded and degenerated into the savage state?¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Farrer, ‘Animal Mythology’, p. 463.

¹⁶¹ Sir John Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man: the Mental and Social Condition of Savages* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1870), p. iv.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

These ‘grave questions now impending in the world of thought’ challenged the inquiring mind to consider humanity’s past in a new light: did primitive life hold something dear that people must strive to regain, or could they trust in the trajectory of progress suggested by the sudden revolutions of the age? At the time Hardy was writing, research was revealing more about the sophistication of primitive societies. Norman Lockyer’s work on the astronomical alignment of stone monuments (1906) would soon reveal that primitive cultures knew far more about the workings of the world around them than had previously been thought. The archaeologist James Miln’s excavations of the Kermario alignments at Carnac during the 1870s — the largest collection of standing stones in the world — illuminated the complexities of the relationship between Roman and prehistoric societies.¹⁶³ Miln accidentally discovered a Roman tile amongst the ancient stone monoliths, and subsequent excavations revealed prehistoric and Roman pottery intermingled, as well as three Roman camps which had been partially built using the extant structures of the monoliths. In 1887, the same year that *The Woodlanders* came out in book form, archaeologist Henri de Cleuziou stated the case for correlation between the rows of stones at Carnac and the directions of sunsets on the solstices.¹⁶⁴

Through his fiction Hardy explored how this ever-growing context of the prehistoric past could inform the turbulent Victorian age, when long-held values and beliefs were crumbling, and traditional ways of rural life were on the verge of extinction. Alongside *The Return of the Native*, *The Woodlanders*

¹⁶³ See James Miln, *Excavations at Carnac (Brittany): a Record of Archaeological Researches in the Alignments of Kermario* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1881) in *Saturday Review*, 24 September 1881, pp. 392–93.

¹⁶⁴ See Henri de Cleuziou, *La création de l’homme et les premiers ages de l’humanité* (Paris: C. Marpon et E. Flammarion, 1887).

has been recognised as one of Hardy's most 'ecological' novels.¹⁶⁵ The spar cutter, Marty South, occupies the 'grey shades' 'on the edge' of life between the natural and human worlds. Early in the novel Marty is presented standing on her doorstep looking out into the night. Hardy writes that she stood on the 'threshold, like on the very brink of an absolute void.'¹⁶⁶ The sentence bears similarities in tone and sentiment to a passage in Jefferies's *The Story of My Heart*, when he stands beside the sea. Aware of the sun and the blueness of the sky, Jefferies perceives 'nothing between [him] and space', and describes being on 'the verge of a gulf [...] the edge of the abyss as much as if the earth were cut away in a sheer fall of eight thousand miles to the sky beneath.'¹⁶⁷

Hardy likens the darkness of the night to the Ginnung-Chasm, which was known in Norse mythology as the 'Yawning Void', and was 'believed in' by Marty's 'Teuton forefathers', who were pre-Iron Age Germanic tribes in Northern Europe.¹⁶⁸ Jefferies speculates on the nature of cosmic space at the end of *The Story of My Heart* when he watches a beam of sunlight falling through the clouds: 'through the heavens a beam slants, and we are aware of the star-stratum in which our earth moves. But what may be without that stratum? Certainly it is not a void.' As Jefferies felt himself to be on the 'edge' of an experience beyond ordinary consciousness, Hardy places Marty South on the cusp between natural and human worlds — a position from which she

¹⁶⁵ See, for example, Richard Kerridge, 'Ecological Hardy', in Karla Armbruster and Kathleen R. Wallace, eds., *Beyond Nature Writing* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001), pp. 126–142.

¹⁶⁶ *The Woodlanders*, p. 16.

¹⁶⁷ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 83.

¹⁶⁸ For discussion about the relationship between cosmologies and Norse myth, see W. St. Clair Tisdall, 'The Hebrew and Babylonian Cosmologies', *Nineteenth century and after: a monthly review*, August 1905, pp. 259–66, which records that the Old Norse legend of the Ginnung-chasm appeared in the Edda: 'The beginning of ages was/ When no one was:/ There was nor shore nor sea/ Nor cool waves/ Earth was nowhere found,/ Nor high heaven,/ There was the Ginnung-chasm,/ But grass nowhere.'

is more receptive to the nature of the cosmic space around her. In the passage, various sounds carry through the dark, all of which express imbalance: two trees 'rubbing each other into wounds, and other vocalized sorrows'; 'the screech of owls, and the fluttering tumble of some awkward wood-pigeon ill-balanced on its roosting-bough.'¹⁶⁹ The imbalances of the natural world are not mirrored within Marty herself. With quiet self-possession, and a fearlessness 'inherited' from her prehistoric ancestors, Marty uses a line of tree-tops to find her way to the shed where she lays down her night's work of crafted spars. The night, says Hardy, gave her 'a less perturbed and brisker manner'; through her long habitation of Little Hintock and her acquaintance with the dark, she does not let the 'petty' fears so often incited in others by the night affect her. Like Giles, her quiet acceptance of, and lack of reaction to, the events which occur in the novel enable her to be the passive recipient of the novel's consequences rather than their reactive agent. When, for example, she overhears Melbury talking to his wife about his plans for Grace to marry Giles Winterbourne, she is 'struck' by the implications of Melbury's intentions, for 'her own existence, and not Mr. Melbury's, was the centre of Marty's consciousness'. Her stoic acceptance — "That, then, is the secret of it all [...] Giles Winterbourne is not for me!" — leads her to ignore vanity and cut her hair to sell to Mrs Charmond after all. She avoids looking in the mirror for 'knowing what a deflowered visage would look back at her and almost break her heart' she has already learnt how to minimise emotional suffering. Hardy writes that 'she dreaded it as much as did her own ancestral goddess the reflection in the pool after the rape of her locks by Loke the Malicious', and

¹⁶⁹ *The Woodlanders*, p. 16.

yet, despite this inherited temptation, 'she steadily stuck to business' and prepared her hair to send away.

Marty and Winterbourne are Hardy's experiments in letting go of fear; they behave and think from their inner 'centre' and in accordance with their circumstances. Hardy says of them as they walk into the night beneath the protective 'tent-shaped sky' that:

Hardly anything could be more isolated, or more self-contained, than the lives of these two walking here in the lonely hour before day, when grey shades, material and mental, are so very grey. And yet their lonely courses formed no detached design at all, but were part of the pattern in the great web of human doings then weaving in both hemispheres.¹⁷⁰

Their activity is at once contained within, and in dialogue with, their immediate environment. They have no fear of isolation or loneliness because their activity is part of a larger scheme — a 'web' of human activity 'in both hemispheres', not simply their own. They exist in the 'grey shades' of day as thinking and feeling beings neither wholly immersed in the natural world nor fully in accordance with the laws of society. Throughout the novel, their ways of thinking about and responding to the events which unfold around them have greater potential to transcend boundaries of time and space than the more introspective social ambitions of characters such as Mr. Melbury, the timber dealer, for whom Marty crafts the wood. Moreover, Hardy hints that this

¹⁷⁰ *The Woodlanders*, p. 22.

way of being is 'inherited' from a long line of ancestors who have lived and worked the land in a similar way.

Hardy draws from the work of Charles Lyell to explore how agricultural workers have adapted to their changing environment. When Marty's father, Mr. South, is struck down by his irrational fear of the elm tree growing by the house and is too ill to work, Marty sits up all night creating thatching spars. By the fireside in the dark little cottage, her activity recalls the manufacturing methods of her prehistoric ancestors:

On her left hand lay a bundle of the straight smooth hazel rods called spar-gads — the raw material of her manufacture: on her right a heap of chips and ends — the refuse — with which the fire was maintained: in front a pile of the finished articles. To produce them she took up each gad, looked critically at it from end to end, cut it to length, split it into four, and sharpened each of the quarters with dexterous blows which brought it to a triangular point precisely resembling that of a bayonet.¹⁷¹

The crafting of spars was a cottage industry which, unlike other agricultural practices, such as mowing and threshing, was not likely to be eclipsed by the arrival of the machine. At the time Hardy was writing *The Woodlanders*, accounts of prehistoric manufacturing activity in the Wessex area had established Kimmeridge, Dorset, as a prehistoric manufacturing site for Kimmeridge coal money. Archaeologists and anthropologists around the world

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 10.

were conducting further studies to try to shed light on the manufacturing practices of prehistoric societies.¹⁷² These studies would have been largely guided by Charles Lyell's accounts in *The Antiquity of Man* (1863), which clearly stated the case for ancient flint weapons being the handiwork of prehistoric man, and refuted theological evidence concerning the history of humanity. In his book, Lyell discusses flint implements which he dates to the Pleistocene era, found in the Somme Valley. He sums up the work of Evans, who had previously written of the flints in *Archaeologia* that they possessed 'a uniformity of shape, a correctness of outline, and a sharpness about the cutting edges and points, which cannot be due to anything but design'.¹⁷³ Lyell's description of knives and flakes excavated from a pit at Abbeville gives one of the first accounts of prehistoric manufacturing practices, which were later to become more widely discussed during the 1870s and 1880s in the periodical press:

Between the spear-head and oval shapes, there are various intermediate gradations, and there are also a vast variety of very rude implements, many of which may have been rejected as failures, and others struck off as chips in the course of manufacturing the more perfect ones. Some of these chips can only be recognised by an experienced eye as bearing marks of human workmanship.

¹⁷² See, for example, Charles C. Jones, 'Primitive Manufacture of Spear and Arrow Points along the Line of the Savannah River' (1879), and 'Centres of Primitive Manufacture in Georgia' (1880).

¹⁷³ *Archaeologia*, 38, cited in Charles Lyell, *On the Antiquity of Man* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1863), p. 117.

It has often been asked, how, without the use of metallic hammers, how so many of these oval and spear-headed tools could have been wrought into so uniform a shape. Mr. Evans, in order experimentally to illustrate the process, constructed a stone hammer, by mounting a pebble in a wooden handle, and with this tool struck off flakes from the edge on both sides of a Chalk flint, till it acquired precisely the same shape as the oval tool.¹⁷⁴

Hardy's description of Marty working the spars by the fireside resembles the manufacturing methods of her prehistoric ancestors.¹⁷⁵ She has 'the raw material of her manufacture' on one side, and 'a heap of chips and ends' on the other, which Hardy terms 'the refuse'. At the time Hardy was writing, archaeologists were recognising the value of refuse heaps in determining the motivations, lifestyles and practices of prehistoric peoples. The word 'refuse' had become increasingly associated with prehistory — not only through the work of Lyell, but also John Lubbock who published a paper on Danish Shell-Mounds, or 'Kitchen Middens' — known as refuse heaps — in the *Natural History Review* in 1861.¹⁷⁶ That Hardy 'precisely' compares Marty's finished product to a 'bayonet' associates the gads with prehistoric weaponry. He describes her carefully and methodically cutting and splitting the hazel poles

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ A contemporary definition of a thatching spar is given by Graham Thorne in 'Chiltern Hazel Coppice and Thatching Spar Survey': 'a straight strip of hazel wood split from a rod of hazel or 'gad' cut from a hazel stool [...] approximately 30" long and ½ inch in diameter and sharpened to a point at each end' (2006)

<<http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/hazel%20report.pdf>> [accessed 23/03/2011] (p. 2).

¹⁷⁶ Lyell refers to this paper in *On the Antiquity of Man*, in which he writes: 'such accumulations are called by the Danes, Kjoekenmodding, or "kitchen-middens." Scattered all through them are flint knives, hatchets, and other instruments of stone, horn, wood, and bone, with fragments of coarse pottery, mixed with charcoal and cinders, but never any implements of bronze, still less of iron' (p. 489).

and sharpening 'each of the quarters with dexterous blows [...] to a triangular point.' The wording recalls Lyell's description of Evans's reconstruction of a flint tool, in which he seeks to create a 'spear-headed tool' of a 'uniform shape' by striking 'flakes from the edge on both sides of a Chalk flint, till it acquired precisely the same shape as the oval tool.' In both accounts, the raw material is shaped by repeated heavy blows to create a spear. Hardy might well be suggesting that cottage traditions such as spar-making might be in danger of becoming extinct through the arrival of modern ways of living. Yet, more than this, he is observing the long continuance of humans' ability to create tools from natural materials to aid their survival; still more importantly, the method of this process remains relatively unchanged since prehistoric times. For Marty, the working of the spars is her last defence against the encroaching threat of poverty and homelessness which are likely to result once her father passes away.

In contrast to the steadiness and stoicism of Marty, and her association with traditional ways of life, Grace's father, Mr. Melbury is caught up in the superficial world of social manners and customs, believing that he can 'better' his daughter by educating her in London. He is characterised by 'suddenness that was a trait in him' and his attempts to construct a future for Grace are associated with jarring movement, suggesting that his interventions are incompatible with the environment and circumstances in which he is trying to implement them. When he contrives for Giles Winterbourne to meet Grace on her return from London, he literally polishes what Hardy later terms Grace's artificial 'veneer', by blacking the hooves of the horses that pull the trap:

Melbury was careful that the turn-out should be seemly. The gig-wheels, for instance, were not always washed during winter-time before a journey, the muddy roads rendering that labour useless; but they were washed to-day. The harness was polished, and when the grey horse had been put in and Winterborne was in his seat, ready to start, Mr. Melbury stepped out with a blacking-brush and with his own hands touched over the yellow hoofs of the animal.

“You see, Giles,” he said as he blacked, “coming from a fashionable school she might feel shocked at the homeliness of home; and ’tis these little things that catch a dainty woman’s eye if they are neglected. We living here alone don’t notice how the whitey-brown creeps out of the earth over us; but she, fresh from a city — why, she’ll notice everything.”¹⁷⁷

Not trusting Giles’s efforts, Melbury adds a finishing touch ‘with his own hands’. As he watches Giles drive out into the morning, ‘where cobwebs glistened in the now clearing air, lengthening and shortening their shine like elastic needles’ — a world far cleaner and brighter than the result of any human effort — he begins to regret his wish for Giles to marry his daughter, perceiving it to have arisen out of guilt rather than genuine resolve. The thought occurs to him ‘with a jerk’, which Hardy tells us was ‘a shape which emotion with him often resolved itself.’ Later, when Melbury encourages Fitzpiers to court Grace, regarding him as more socially suitable, he seeks to dispel the local myth that Fitzpiers is a practising black magician. Melbury

¹⁷⁷ *The Woodlanders*, p. 33.

proclaims this as 'nonsense', saying that Fitzpiers is 'only a gentleman fond of science, and philosophy, and poetry'.¹⁷⁸ Melbury's crucial misjudgements are catalysts for the unfolding of the tragic events in the novel and identify him as an unstable influence. The stark contrast between the erratic Melbury, the modern man wanting swift results from his actions, and the passive steadiness of Grace, Marty and Giles, represents the stability of older traditional ways of life undermined and shaken by the unwelcome interference of the new.

Through the detailed delineation of the architecture of his characters' emotions, Hardy makes implicit reference to his knowledge of prehistoric construction. Traditionally built over long periods of time, during a series of stages, the megalithic monuments of Wiltshire and Dorset were shaped in accordance with the nature of their environment and the availability of resources, thus expressing a relationship of balance between humans and the natural world. Melbury is the antithesis to this slow evolution and instead demands to see the shape of his efforts, placing faith in the 'men of science' who dispel the 'myth' of existence. When Melbury changes his mind about the marriage, and fears that Grace may yet favour Giles, he struggles to find the right balance between fulfilling his secret pledge to Giles's father and his desire that Grace should marry someone more suitable:

Thus Mr. Melbury went out of the house still unreconciled to the sacrifice of the gem he had been at such pains in mounting. He faintly could hope, in the secret nether chamber of his mind, that something

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 31.

would happen before the balance of her feeling had quite turned in Winterborne's favour, to relieve his conscience and at the same time preserve her on her elevated plane.¹⁷⁹

The rising popularity of archaeological terminology caused it to feature in serialised fiction, and more specifically in the prose of psychological narratives.¹⁸⁰ As Melbury struggles to come to terms with Grace's gradually changing regard for the place in which she grew up — a change which he himself encouraged — he simultaneously wishes 'in the secret nether chamber of his mind' that something will happen to alter the 'balance of her feeling'. Hardy sketches Melbury's emotions as a landscape, in which an inner chamber conceals his truest feelings — his self-doubt and his 'hope' that things will work out. Grace is compared to a gemstone that Melbury is seeking to set in an artificial mount, in an attempt to exaggerate its natural beauty. At this stage in the story he cannot see that this layer of artificiality will only complicate rather than complement his daughter's life. Grace's feelings are finely balanced and could tip one way or another — either towards Giles or away from him. Hardy's identification of Grace with precious stone, and his metaphor of the chamber in relation to Melbury, might suggest that he was recalling a prehistoric landscape. Logan stones, also known as rocking stones, are huge boulders in the landscape that are very finely balanced, and the application of only a small force causes them to rock. Some are megaliths

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁸⁰ Searches of periodical databases reveal that the phrase 'chambered mound' occurred more during the 1880s than of all decades of the nineteenth century. In *British Periodicals* the phrase 'chambered tumulus' occurs 75 times between 1847–1931, and 47 of these mentions occur between 1860 and 1890, when Hardy was writing his fiction.

constructed by prehistoric societies, and others are formed naturally, but many of them are associated with Druid sites, burial grounds, and shrines. Hardy's mention of a 'nether chamber' may relate to the structure of chambered tumuli in which it was customary for there to be a rear chamber, separate from the main chambers.¹⁸¹ Melbury's perceived 'sacrifice' of his daughter may also suggest prehistoric influence.

Hardy imagined that the astronomical alignment of stone monuments expressed a fundamental idea of balance — not only between people and the environment, but between psychic forces associated with light and dark, and between day and night. Through his consistent association of Marty South with the darkness and moonlight, Hardy suggests that the moon is an integral part of cosmic consciousness. Michael Irwin notes that the moon is mentioned more than 300 times in Hardy's work — in comparison to other novelists' work, such as Jane Austen's single reference to it across six novels, and George Eliot's 25 allusions.¹⁸² This might not be surprising, given the scientific developments of the late-nineteenth century which led to widespread fascination with the skies. Irwin observes that Hardy's depictions of the moon 'can tell us a great deal about the way in which he sees and interprets the world [...] [and] can bear directly on the conduct and psychology of his

¹⁸¹ See, for example, the description of a chambered tumulus at the Bridge of Waith in Orkney in 1884, which records 'five large chambers, and one small one connected with the central chamber' in 'Opening of a Chambered Tumulus in Orkney', ed. by Frederick William Llewellynn Jewitt, *Reliquary and illustrated archaeologist: a quarterly journal and review devoted to the study of early pagan and Christian antiquities of Great Britain*, 25 October 1884, p. 128. Other chambered tumuli opened from the mid-to late-nineteenth century include Belas Knap (Gloucestershire), Maes Howe (Orkney), and Newgrange in Ireland.

¹⁸² Irwin, 'Thomas Hardy and the Moon', p. 23.

characters.¹⁸³ When Mr South dies, Marty is left alone in the house with his body, which becomes visible to her by the light of the moon:

Everybody thought of Giles; nobody thought of Marty. Had any of them looked in upon her during those moonlight nights which preceded the burial of her father they would have seen the girl absolutely alone in the house with the dead man. Her own chamber being nearest the stair-top the coffin had been placed there for convenience; and at a certain hour of the night, when the moon arrived opposite the window, its beams streamed across the still profile of South, sublimed by the august presence of death, and onward a few feet further upon the face of his daughter, lying in her little bed in the silence of a repose almost as dignified as that of her companion — the repose of a guileless soul that had nothing more left on earth to lose, except a life which she did not over-value.¹⁸⁴

The image of the body resting in the 'chamber' recalls the Victorian awareness of the function of tumuli in the landscape — as resting places for the spirits of prehistoric peoples. The movement of the moon, and the light across South's face at a 'certain hour of the night', evoke the astronomical alignment of prehistoric burial sites when the rays of the sun would enter the chamber at a particular time of day. That this light also falls across Marty, lying in a similar position in 'the silence of [...] repose', further affiliates her

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ *The Woodlanders*, p. 106.

with the prehistoric world and suggests that she is sensitive to similar types of cosmic energies as her prehistoric ancestors.

The theme of balance in relation to the environment is continued throughout the book. As Grace and her father walk through the autumnal woods, Hardy describes the seasonal change as akin to ‘a sudden lapse from the ornate to the primitive on Nature’s canvas.’ Winterborne follows behind, keeping a steady watchful ‘eye upon the two figures as they threaded their way through these sylvan masses.’ He notes that Melbury has a ‘habit of getting lost in thought and arousing himself with an exclamation of “Hah!” — accompanied with an upward jerk of the head.’ Melbury’s caricature is ‘recognisable’ by the human and animal inhabitants — ‘It seemed as if the squirrels and birds knew him’ — with a certain squirrel ‘assuming a mock manner’ around him as he knew him to be without a gun.¹⁸⁵ The animals’ mocking of Melbury is the antithesis to Winterbourne’s ‘conjurer’s touch’ which enables him to work the woodlands to his advantage. By contrast, Melbury walks through clumsy ‘elbowed old elms and ashes with great forks’ and trunks with mossy roots ‘like hands wearing green gloves’. Hardy writes that:

here, as everywhere, the Unfulfilled Intention, which makes life what it is, was as obvious as it could be among the depraved crowds of a city slum. The leaf was deformed, the curve was crippled, the taper was interrupted; the lichen ate the vigour of the stalk, and the ivy slowly strangled to death the promising sapling.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ *The Woodlanders*, p. 53.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

The immediate natural environment surrounding Melbury is likened to an unkempt garden where giant hands have inverted the traditional image of the nurturing hand to eat and ‘slowly strangle [...] the promising sapling.’ Later in the story, when events spiral out of Melbury’s control, Winterbourne — despite having lost everything — offers his unconditional support and talks it through with the timber merchant. Hardy writes that Winterbourne ‘responded only too readily to the mood of the timber-dealer’, suggesting his inner steadiness and reliability, while Melbury characteristically ‘struck the smooth trunk of a young ash-tree’ in his frustration.

Grace’s eventual failed marriage to Fitzpiers is marked by her consistent surprise and disappointment at his lack of commitment to her. Like Melbury, Fitzpiers is also characterised by ‘suddenness’ and ‘fit[s] of pride’, and is unable to strike a successful balance between his desires, ambitions and the circumstances of his life at Hintock with Grace. Although fascinated by the transcendent potential of philosophy, Fitzpiers cannot commit to a state of calm acceptance, and remains enslaved to his desire to transcend boundaries in pursuit of happiness.¹⁸⁷ One evening, in the woods, he ponders the fabric of the material world around him:

He dreamed and mused till his consciousness seemed to occupy the whole space of the woodland round, so little was there of jarring sight or sound to hinder perfect mental unity with the sentiment of the place.

¹⁸⁷ Through Fitzpiers, Hardy sketches an emerging conceptual ideal of the late 1880s that was explored through the study of metaphysics.

The idea returned upon him of sacrificing all practical aims to live in calm contentment here, and instead of going on elaborating new conceptions with infinite pains to accept quiet domesticity according to oldest and homeliest notions.¹⁸⁸

In these moments of 'mental unity' with his surroundings, Fitzpiers considers whether he can find it in himself to live with 'calm contentment' and 'accept quiet domesticity'. His thoughts 'detain' him, even though they cause him 'infinite pain'. But it is not through the study of philosophy that he can attain the emotional sublimity that he craves. Instead, he finds that knowledge only takes him to a certain point, from which experience takes over. He believes that he might be close to perceiving nature's 'recovered [...] lost union with the idea', but in fact it is Marty South and Winterbourne who gain closest proximity to this ideal through their intimate habitation alongside the natural world in all its moods, weathers and tendencies.

Fitzpiers's relationship with Grace is the ultimate test of his mental strength. When she first visits him at his home she finds him asleep on the sofa. Upon her return, he describes having seen her in what he thought had been a dream:

"I fancied in my vision that you stood there," he said, pointing to where she had paused. "I did not see you directly, but reflected in the glass. I thought, what a lovely creature! — the design is for once carried out. Nature has at last recovered her lost union with the Idea! My thoughts

¹⁸⁸ *The Woodlanders*, p. 139.

ran in that direction because I had been reading the work of a transcendental philosopher last night; and I dare say it was the dose of Idealism that I received from it that made me scarcely able to distinguish between reality and fancy. I almost wept when I awoke, and found that you had appeared to me in Time, but not in Space, alas!"¹⁸⁹

His words 'I did not see you directly' represent his misperception and underestimation of Grace. Fitzpiers's strength lies in his ability to 'imagine the impossible', but herein also lies his weakness, for Hardy warns that it is 'a futile direction'. He mistakenly perceives his reading of a transcendental philosopher to have caused him to 'scarcely [be] able to distinguish between reality and fancy.' Later, his 'fancy' leads him to the destruction of his marriage, and he finds himself attracted to his old love, Felice Charmond, who is also led by her fanciful nature.¹⁹⁰ That Felice wears a hairpiece made from Marty South's severed locks, adds a further element of falsity to her character. She is inclined to believe that she was 'born to live and do nothing, nothing, nothing but float about, as we fancy we do sometimes in dreams', but paradoxically believes she 'must struggle against such fancies', and thus exists in a permanent state of irresolvable conflict. Behind what Radford terms the 'sylvan faith irretrievably waning in Little Hintock', lay a larger, albeit

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁹⁰ 'Felice' is the name of the lead character in Jefferies's 1884 novel, *The Dewy Morn*, but has the alternative spelling of 'Felise' (Oxon: Petton Books, 2009). Jefferies's notebook entries show that he originally intended to work with the former spelling, but changed it (unpublished notebooks). In the novel Felise has a deep affinity with the natural world. In contrast to Felice Charmond in *The Woodlanders*, who secretes herself way indoors, Felise experiences a much calmer relationship with her surroundings and enjoys spending most of her time outdoors. Hardy would have at least been aware of Jefferies's novel through its multiple advertisements and reviews in newspapers and periodicals of the time. In *The Woodlanders* and *The Dewy Morn* there are similar scenes in which the character Felice drops a white handkerchief which is later found by her lover.

'fanciful', cosmic perspective of reality — identified by Hardy as the 'Ultimate Idea'.

The area around High-Stoy Hill is presented as a cosmos with its own laws of reality. When Fitzpiers tries to repair his marriage to Grace, they agree to meet on the hill, which Hardy terms the 'axis of so many critical movements in their lives':

The sight of each homely and well-remembered object swelled the regret that seldom left him now. Whatever paths might lie open to his future the soothing shades of Hintock were forbidden him for ever as a permanent dwelling-place.

He longed for the society of Grace. But to lay offerings on her slighted altar was his first aim, and until her propitiation was complete he would constrain her in no way to return to him. The least reparation that he could make, in a case where he would gladly have made much, would be to let her feel herself absolutely free to choose between living with him and without him.¹⁹¹

Like the 'pole and axis' of Rainbarrow in *The Return of the Native*, High-Stoy is a centre around which the novel's events revolve. Fitzpiers's image of repentance on Grace's 'slighted altar' anticipates the more exaggerated metaphor of sacrifice at the end of *Tess*.¹⁹² When Fitzpiers first arrives at Hintock we are told that the place was a 'convenient centre' for his medical

¹⁹¹ *The Woodlanders*, p. 332.

¹⁹² The term 'sacrifice' is used in *The Woodlanders* to denote the giving up of individuality, most notably in relation to Giles, to whose 'self sacrifice' Hardy refers three times.

practice, a space that soon expands to become an emotional territory from which he cannot separate himself, leading him to turn down the offer of work in a seaside town. The area's ancient past, and its history of human habitation, form a centre of gravity around which characters and events revolve. This coordinated 'movement' between mind and landscape — what Hardy terms 'orbit' — is intrinsic to the structure of the novel's events.

When their marriage is going awry, Fitzpiers leaves Grace by the door of her father's house and walks away into the dusk:

as he receded and was clasped out of sight by the filmy shades he impressed Grace as a man who hardly appertained to her existence at all. Cleverer, greater than herself, one outside her mental orbit as she considered him, he seemed to be her ruler rather than her equal, protector, and dear familiar friend.¹⁹³

Fitzpiers's being 'clasped out of sight by the filmy shades' associates him with the dark unknowingness of the otherworld. This new perspective encourages Grace to perceive him in a new light — as being 'outside her mental orbit' and not her counterbalancing 'equal', as Giles could have been. The term 'orbit' is used twice in the novel, both times in association with Fitzpiers. Further on in the story, when he realises that Felice Charmond, whom he once met years ago, is now living at Hintock House he reflects upon the pull he previously felt from the house:

¹⁹³ *The Woodlanders*, p. 165.

Outside the house he mused over the spot under the light of the stars. It seemed very strange that he should have come there more than once when its inhabitant was absent, and observed the house with a nameless interest; that he should have assumed offhand before he knew Grace that it was here she lived; that, in short, at sundry times and seasons the individuality of Hintock House should have forced itself upon him as appertaining to some existence with which he was concerned.

The intersection of his temporal orbit with Mrs. Charmond's for a day or two in the past had created a sentimental interest in her at the time, but it had been so evanescent that in the ordinary onward roll of affairs he would scarce ever have recalled it again. To find her here, however, in these somewhat romantic circumstances, magnified that bygone and transitory tenderness to indescribable proportions.¹⁹⁴

Rather than simply feeling drawn to the house, Fitzpiers perceives it to have 'forced itself upon him', as if the place is a centre with an orbit of its own which attracts him. His fleeting affection for Mrs Charmond had been 'evanescent' in the 'ordinary onward roll' of daily life, but here, away from the rigmarole of routine, amidst a slower pace of life and thought, it becomes enlarged. Hardy writes that this pull occurred 'at sundry times and seasons' and had no relation to the outside social world. It denotes a movement or attractive force, which causes Fitzpiers's 'temporal orbit' to intersect with Mrs Charmond's.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 189.

The unusual seclusion of the house also encourages the regeneration of his old feelings, so that what was once 'transitory' becomes excessively 'magnified' under the lens of his own consciousness. While this process enables him to develop feelings for Felice, it simultaneously causes him to lose perspective and seemingly forget about his marriage to Grace. This sudden loss of judgement over his own emotions causes his behaviour to be incompatible with the ordinary social world.

Hardy associated the human inclination to be attracted to or 'orbit' certain people and situations with the desire of prehistoric societies to mark places in the landscape as their own. In the nineteenth century, Avebury and Stonehenge were recognised as centres to which prehistoric people were drawn from as far as Europe. The late-nineteenth century witnessed unprecedented forms of attack on the superstitious nature of theological traditions. Hardy perceived that some Victorian institutions, such as marriage, were no more than a 'survival', as he once wrote in a letter to Edward Clodd, 'from the custom of capture & purchase, propped up by a theological superstition'.¹⁹⁵ In light of the inflexibility of social laws, pre-civilisation appeared to offer some form of compensatory hope that mental liberty might once again be achievable for the human race. Hardy's references to abstract philosophy in *The Woodlanders* and *The Well-Beloved* reveal his interest in alternative philosophies — a 'grey' middle ground — as an alternative to the narrowness of Christian superstition. However, as a movement in its embryonic stages, Hardy perceived that abstract philosophy had not yet found

¹⁹⁵ Richard Purdy and Michael Millgate, eds., *Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*, 7 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), Volume 2, p. 92.

a reliable form of expression in the individual psyche. Both Fitzpiers and Jocelyn Pierston (the protagonist of *The Well-Beloved*) suffer for the illusive nature of their 'fancy' which lends them instability and restlessness.¹⁹⁶ Both names contain 'piers', a derivative of the name 'Pearce', which can be traced to Peter — meaning "rock" — and the Greek "petros" meaning "stone". These names represent the earthly, grounded form of inanimate matter — the antithesis to the transcendental aspirations of the characters themselves.

In *The Woodlanders* Hardy uses terms which both describe characteristics of the landscape and indicate the transcendent potential of thought. Like Jefferies's use of 'verge' in *The Story of My Heart*, Hardy's appropriation of the term in *The Woodlanders* is significant. In the context of landscape, 'verge' refers to an extreme edge or margin, or a border, and denotes an enclosing boundary. In thought and action, 'verge' indicates the brink or threshold of a new state or condition. The *Oxford English Dictionary* traces the origin of the word to the Latin *vergĕre* — 'to bend, incline, turn' — and its meaning to move in a certain direction.¹⁹⁷ The term also relates to the specific movement of the sun as it descends towards the horizon or begins to sink.

Hardy uses the term in the description of Hintock House. When Grace first visits the house she finds herself 'on the verge of a deep glen', where below her the house 'stood in a hole [...] full of beauty'.¹⁹⁸ Its ancient character is immediately apparent — hewn from 'snuff-coloured freestone from Ham-Hill

¹⁹⁶ Richard Jefferies himself seemed to experience this restlessness and moved house five times in the years 1874–1887.

¹⁹⁷ 'diverge, v.'. Oxford English Dictionary Online, Oxford University Press (December 2012) <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/56036?rskey=8ssM7L&result=3>> [accessed 7 January 2013] (no page).

¹⁹⁸ *The Woodlanders*, p. 58.

quarries' and 'coated with lichen of every shade'. Ham Hill, the largest Iron Age hillfort in Somerset, has been quarried for 2000 years, but the quarries were most active during the Victorian era when new technologies improved extraction and transportation methods. The quarry is known for its honey-coloured stone — a Jurassic limestone that furnished many of the surrounding villages.¹⁹⁹ The concept of a verge or brink has consistent importance for the characters in *The Woodlanders*. When Grace notices Fitzpiers becoming distracted by a secret passion for Felice Charmond which is unknown to her, she finds him 'leaning over a gate on High-Stoy Hill [...] which opened on the brink of a declivity, slanting down directly into White Hart or Blackmoor Vale [...] When she came close she could see his lips moving unconsciously, as on some impassioned visionary theme.' Unlike the calm and attentive Marty South, who stood 'on the brink of an absolute void' before overhearing Melbury talking to his wife, Fitzpiers lacks self control, murmuring to himself and failing to hear Grace's approach. Dale Kramer notes that one of Hardy's manuscript revisions, when he relocated the novel from Bubb Down to High-Stoy, led to the omission of a further description of 'a half-invisible little lane' which, as it approached the hill, was on 'the verge of an eminence'.²⁰⁰ This revision further suggests the greatness Hardy perceived in the ancient hilltop sites of Dorset and Somerset and the grand sweep of human and geological history that they represented.

Hardy explores further the imaginative implications of verging on new experiences when Grace and Giles are finally given an opportunity to be

¹⁹⁹ There was an annual fair held at the site, similar in nature to 'Woodbury Hill Fair' upon which Hardy based the fair where Henchard sold his wife in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

²⁰⁰ *The Woodlanders*, p. 366.

together, albeit not in the eyes of the law. When Grace encounters Giles on the edge of the Blackmoor Vale, at the end of a long summer, he appears to her as:

Autumn's very brother, his face being sunburnt to wheat-colour, his eyes blue as corn-flowers, his sleeves and leggings dyed with fruit stains, his hands clammy with the sweet juice of apples, his hat sprinkled with pips, and everywhere about him that atmosphere of cider [...] Her heart rose from its late sadness like a released bough; her senses revelled in the sudden lapse back to Nature unadorned. The consciousness of having to be genteel because of her husband's profession, the veneer of artificiality which she had acquired at the fashionable schools, were thrown off, and she became the crude country girl of her latent, early instincts.²⁰¹

Grace's years of accumulated 'consciousness' of herself and the accompanying 'veneer of artificiality' are suddenly 'thrown off' like an unwanted garment. She feels at home in Giles's company — 'unadorned' — without the 'mount' that her father had tried to set her in. Giles's appearance and his immersion in nature instantly appeal to Grace's senses, causing her dormant 'early instincts' to rush to the surface. Andrew Radford presents Winterbourne as a 'survival' of archaic systems which are being smothered by social progress. He cites the failed meal that Giles prepares for the Melbury family, followed by the awkward country dance, as symbols of Giles's

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 204.

dislocation from changing rural society.²⁰² However, the above passage suggests that for all the seeming intrusion of the modern world, and its tendency to make redundant traditional ways of living and thinking, such accumulations are transitory and can be shrugged off through what Hardy terms 'the sudden lapse back'. While Radford recognises Hardy's concern that primitive instincts are under threat, he overlooks the late-Victorian belief in the hereditary survival of such instincts and their ability to shape contemporary motivations and experiences. As Hardy chronicles the gradual disappearance of traditional rural life, he simultaneously suggests the subtle continuation of the ways of thinking associated with these ways of life. For Hardy, the 'survivals' of time remained too powerfully engrained to legitimately term them 'moribund'.²⁰³

The growing understanding between Grace and Winterbourne is founded on their joint recognition and celebration of the 'primitive simplicity' of the human condition. As they take a walk together towards the close of day they reconsider their relationship as potentially romantic. Grace is, like a prehistoric loganstone, presented as tipping one way then another in her feelings towards him. She is initially perturbed by his 'abrupt manner', before suddenly considering him 'affectionately':

With their minds on these things they passed so far round the hill that the whole west sky was revealed. Between the broken clouds they

²⁰² See Andrew Radford, 'Dethroning the High Priest of Nature', in Keith Wilson, ed., *A Companion to Thomas Hardy*, p. 316.

²⁰³ See Radford's analysis in which he writes that 'woven into the verbal texture of *The Woodlanders* are myriad "survivals" that reflect the residue of a moribund mythology no longer operant in the sheltered recesses of Little Hintock' ('Dethroning the High Priest of Nature', in Keith Wilson, p. 313).

could see far into the recesses of heaven as they mused and walked, the eye journeying on under a species of golden arcades, and past fiery obstructions, fancied cairns, logan-stones, stalactites and stalagmite of topaz. Deeper than this their gaze passed thin flakes of incandescence, till it plunged into a bottomless medium of soft green fire.

Her abandonment to the seductive hour and scene after her sense of ill-usage, her revolt for the nonce against social law, her passionate desire for primitive life, may have showed in her face. Winterborne was looking at her, his eyes lingering on a flower that she wore in her bosom. Almost with the abstraction of a somnambulist he stretched out his hand and gently caressed the flower.

She drew back. "What are you doing, Giles Winterborne!" she exclaimed with severe surprise. The evident absence of all premeditation from the act, however, speedily led her to think that it was not necessary to stand upon her dignity here and now. "You must bear in mind Giles," she said kindly, "that we are not as we were; and some people might have said that what you did was taking a liberty."

It was more than she need have told him; his action of forgetfulness had made him so angry with himself that he flushed through his tan. "I

don't know what I am coming to!" he exclaimed savagely. "Ah — I was not once like this!" Tears of vexation were in his eyes.²⁰⁴

In this 'seductive hour' the sky is likened to a prehistoric landscape characterised by 'fancied cairns, logan-stones, stalactites and stalagmites of topaz'. The imaginative freedom afforded by the depths of the evening sky is akin to the freedom experienced by prehistoric societies who lived 'savagely', without adherence to social laws. While Grace's 'vener' of social standards can temporarily obscure her true feelings for Giles, 'her revolt for the nonce against social law' and 'her passionate desire for primitive life' become visible in her face, and encourage Giles to reach out to her. Giles recognises in himself a shift away from an original state or condition — 'I was not once like this' — suggesting that the pressurising social standards of the age were compromising his instincts.

Hardy imagined the past to be part of the present, rather than separate or idealised. The scene of the couple's reunion is marked by imaginary 'cairns and logan-stones' — symbols of prehistoric man's engagement with and celebration of the natural environment. More than simple identification with prehistoric ancestors, the presence of these symbols suggests a directional movement that Hardy perceived to run through humanity like a current; one that has its origins in the prehistoric state and can shape human desire in the present. In the novel he implicitly suggests that this form of continuation of the prehistoric condition requires recognition and expression in the modern world, and that to prevent its true expression can have dangerous consequences.

²⁰⁴ *The Woodlanders*, p. 205.

When Winterbourne perishes after contracting typhoid, Grace realises too late the worth of true feelings which are unshaped by social or cultural influences. Hardy writes of her repetitious visits to his grave with Marty South, who had also loved him, that 'nothing ever had brought home to her with such force as this death how little acquirements and culture weigh beside sterling personal character.'²⁰⁵ Grace's perception that her own delay and faltering regard of Winterbourne might have contributed to his demise hints towards the emptiness of wealth and success. The 'force' with which this realisation is 'brought home' refers to the continual suppression of her feelings for Giles under the weight of responsibility to her father to improve herself socially. The current of instinctive emotion, which Grace tried so hard to listen to, but was ultimately distracted from, makes itself known suddenly, coming back to the 'chamber' of her inner psyche. Later, when Grace tries to re-imagine her life with the repentant Fitzpiers, she questions her too ready acceptance of the original marriage vows: 'She became lost in long ponderings on how far a person's conscience might be bound by vows made without at the time a full recognition of their force.'²⁰⁶ The full implications, or psychic 'force', of social decisions cannot always be foreseen by the immature mind, and it takes the wisdom of retrospection to understand them.

Giles is again identified with primitive life when Grace, believing that her father has found a new law that will nullify her marriage to Fitzpiers, suggests they kiss. Grace states that "perhaps — as I am on the verge of freedom — I am not right, after all, in thinking there is any harm in your kissing

²⁰⁵ *The Woodlanders*, p. 330.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

me.”²⁰⁷ Giles, secretly knowing that Mr. Melbury had failed to make any such discovery, experiences moral agony on being offered her company in untruthful circumstances: ‘the wrong, the social sin, of now taking advantage of the offer of her lips, had a magnitude, in the eyes of one whose life had been so primitive, so ruled by household laws as Giles’s, which can hardly be explained.’²⁰⁸ The consequences of his actions are temporarily overlooked in favour of his true feelings for her, and ‘since life was short and love was strong — he gave way to the temptation.’ Hardy writes that ‘he cared for nothing past or future, simply accepting the present and what it brought, deciding once in his life to clasp in his arms her he had watched over and loved so long.’ Not only does Hardy justify Giles’s decision, but he clearly associates primitive life with freedom, and modern living with constraint. Grace is an ‘impressionable creature, who combined modern nerves with primitive feelings, and was doomed by such co-existence to be numbered among the distressed.’²⁰⁹ Her perception of herself as ‘on the verge of freedom’, combined with Giles’s ‘primitive simplicity’, and his adherence to his instincts, allows them a few moments of happiness together.

In a different way from Hardy’s earlier novels, *The Woodlanders* chronicles the emergence of a new way of thinking about the past and future. Hardy’s identification of the woodland worker, Marty South, with primitive man — standing on the brink of an unquantifiable void, or mental darkness — is not only a symbol of the enduring nature of the human condition, but suggests a post-Darwinian anticipation of new insights into the relation of the psyche to

²⁰⁷ *The Woodlanders*, p. 286.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

the cosmos. In his earlier novels Hardy expressed anxiety that the era of humanity seemed infinitesimal in the context of the grand timescale of earth's history, which had been established by science. The late-nineteenth-century assumption had been made that, because science had provided a timescale that contradicted established theological and historical systems, it too could answer fundamental questions about humans' place on earth. In his novels of the mid-to late-1880s Hardy perceived that the light of science could only partially illuminate the ignorance surrounding the human condition, and that there was a vast psychic space or 'void' as yet unexplored. Through his close association of his characters' mental processes with prehistoric settings, and his use of interchangeable terms for features of the landscape and emotional experience, Hardy suggests a dynamic state of mind which is 'on the verge' of a new state or condition. In light of this perception, and the brief span of time since humans first became conscious of themselves — what George Romanes termed in 1884 'the dawn of consciousness'²¹⁰ — Hardy perceived that there was, at a deep level, only a few 'shades' of difference between modern and prehistoric man. Furthermore, he suggested that humans could learn from the strain of prehistoric consciousness that sought to be recognised in the present.

Thus, the rational explanations of mid-to late-nineteenth-century science, although formative to Hardy's early vision, could only take him to a certain point, from which, in later life, metaphysical speculation took over. John Bailey records Hardy's thoughts about the nature of matter in a diary

²¹⁰ George Romanes, *The Mental Evolution of Animals with a Posthumous Essay on Instinct by Charles Darwin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 111.

entry for 13 February 1887, the year in which *The Woodlanders* was published:

I was thinking a night or two ago that people are somnambulists — that the material is not the real — only the visible, the real being invisible optically. That it is because we are in a somnambulistic hallucination that we think the real to be what we see as real.²¹¹

Somnambulating, the state of sleep-walking, refers to simple, repetitious behaviour, derived from only semi-conscious perceptions. In the same year Hardy noted that his true interest was in ‘a deeper reality underlying the scenic’. As if affirming his own widening of interest from the mid-century fascination with Darwin to the underlying nature of reality itself, he wrote in 1901, when he was working on *The Dynasts*:

My own interest lies largely in non-rationalistic subjects, since non-rationality seems, so far as one can perceive, to be the principle of the Universe. By which I do not mean foolishness, but rather a principle for which there is no exact name, lying at the indifference point between rationality and irrationality.²¹²

²¹¹ Florence Emily Hardy, *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy*, in John Bailey, *Thomas Hardy and the Cosmic Mind: A New Reading of the Dynasts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956), p. 6.

²¹² This was part of a letter he did not send. From *The Later years of Thomas Hardy*, in Bailey, p. 6.

This 'principle for which there is no exact name' was the subject of Jefferies's experiments in metaphysical philosophy from 1883 to 1887, which attempted to identify a larger context for the psyche beyond the ordinary material world. By this time, archaeological thought had assumed a metaphysical dimension in both authors' work. Hardy went on to write *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, novels which, as the next chapter will show, continue to explore how the prehistoric state can find expression in the modern mind.²¹³

A final example from *The Woodlanders*, which explains the deep connection between Giles and Marty South, suggests the inadequacy of scientific knowledge, and hints towards an understanding drawn from simple experience:

The casual glimpses which the ordinary population bestowed upon that wondrous world of sap and leaves called the Hintock woods had been with these two, Giles and Marty, a clear gaze. They had been possessed of its finer mysteries as of commonplace knowledge; had been able to read its hieroglyphs as ordinary writing; to them the sights and sounds of night, winter, wind, storm, amid those dense boughs, which had to Grace a touch of the uncanny, and even of the supernatural, were simple occurrences whose origin, continuance, and laws they foreknew. They had planted together, and together they had felled; together they had, with the run of the years, mentally collected

²¹³ After *Jude* received some poor press in 1895 Hardy resolved to write no more prose fiction. It is possible that his perception of there being more to understand about the psyche than rational science could explain contributed to this sudden and not fully understood change of career. The metaphysical and psychic dimensions to experience, which had found partial expression through his novels, may have found a purer expression through his poetry.

those remoter signs and symbols which seen in few were of runic obscurity, but all together made an alphabet. From the light lashing of the twigs upon their faces when brushing through them in the dark either could pronounce upon the species of the tree whence they stretched; from the quality of the wind's murmur through a bough either could in like manner name its sort afar off. They knew by a glance at a trunk if its heart were sound, or tainted with incipient decay, and by the state of its upper twigs the stratum that had been reached by its roots. The artifices of the seasons were seen by them from the conjuror's own point of view, and not from that of the spectator.²¹⁴

Giles and Marty have a 'clear gaze' that sees beyond the 'casual glimpses' of the 'ordinary' observer. This form of instinctive, primitive engagement with nature is not savage or rudimentary but is achieved through sustained 'intelligent intercourse' with the sights and sounds of the woods. Throughout the novel Hardy presents Marty South as alone, without family, purpose or future, but his revelation at the very end of the story of her 'counterpart' role seems to suggest a redefining of his attitude to Darwinian ideas of individuality. Rather than being a lonely product of biologically determined processes,²¹⁵ it is Marty's individuality — that she 'alone, of all the women in

²¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 326–7.

²¹⁵ For suggestions on how Hardy incorporates biological determinism into his novels, see Jane Mattison, *Knowledge and Survival in the novels of Thomas Hardy* (Lund: Lund University, 2002), chapter 4, and Angelique Richardson, 'Thomas Hardy and the Place of Culture', in *A Companion to Thomas Hardy*, ed. by Keith Wilson (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2009), pp. 54–69. Readings that closely affiliate Hardy with Darwin might exercise more caution in the use of terms such as 'staunch humanist' and 'evolutionary meliorist' to describe him (see, for example, Patil Mallikarjun, *Thomas Hardy's Poetry and Existentialism* (New

Hintock and the world' could have known and understood Giles — that comes as a blow to Grace, who had thought herself to be Giles's equal. Marty's individuality comes not from nature or culture, but from an instinctive way of being 'inherited from her Teutonic forefathers', which, through its joint expression with Giles, allows her to experience a sense of community with the natural world itself, and causes her social isolation to seem irrelevant. Hardy writes that the environment has its own language; the wind has a voice that 'murmurs' and the trees communicate their health by the 'state' of their branches. These 'remoter signs and symbols' of 'runic obscurity' make sense when Giles and Marty collect them to 'form an alphabet'. At the time when Hardy was writing, archaeologists' fascination with runes and symbols was at its height.²¹⁶ Giles and Marty are given the 'run of the years' — freedom reminiscent of the lawless and timeless era of prehistory in which to amass their knowledge. Their joint interpretation of the symbols presents them as two individuals engaging in a forgotten community of shared knowledge of the woodland environment. Moreover, that the symbols are 'collected' recalls the activities of antiquarians contemporary with Hardy who worked to collect enough material before analysing and interpreting it. Hardy writes that the two 'foreknew' the 'origin, continuance, and laws' of the natural world — a quality bestowed upon them through their embodiment of a prehistoric state that once instinctively understood these laws. 'Continuance' further suggests the ongoing presence of the prehistoric state in the psyche, rather than it being a

Delhi: Atlantic Publishing, 1999), p. 37), and pay more attention to Hardy's ambivalence towards Darwin.

²¹⁶ Searches in *British Periodicals Series One and Two* reveal that the word 'runic' occurs 355 times in the 1880s — the most occurrences over 30 decades, comparable only to 354 times in the 1860s after Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*, and during the rise of archaeology as a science.

separate or dysfunctional past. Hardy makes it clear that knowledge amassed through traditional scholarship is of little value to the sort of understanding gained from long interaction and inhabitancy with nature: the 'species' of the tree is not understood in scientific terms but through firsthand experience and physical contact with the tree itself. Hardy seems further to distinguish the ordinary rational explanations of nature from the creative sympathetic response to it by representing theirs as 'the conjuror's own point of view', rather than the objective perspective of the scientific 'spectator'.

The deep-rooted engagement with the movement of the cosmos which Hardy perceived and represented — what Michael Irwin describes as 'landscapes, seascapes and skyscapes [being] aspects of an endlessly mutable holistic drama'²¹⁷ — denotes a synergistic relationship where something in or of the cosmos is receptive to the psyche. Furthermore, this relationship has remained essentially unchanged since prehistoric times; it is the human understanding of it — particularly in the Western world — that has changed.²¹⁸ Hardy perceived that the advent of the Roman calendar precipitated the construction of a temporal existence, one that compromised receptivity to the relationship experienced by prehistoric man with the cosmos. For Giles and Marty, who have 'the run of the years' to understand nature's 'language', time is no barrier. What Hardy termed the language of 'signs and

²¹⁷ Irwin, 'Thomas Hardy and the Moon', p. 32.

²¹⁸ For a detailed discussion of how the prehistoric mind remains active in contemporary society, but has been suppressed by Western ways of living, see Marianna Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives* (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). Torgovnick traces the recognition of this active element in the psyche to the mid-nineteenth century, after Darwin, and notes that it peaked during the 1910s and 1920s. Tim Dolin discusses this in relation to Hardy in 'Melodrama, Vision, and Modernity: *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*', in Keith Wilson, ed., *A Companion to Thomas Hardy* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2009), p. 338.

symbols' continues to be transmitted — like the sentiments between the lovers in *A Laodicean* which suddenly become audible and readable with the advent of the telegraph — but its translation depends upon the receptivity of the society which it reaches.

Part 3

Richard Jefferies

5

**Archaeological setting and the language of *The Story
of My Heart***

The Story of My Heart, published in 1883, was described by Jefferies as his spiritual autobiography, the outcome of seventeen years' contemplation of the relationship between his thought, existence, and the natural and human worlds. In a letter to the publisher, Charles Longman, Jefferies explained that it might have been better named 'an Autobiography of a Soul or of Thought', and that he wished for readers to consider that 'the soul is the man, not the clothes he wears'.¹ Scholarship has identified the book as central to Jefferies's career and thought as it signifies a change in subject and style from his earlier countryside books to his later articles which invest the natural world with symbolic meaning. W. J. Keith writes in his *Critical Study* that the book's 'generalisations and its seemingly wilful eccentricity are very real barriers to understanding and acceptance, yet around it almost all Jefferies's books, early or late, seem to revolve'.² As such, the book is a thought and language experiment, a record of a search for a new mode of expression that could satisfy the spiritual needs of the late nineteenth century.

For Jefferies, writing in a society that had only recently begun to foster the idea of secularisation, an autobiography of such content and structure was a risk. His assertion that 'there is no God in nature, anywhere' challenged readers to recognise the transience of long-established spiritual traditions and respond to new ideas, more risky to their understanding of themselves in relation to the world. The book received a mixed reception, with some reviewers expressing mild curiosity at this apparent deviation away from the

¹ 'Notes on Books', November 30 1883, cited in *The Story of My Heart: My Autobiography* (London: Longmans, 1922), p. xiv.

² W. J. Keith, *Richard Jefferies: a Critical Study* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 82.

idyllic nature writing that Jefferies had become known for, and others labelling it as essentially incomprehensible.³ Miller and Matthews decide that the book was a failure on publication;⁴ it was not until the 1890s and into the Edwardian era that it found popularity.⁵ Mary Webb, for example, in her novel *Gone to Earth* (1917), refers to a ‘consumptive genius’⁶ — likely a reference to Jefferies — and states openly that reading *The Story of My Heart* as a teenager caused her to reject Orthodox Christianity.⁷ Reviews of later editions of *The Story of My Heart* recognised the book as ‘a masterpiece in production’.⁸

The autobiography recounts Jefferies’s struggles to understand the human condition and its place — on both an individual and collective level — and aims to move towards some sort of explanation for the spiritual crisis of the time. Jefferies admits that the book almost did not get written due to difficult circumstances which kept him in a regular routine of work and did not

³ See, for example, the *Literary World* a monthly review of current literature, 14 [no month] 1883, p. 421, in which the reviewer describes *The Story of My Heart* as ‘a strange medley of wandering fancies [...] chiefly curious as a specimen of morbid psychology’, and a letter by William B. Fotheringham:

It is with deep regret, and only after much hesitation, that I speak thus of the work of one, the majority of whose writings are deservedly held in the highest esteem; but many of the views expressed in ‘The Story of My Heart’ are of such a nature that I honestly believe no right-minded person could endorse or uphold them. It seems to me that the book is calculated to do an immense amount of harm, to unsettle many, to put many upon the wrong track altogether, and this being the case, I think it would scarcely be right, even now, to allow it to pass unchallenged. William B. Fotheringham, ‘The “Pernicious” Works of Richard Jefferies’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 8 September 1891, p. 7.

⁴ George Miller and Hugoe Matthews, *Richard Jefferies: a Bibliographical Study* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1993), p. 333.

⁵ *The Story of My Heart* was the most reprinted of all Jefferies’s books, with 16 reprints of the 1883 edition between 1891 and 1922.

⁶ Mary Webb, *Gone to Earth* (London: Penguin, 1936), p. 100.

⁷ Thomas Moulton, *Mary Webb: Her Life and Work* (London: Cape, 1932), pp. 60–61, cited in Brian Morris, *Richard Jefferies and the Ecological Vision* (Oxford: Trafford Publishing, 2006), p. 14.

⁸ Anonymous, *Cambridge Review*, vol. 45 [no month] 1924, p. 109.

allow time for philosophical inquiry.⁹ One of his greatest problems in writing the book was finding effective language to convey his meaning. He continually expresses his frustration with the limits of writing as a form of consciousness, stating that ‘the word is a rude sign to the feeling’,¹⁰ and begun drafting a larger, revised edition of the autobiography the year after its publication. Jefferies strived to produce original work, and consciously sought to avoid emulating other authors. David Ascoli, in his introduction to *The Gamekeeper at Home*, claims that *The Story of My Heart* is little more than a patchwork vision, cobbled together from the ideas of Locke, Spinoza, and Wordsworth. As a result, writes Ascoli, it is a ‘synthetic vision which, grasping at paradise, comprehends a void’.¹¹ This claim perhaps overlooks Jefferies’s deliberate use of the idea of void space, which — akin to Hardy’s reference to the Ginnung Chasm in *The Woodlanders* — is used to reposition and rethink the place of the individual life within the grander scale of the universe.¹²

⁹ Jefferies metaphorically identifies these difficulties eight years earlier in *Restless Human Hearts* (1875), when Noel has a boating accident and becomes entangled in weeds. The metaphor is used again in notes for *The Story of My Heart* in which Jefferies writes: ‘I pray that I may have a deeper, broader, wider life. Do not let me be drawn down and destroyed in the despicable cares and ambitions of daily work. Like the weeds in the water that twist around the limbs of a swimmer, they are for ever entangling the mind, dragging it down into the mire.’ *Chronicles of the Hedges*, ed. by Samuel Looker (London: Phoenix House, 1948), p. 143.

¹⁰ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 6.

¹¹ Richard Jefferies, *The Gamekeeper at Home: The Amateur Poacher*, ed. by David Ascoli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), p. xiii.

¹² At the end of the book Jefferies states:

Through the heavens a beam slants, and we are aware of the star-stratum in which our earth moves. But what may be without that stratum? Certainly it is not a void. This light tells us much, but I think in the course of time yet more delicate and subtle mediums than light may be found, and through these we shall see into the shadows of the sky (*The Story of My Heart*, p. 134).

Jefferies's attempt to define what has since been recognised as cosmic consciousness¹³ was acknowledged in 1914 by the journalist Arthur Thorn, who wrote that in *The Story of My Heart* 'Jefferies's supreme value becomes manifest', and that 'while many have sought to invest his work with a materialistic or purely scientific value [...] the cosmic Jefferies has been mislaid'.¹⁴ Written in lyrical and, at times, rapturous prose, the autobiography was an attempt to strengthen and develop imaginative connections with the natural and human worlds. Jefferies saw potential for consciousness to 'burst through the fetters' of mundane experience, and connect with something beyond the idea of God.¹⁵ For Jefferies, the human endeavour to understand the hidden depths of the mind and soul remained in its early stages and had not substantially progressed since the era of the caveman. The rural settings of archaeological landscapes, and their testament to human history, allowed Jefferies to imagine a 'fourth idea' that he ambitiously hoped would further the spiritual, social and psychological development of mankind.¹⁶ The development of archaeology during the 1870s, which shed light on the astronomical knowledge and complexity of prehistoric societies, was central to the formation of Jefferies's vision.

Attempts to understand *The Story of My Heart* have analysed the book in varied contexts, including the literary genres of the time — which in many respects it sought to retain immunity from — and the significance of place and

¹³ Edward Carpenter originally coined the term 'cosmic consciousness' after hearing R.M. Bucke present a paper on the subject, and Bucke adopted it. Michael Robertson, *Worshipping Walt: The Whitman Disciples* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 128–9.

¹⁴ Arthur Thorn, *The Life-Worship of Richard Jefferies* (London: Pioneer Press, 1920), preface.

¹⁵ Richard Jefferies, *The Old House at Coate*, ed. by Samuel Looker (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 64.

¹⁶ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 141.

setting.¹⁷ Of these varying approaches, Andrew Radford's chapter on Jefferies in *Mapping the Wessex Novel* (2011) is the most recent, if not the only, account to pay serious and sustained attention to the role of archaeological landscapes in Jefferies's work. Essentially a compilation of thoughts, feelings and speculations derived from the author's experiences in different landscapes, the book uses archaeological and geographical features of environments which Jefferies knew in order to think about and foster encounters with the unknown territories of the mind. The key settings of the book include the Sussex coast, London, and the Wiltshire landscapes near Jefferies's birthplace, Coate Farm. In his drafts for the book, Jefferies notes that he had wished to express his esoteric feelings for at least fifteen years, since 1867.¹⁸ He writes that he had spent much of this time searching for the right format for the book, unable to decide whether it should be 'metre [...] as most appropriate to the chant of the earth, or whether in the abstract shape of immaterial prayer'.¹⁹ In a draft dated 1882, Jefferies roughly lists the various places where he had felt compelled to begin writing the book, which include the River Churn in Cirencester,²⁰ a spot in the gardens of Coate Farm where

¹⁷ See, for example, Peter Keating on Jefferies and late Victorian regionalism. Keating labels Jefferies's countryside books as essentially 'contradictory' to *The Story of My Heart*. He writes that *The Story of My Heart* 'invoked a post-Darwinian despair at man's ephemerality in order to heighten the individual's spiritual union with the whole of natural life', whereas the earlier rural books embraced the connections between animal and human life (Peter Keating, *The Haunted Study: A Social History of the English Novel, 1875–1914* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1989), p. 335).

¹⁸ See the opening line, 'The story of my heart commences seventeen years ago' (*The Story of My Heart*, p. 3).

¹⁹ 'The Genesis of the Story of My Heart', *Field and Farm*, ed. by Samuel Looker (London: Phoenix House, 1957), p. 167. Hereafter cited as 'Genesis'.

²⁰ With the assistance of Simon Coleman it has been possible to identify the spot on the River Churn that Jefferies refers to. In the 'Genesis' he refers to 'most distasteful labour' from which he took a half hour break to stand beside a brook leading to the Churn, which flowed past a Roman wall. We have identified this experience as having taken place in Cirencester when Jefferies was working for the *Wilts and Glos. Standard*. The 'distasteful labour' might refer to his reporting of legal cases in the Chamber of Agriculture in 1873, or could even refer to an

he could watch the sun rising over Liddington Hill, and Pevensey Castle in Sussex, one of the largest and best surviving examples of Roman fortifications in the UK.

One of the earliest indications of Jefferies's resolve to express himself to the wider world, and possibly an early meditation on *The Story of My Heart*, can be seen in his poem 'The Grave of the Last Abbot', written when he was researching 'A History of Cirencester', and published in the *North Wilts Herald* in 1869. The poem is based on the story that Blake, the last abbot of Cirencester Abbey before its dissolution in 1540, went to live in Driffield, a quiet parish of Cirencester, and was eventually buried in the chancel of Driffield Church:

Full of thoughts of past and future
Took I there a solemn vow —
Darkness I will overthrow!
List, my voice like clarion sounding,
Dreading neither priest nor ban,
He alone is abbot — hero,
Who can bless his fellow man!²¹

Identification with prominent male individuals of high rank or purpose was a key characteristic of Jefferies's expression. In *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies seeks to identify his life with that of an interred Iron Age warrior: 'I felt at that

earlier period of work for the WGS in 1869 when he was researching 'A History of Cirencester.'

²¹ *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies*, p. 38.

moment that I was like the spirit of the man whose body was interred in the tumulus; I could understand and feel his existence the same as my own'.²² He also identifies with the Roman Emperor, Julius Caesar, admiring his bust in the British Museum for its 'width of intellect'²³ and Caesar's ambition to precipitate social change.

Jefferies's interest in Roman society was part of a growing mid-to late-nineteenth-century trend, which Virginia Hoselitz identifies in *Imagining Roman Britain* as having emerged in the mid-nineteenth century — partially as a result of the increase in archaeological societies which were set up to preserve, protect and research the human past. One of the leaders of this movement was Charles Roach Smith, originally a collector of Roman coins, who co-founded the British Archaeological Association.²⁴ Roach excavated Pevensey Castle, Sussex, in 1852, almost thirty years before Jefferies visited it in late 1880 during his preparations for writing *The Story of My Heart*. For Jefferies, who was a keen walker, the settings of the Roman towns of London and Cirencester, and the network of Roman roads in the surrounding countryside, would have provided ample opportunity to reflect upon ways in which Roman occupation had shaped landscape and society. Some of these meditations are the subject of a fictional sketch titled 'A Roman Brook'²⁵ about a stream that passes a buried Roman fort at Wanborough, Swindon. The piece was published in *Longman's Magazine* in March 1883, just before Jefferies completed the manuscript for *The Story of My Heart* in May that

²² *The Story of My Heart*, p. 28.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

²⁴ Hoselitz, pp. 19–20.

²⁵ 'Bits of Oak Bark', *The Life of the Fields* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 53.

year. Jefferies writes that 'all life loved the brook', noting that horses and cows wander from the fields to drink from it, and birds bathe there. Just as the water draws to it the life of flowers and grasses and all shapes and sizes of birds and animal, it also attracts different classes of people — labourers, farmers, and the lone wanderer:

At morn and even the peasant girls came down to dip; their path was worn through the mowing-grass, and there was a flat stone let into the bank as a step to stand on [...] there is something in dipping water that is Greek — Homeric — something that carries the mind home to primitive times.²⁶

Yet more than this, due to its close proximity to the Roman site, the waters both contain and reveal a far deeper and surprising history. Jefferies is shown to the banks of the stream by the owner of an orchard which abuts it; there he learns about a large number of Roman artefacts which have been washed from the earth by the passage of the water. Earthenware jugs by their tens had been brought out of the ground, often to be broken up to help 'mend the lane'. Jefferies notes that 'half a gallon of coins' had been found and shared out among the local children, but they could not be used as currency as they did not 'ring' and bore illegible inscriptions. Jefferies writes that he was familiar with research of the time which had established the spot as the site of a Roman fort:

²⁶ *The Life of the Fields*, p. 53.

Fifteen centuries before there had been a Roman station at the spot where the lane crossed the brook. There the centurions rested their troops after their weary march across the downs, for the lane, now bramble-grown and full of ruts, was then a Roman road. There were villas, and baths, and fortifications; these things you may read about in books.²⁷

The old man then leads Jefferies to a section of the brook where the bank has been undermined by the activity of water voles, and where a horse, attempting to drink, had caused subsidence. There, 'within a few inches of the water', was a human skeleton, which Jefferies identifies as 'a sorrowful thing' lying unheeded in the presence of the 'sparkle of the sunshine', 'the living water', and the 'voice of the cuckoo'.²⁸ Jefferies highlights the close relation between agriculture, nature and archaeology, suggesting that the process of reworking the same area of land over time can reveal the presence of a human past that is close, tangible and accessible. This recognition of the proximity of the human past reflects mid-nineteenth-century developments in prehistoric archaeology which established ancient British society as developed, and closer to the Victorian era than previously imagined, signifying a move away from simplistic earlier accounts which identified the ancient Britons as primitive. Moreover, the revealed presence of the human skeleton in the ground suggests that the subterranean human past has a role in

²⁷ These titles might have included, for example, John Collingwood Bruce, *The Roman Wall* (London: John Russell Smith, 1853), or Henry Charles Coote, *The Romans of Britain* (London: F. Norgate, 1878), which was reviewed in the *Academy* in 1878, where Jefferies's work was reviewed.

²⁸ *The Life of the Fields*, p. 55.

shaping the character of the soil that the landowner creates his livelihood from, and as such is actively shaping the present.

Further suggestion that Jefferies had *The Story of My Heart* in mind before 1880, and that the book naturally emerged from his study of the past, can be found in a notebook entry for 1876: 'my joint religion and truth which I wish to write and publish'.²⁹ At the time of this note Jefferies had in press a serialised piece of fiction for the *New Monthly Magazine*, titled 'The Rise of Maximin', which follows a determined Roman emperor in his attempt to lead an uprising in the Occident. Several qualities of the male hero are identifiable with Jefferies's own literary ambitions at the time. Maximin's determination to overcome the difficulties he encounters is fuelled by his self-belief and by a poem or hymn titled 'Rah!'³⁰ or 'Ancient Sunlight'. In a barely disguised allusion to his own literary imagination, Jefferies writes that 'Maximin's soul had been fired with the wildest dreams, and he would not so easily relinquish the position of a conqueror'.³¹ These thoughts are echoed in the 'Genesis' of *The Story of My Heart*, in which Jefferies writes that he could not waste any more time — he was determined that 'it must be done, it must no longer be postponed'.³²

Jefferies seems to have chosen Wiltshire as a setting because of its remoteness and rich prehistoric past. In the draft of *The Story of My Heart* the setting of Jefferies's childhood home and Liddington Hill are both named in the first sentence: 'the sun rises in the morning at Coate, Wiltshire, where I

²⁹ Unpublished notebooks transcriptions, private collection.

³⁰ Jefferies spells this differently to the Egyptian spelling of 'Ra!' the Sun God.

³¹ 'The Rise of Maximin', *New Monthly Magazine*, January 1877, p. 112.

³² 'Genesis', p. 169.

used to live, over the Down called Liddington Hill.³³ In the final version this sentence is altered. It is preceded by an introductory paragraph about Jefferies's affinity for the hill as a place where he can find 'an inspiration — a long deep breath of the pure air of thought', and both place names are removed so that he refers only to 'a hill to which I used to resort'. This decision gave the text greater objectivity and was consonant with Jefferies's desire to appeal to a wide audience, irrespective of their own personal experience or knowledge of place. The protective enclosure of the hill fort, with its ramparts and fosses, afforded him shelter from observation and allowed him to relax and think. In the draft he writes that at the farm he would often feel 'despised' or 'ashamed' if one of the locals were to observe him contemplating the scenery; whereas he records that on the summit of Liddington he felt 'quite shut in and concealed and utterly alone'.³⁴ From his position on the top of Liddington, surveying the plains below, Jefferies perceives that geographical distance, and its archaeohistorical depth, reflect the immense unknown potential of the mind itself. The 'crude' and 'coarse' fosse has a direct effect upon his resolution to write; like the prehistoric builders he feels that he 'had to begin somewhere', no matter how 'rude' and 'roughly hewn' his creation.³⁵ As the prehistoric builders constructed unique and symbolic monuments as testament to their beliefs, so Jefferies perceived himself to be constructing 'a new book of the soul [...] a book drawn from the present and future, not the past.'³⁶

³³ 'The Draft of the Story of my Heart', *The Story of My Heart*, ed. by Samuel Looker (London: Constable and Company, 1947), p. 139. Hereafter cited as 'Draft'.

³⁴ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 142.

³⁵ Draft, p. 144.

³⁶ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 26.

By the time *The Story of My Heart* was published, Jefferies was making a good living from his writing, and no longer pursued archaeology as a subject in itself. Yet although he reminds his readers that his interest in archaeology was 'long since extinct',³⁷ he continues to employ archaeological imagery and terminology to aid his expression. In the 'Genesis' of *The Story of My Heart*, he writes that 'unhewn fragments will be thrown together; the past, the present and the future will be co-mingled: there will be little shape and no order'.³⁸ The phrase 'unhewn fragments' is unusual, and appears in only a few nineteenth-century publications to describe the construction of rough stone walls. These include an anthropological account of ancient Egypt published in 1837,³⁹ and a poem by William Mason titled 'The English Garden', first published in 1772.⁴⁰ That Jefferies associates the idea of the autobiography with the construction of a defensive barrier, or wall, points again towards the significance of the Roman walls at Cirencester and Pevensy where he records attempting to write. At both locations, the Roman walls are particularly well preserved and have been noted for their size and defensive purpose. In the final version of *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies alters the phrase 'unhewn fragments' to 'rude stones', and explains in more detail the effect of the Roman setting on his conceptual development:

³⁷ Ibid., p. 118.

³⁸ 'Genesis', p. 169.

³⁹ See Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, *Manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians: including their private life, government, laws, art, manufactures, religions, and early history; derived from a comparison of the paintings, sculptures, and monuments still existing, with the accounts of ancient authors*, vol. 3 (London: John Murray, 1837), p. 229.

⁴⁰ 'Then let taste select/ the unhewn fragments, that may give its front/ A rocky rudeness'. William Mason, *The English Garden: A Poem in Four Books* (London: A. Ward, 1783), p. 79.

Further indication that Jefferies's expression was influenced by his reading of Romantic literature can be surmised from his inclusion or reference to certain figures, including Prometheus, Sesostris, and Diogenes Laertius, all of who feature in Lord Byron's poem 'The Age of Bronze' (1823), a political piece with strong allusions to history and classicism.

It happened just afterwards that I went to Pevensey, and immediately the ancient wall swept my mind back seventeen hundred years to the eagle, the pilum, and the short sword. The grey stones, the thin red bricks laid by those whose eyes had seen Caesar's Rome, lifted me out of the grasp of houselife, of modern civilization, of those minutiae which occupy the moment. The grey stone made me feel as if I had existed from then till now, so strongly did I enter into and see my own life as if reflected. My own existence was focussed back on me; I saw its joy, its unhappiness, its birth, its death, its possibilities among the infinite, above all its yearning Question. Why? Seeing it thus clearly, and lifted out of the moment by the force of seventeen centuries, I recognised the full mystery and the depth of things in the roots of the dry grass on the wall, in the green sea flowing near. Is there anything I can do?⁴¹

In the text Jefferies dates this visit to Pevensey as 1880, and the location is noted by Miller and Matthews to be 'symbolic' in a similar way to London and the Wiltshire Downs.⁴² In his notes for *The Story of My Heart* Jefferies writes that he had burned all previous attempts 'in anger or despair',⁴³ but in 1880, after visiting Pevensey Castle, he made notes which he kept and from which developed the finished manuscript. In the book he describes his thoughts and feelings on entering the site and being surrounded by the Roman wall:

⁴¹ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 26–7.

⁴² Miller and Matthews, p. 337.

⁴³ 'The Genesis', p. 169.

The mystery and the possibilities are not in the roots of the grass, nor is the depth of things in the sea; they are in my existence, in my soul. The marvel of existence, almost the terror of it, was flung on me with crushing force by the sea, the sun shining, the distant hills. With all their ponderous weight they made me feel myself: all the time, all the centuries made me feel myself this moment a hundred-fold. I determined that I would endeavour to write what I had so long thought of, and the same evening put down one sentence. There the sentence remained two years. I tried to carry it on; I hesitated because I could not express it: nor can I now, though in desperation I am throwing these rude stones of thought together, rude as those of the ancient wall.⁴⁴

When Jefferies was conceiving the book in the 1870s, James Fergusson had just published *Rude Stone Monuments* (1872), which quickly became a popular book on megalithic culture. Ferguson calls for megalithic structures to be recognised as belonging to a ‘style of architecture [...] like Gothic, Grecian, Egyptian, Buddhist, or any other’, and highlights their cultural and anthropological significance.⁴⁵ The concept of prehistoric, or ‘rude stone’

⁴⁴ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 26–7. During a visit to Pevensey Castle as part of research for this thesis I identified the specific part of the Roman wall which Jefferies refers to. Only the pillared entrance on the Western side bears the ‘thin red bricks’ which he describes. This section of the wall, more than anywhere on the site, is the thickest, tallest, and most impressive.

⁴⁵ James Fergusson, *Rude Stone Monuments in all Countries: their age and uses* (London: John Murray, 1872), p. x. This passage is quoted previously in Chapter 4. The phrase ‘rude stones’, which Jefferies borrows, appears in Ferguson’s book thirteen times, and features in the periodical press in journals and magazines in the 1870s.

monuments being ‘thrown up’ or ‘thrown’ together was frequently used in archaeological reports to describe the process of their construction, and is used by Hardy in *Two on a Tower* (1882).⁴⁶ For Jefferies, the idea of Roman engineers throwing together the stones of the castle for the purpose of the time, not necessarily with foresight into its longevity, was akin to the process of authorship, wherein the construction of an entirely new literary form was an unpredictable, but necessary, reaction to personal and cultural circumstances. Pevensey Castle is a historically important site, being the first scene of the Norman invasion in 1066. In his account of visiting Pevensey in 1891, the author and antiquary Augustus Jessop refers to the site’s national and cultural importance by writing that ‘it is the duty of every Englishman to make a pilgrimage to Pevensey’.⁴⁷ According to Jessop, the site formed part of a much larger Roman footprint that had once changed the face of the entire south coastline:

From end to end of that Sussex coast we find the deep impress of Roman feet, the dent of Roman hands. The very ocean shrank back before them. Nowhere in Britain has the coastline undergone such change as here. Once it seems that the tides guard the city then called Regnum — a city which doubtless had been growing for ages with its great earthworks, its port crowded with ships, its temple or temples, such as they were, its warriors, its merchants, its courtiers, its

⁴⁶ Hardy writes, ‘what events had been enacted in that earthen camp since it was first thrown up nobody could say’ (*Two on a Tower*, p. 118).

⁴⁷ Augustus Jessop, ‘Random Roaming’, *The Nineteenth century and after: a monthly review*, January 1891, 124–144 (p. 132).

statesmen, its party of home rulers and its other party of liberal-conservatives, just as men live now.⁴⁸

In the nineteenth century, accounts favoured Pevensey over other Roman sites in Britain for its size and location, and identified it as the site which gave rise to contemporary Britain. An anonymous article titled 'Eastbourne' in *London Society* (1882) — which Jefferies refers to in his notebooks⁴⁹ — describes the area as 'the neighbourhood of castles', with Herstmonceaux also being within easy reach.⁵⁰ Pevensey is described as 'a solid page in stone of English history',⁵¹ and a visiting place favoured by artists, men of letters, reviewers, and novelists.⁵² The literary associations with Pevensey go back through history, but notably appear in the work of James Thomson, whose sensitive depictions of nature are recognised to have been an influence on Romanticism. Thomson's poem 'Liberty' describes the attack on the Saxon stronghold by the Normans as the mixing of different nations into 'one exalted stream':

By degrees the Saxon empire sank,
Then set entire in Hastings' bloody field.
Compendious war! (on Britain's glory bent,
So fate ordained) in that decisive day,
The haughty Norman seized at once an isle,

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 131.

⁴⁹ This reference was omitted by Samuel Looker in his published transcriptions of Jefferies's notebooks, but it occurs in the originals.

⁵⁰ Anonymous, 'Eastbourne', *London Society*, August 1882, p. 148.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., p. 137.

For which, through many a century, in vain,
The Roman, Saxon, Dane, had toiled and bled:
Of Gothic nations this the final burst;
And, mixed the genius of these people all,
Their virtues mixed in one exalted stream,
Here the rich tide of English blood grew full.⁵³

The Normans effectively renamed Eastbourne, introducing their own word 'borne', meaning 'boundary', which was more easily pronounceable than 'bourne'. Nineteenth century historians identified this as contributing to the powerful sense of crossing points and exchange associated with Eastbourne and Pevensey. The mixing of 'blood' and nationality gave the site an unusual prominence in archaeology, as practitioners sought to excavate evidence of the struggles which took place there. When Jefferies visited the site in 1880, the most recent excavations had been undertaken by Roach Smith and Mark Anthony Lower in 1852. They concluded that the Roman castrum, which enclosed 12 acres, was the best surviving example of Roman building in England.

The defensive purpose of the great walls of Roman Britain, which drew the attention of historians, artists, writers and others in the nineteenth century, appeared to have held a similar fascination for Jefferies. The wall at Pevensey was not just defensive, but clearly marked a territory from the time when

⁵³ See James Thomson, 'Liberty' [1734], *The Works of Cowper and Thomson: including many letters and poems never before published in this country* (Philadelphia: J. Grigg and Elliott, 1841), p. 96.

Anderida (the Roman name for Pevensey) had once been a town. Throughout history, Pevensey was the site of struggle and capture. Knowledge of the long sieges, starving inhabitants for weeks at a time, caught the imagination of poets and authors.⁵⁴ For Jefferies, who borrowed from the Romantic tradition of celebrating heroes and their conquering prowess, the historical fight for freedom translated into a fight for liberty in expression; a personal fight to free the mind from the oppression of engrained social, political and spiritual structures and discover new territory.

The archaeological landscapes of the south coast appear to have been influential in shaping *The Story of My Heart*. At various points in the period 1879–1882, during the conception and writing of the book, Jefferies visited a number of sites along the coast between Brighton and Eastbourne. These included Devil's Dyke, the site of an Iron Age fort and tumulus; Ditchling Beacon, also home to an Iron age fort and numerous other archaeological features including tumuli and dew ponds; Wilmington Hill, site of a further Iron Age fort; and Beachy Head, the highest chalk sea cliff in Britain and an ancient burial site. Spending time on these hilltop sites must have encouraged Jefferies's deep engagement with nature and the wider cosmos, which eventually resulted in the first drafts of the book between 1880 and 1882. Notes and drawings in his notebooks made during a five-week family holiday to Hove in 1879 indicate that he visited Brighton Museum, known then for its extensive pottery collections. The museum was an obvious place to begin a

⁵⁴ See Thomson's 'Liberty' (1734) which refers to the pursuit of freedom at Pevensey in the lines, 'The fort of freedom! / Slow till then, alone, / Had work'd that general liberty, that nature breathes, and which, / By me to bondage was corrupted Rome' (p. 488).

tour of the history and prehistory of Sussex. Jefferies's notes for September–October 1879 constitute many observations about the weather, location, and nature notes. They also include drawings of jugs, and notes on bowls, mugs, and cups, some of which are in shorthand. That these observations were made while in Brighton itself is implied by the note 'rooks on Pavilion', which immediately follows a note about a Worcester vase.⁵⁵ The Brighton Museum was established in the early nineteenth century and stands in the Royal Pavilion grounds. Its founder was the social reformer, Henry Willett, who was a known collector of pottery and porcelain, now on display as 'Mr Willett's Popular Pottery' collection. The aforementioned article written by Augustus Jessop ('Random Roaming', 1891) outlines the importance of these collections to late Victorian culture. Jessop, who was awarded a Civil List pension in 1907 for services to archaeology and literature, describes taking a holiday in Brighton, where he first visited attractions in the town, including the museum, before travelling further afield to historic sites:

Brighton has no past worth mentioning, yet it has something to boast of which the casual visitor rarely hears of, rarely visits. It has in its Museum perhaps the most complete, and certainly the most exquisite collection of chalk fossils in the world, and also a unique collection of pottery and porcelain. [...] That unique collection of pottery was made to illustrate the principle, or rather in development of the notion, that the history of a country may be traced in its homely pottery [...] [H]e who

⁵⁵ These notes make up most of the essay 'To Brighton', published in the *Standard* in 1880.

goes to Brighton without spending an hour or two in looking at those mugs, plates, and cups and saucers, is not a man to be envied.⁵⁶

From Jefferies's notebooks it would seem that his trip to Sussex followed a similar itinerary to Jessop's 1891 visit — first visiting the museum and Devil's Dyke, before travelling eastwards to see other downland sites, including Pevensey Castle. During the time he spent in Sussex, Jefferies speculated on the area's history. The event of visiting Brighton Museum particularly seems to have precipitated meditative reflections on past human activity in the Weald area:

No written history has preserved the daily life of the men who ploughed the Weald behind the hills there, or tended the sheep on the Downs, before our beautiful land was crossed with iron roads; while news, even from the field of Waterloo, had to travel slowly. And, after all, written history is but words, and words are not tangible.

But in this collection of old English jugs, and mugs, and bowls, and cups, and so forth, exhibited in the Museum, there is the real presentment of old rural England. Feeble pottery has ever borne the impress of man more vividly than marble. From these they quenched their thirst, over these they laughed and joked, and gossiped, and sang

⁵⁶ Augustus Jessop, 'Random Roaming', p. 126.

old hunting songs till the rafters rang, and the dogs under the table got up and barked. Cannot you see them?⁵⁷

The assertion that 'Feeble pottery has ever borne the impress of man more vividly than marble' suggests an implicit reference to prehistoric pottery which preceded the 'marble' creations of ancient Greece.⁵⁸ The idea that 'words are not tangible' anticipates the problems with expression that Jefferies would experience a year later when drafting *The Story of My Heart*. This is one of the earliest references to Jefferies's frustration and disappointment with history; that as a form of consciousness it does little to develop or open the channels of the mind.

'To Brighton' also describes a trip to the hill fort on Ditchling Beacon, the third highest hill on the South Downs. At the time of writing Jefferies was living in Surbiton and no longer visited Liddington Hill in Wiltshire. His keen anticipation of seeing the Downs from the train is conveyed by his 'fitful glances at the newspaper or the novel', and his admission that 'now I can read no longer, for I know, without any marks or tangible evidence, that the hills are drawing near'.⁵⁹ As this visit predated his notes made for *The Story of My Heart* at Pevensey Castle by a year, it suggests that the South Downs provided an essential ingredient that would contribute to the making of *The Story of My Heart*. Miller and Matthews note that the essays in *Nature near London* 'are some of the first to use the emotional/spiritual vocabulary of *The*

⁵⁷ Richard Jefferies, 'To Brighton', *Nature Near London* (London: John Clare Books, 1980), p. 209.

⁵⁸ Jefferies was particularly interested in Greek sculpture and visited the British Museum and the Louvre in Paris.

⁵⁹ 'To Brighton', p. 209.

Story, especially those describing visits to South Coast places which somehow at last precipitated the book'.⁶⁰ 'To Brighton' was one of these essays, and Jefferies's comment, 'there is always hope in the hills', suggests that preparation for the book was needing something extra to precipitate the process of writing it down.⁶¹

The prehistoric landscapes which Jefferies visited during this time on the South Coast would have helped to forge an important link between his contemporary thought and his experiences of Liddington hill in the 1860s, which he used as a starting point for *The Story of My Heart*. In his account of ascending Ditchling Beacon, Jefferies experiments with an idea that appears in the introductory pages of *The Story of My Heart* in 1883:

Now *every step* exposes the climber to the force of the unchecked wind. The harebells swing before it, the bennets whistle, but *the sword* springs to the foot, and the *heart* grows lighter as the height increases. The ancient hill is alone with the wind. The *broad summit* is left to scattered furze and fern cowering under its shelter. A sunken fosse and earthwork have *slipped* together. So lowly are they now after these fourteen hundred years that in places the long rough grass covers and conceals them altogether.

Down in the hollow the breeze does not come, and the bennets do not whistle, yet gazing upwards at the vapour in the sky I fancy I can hear

⁶⁰ Miller and Matthews, p. 336.

⁶¹ 'To Brighton', p. 209.

the mass, as it were, of the wind going over. Standing presently at the edge of the steep descent looking into the Weald, it seems as if the mighty blast rising from that *vast plain* and glancing up the slope like an arrow from a tree could lift me up and bear me as it bears a hawk with outspread wings. [...]

The tide of the wind, like the tide of the sea, swirls about, and its cold push at the first causes a lifting feeling in the chest — a gulp and pant — as if it were too keen and strong to be borne. Then the blood meets it, and every fibre and nerve is filled with *new vigour*. I cannot drink enough of it. (my emphasis)

This scene anticipates the opening pages of *The Story of My Heart* and the ascent of Liddington Hill:

There was a hill to which I used to resort at such periods. The labour of walking three miles to it, all the while gradually ascending, seemed to clear my blood of the heaviness accumulated at home. On a warm summer day the slow continued rise required continual effort, which carried away the sense of oppression. The familiar everyday scene was soon out of sight; I came to other trees, meadows, and fields; I began to breathe a new air and to have a fresher aspiration. I restrained my soul till I reached the *ward* of the hill; psyche, the soul that longed to be loose. [...]

Moving up the sweet short turf, at *every step* my heart seemed to obtain a wider horizon of feeling; with every inhalation of rich pure air, a deeper desire. The very light of the sun was whiter and more brilliant here. By the time I had reached the *summit* I had entirely forgotten the petty circumstances and the annoyances of existence. I felt myself, myself. There was an intrenchment on the summit, and going down into the fosse I walked round it slowly to recover breath. On the south-western side there was a spot where the outer bank had partially *slipped*, leaving a gap. There the view was over a *broad plain*, beautiful with wheat, and enclosed by a perfect amphitheatre of green hills.⁶²
(my emphasis)

Both descriptions of the hill fort sites have a similar structure and language. At Ditchling ‘a sunken fosse and earthwork have slipped together’, and at Liddington ‘there was a spot where the outer bank had partially slipped, leaving a gap’. A strong similarity occurs in both descriptions of Jefferies walking up the hill and its psychological effect. The Ditchling account reads: ‘Now every step exposes the climber to the force of the unchecked wind. [...] the heart grows lighter as the height increases’. The passage in *The Story of My Heart* reads: ‘Moving up the sweet short turf, at every step my heart seemed to obtain a wider horizon of feeling.’ In both accounts the richness and purity of the air or wind are invigorating, and enliven the climber. The phrase ‘new vigour’, which occurs in the Ditchling account, features in *The*

⁶² *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 4–5.

Story of My Heart as ‘fresh vigour of soul’,⁶³ and the words ‘tide’ and ‘force’ would become key words — integral to Jefferies’s expression — in *The Story of My Heart*. ‘Vast plain’ in the former passage becomes ‘broad plain’ in the latter, and both accounts use the words ‘sward’ and ‘summit’. ‘To Brighton’ also features ‘wheat’, ‘harebells’, and the phrase ‘brown autumn’, all of which occur in Jefferies’s description of the tumulus in *The Story of My Heart*.⁶⁴ ‘Unchecked wind’ in ‘To Brighton’ becomes ‘unchecked’ thought in *The Story of My Heart*,⁶⁵ and both accounts feature a shepherd. In ‘To Brighton’ Jefferies meets a shepherd who directs him to the path leading to the fort: ‘A passing shepherd, without his sheep, but walking with his crook as a staff [...] points with his iron crook at a narrow line which winds up the Down by some chalk-pits’.⁶⁶ This encounter might relate to the sentence in *The Story of My Heart*: ‘had any shepherd accidentally seen me lying on the turf, he would only have thought that I was resting a few minutes’.⁶⁷ The shepherd might also relate to the sentence in the draft: ‘I was quite shut in and concealed and utterly alone, for there was no one nearer than a shepherd perhaps in the fields a mile away below.’⁶⁸ These correlations show that the Sussex landscape — a chalk grassland expanse — provided Jefferies with an area

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁶⁵ Jefferies would visit a spot by some elm trees, from where he could see Liddington: ‘I went every morning, and was satisfied if I could get two or three minutes to think unchecked’ (*The Story of My Heart*, p. 55).

⁶⁶ ‘To Brighton’, p. 217.

⁶⁷ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 8.

⁶⁸ Looker, ‘Draft’, *The Story of My Heart*, p. 142.

similar to his native Wiltshire landscape, with the added benefit of being close to the sea.⁶⁹

When Jefferies returned to the Sussex coast the following year (1880) for the visit that was to finally give proper shape to *The Story of My Heart*, he records progress in the conception of the book in a note on authorship on 17 November 1880:

Authors who portray so closely in appearance really often know little or nothing of life — merely the verge or edge, and picture what they see, or rather fancy they see and this is accepted as representative — or is life really so small as to be no more than 20 types? At last I feel as if I only scratched the surface as the engraver the faintest line the preparation to the block.⁷⁰

This note corresponds with the line in the final version of *The Story of My Heart*: 'These are but the primer of soul-life; the merest hieroglyphics chipped out, a little shape given to the unknown'.⁷¹ The entry is followed by a note about a visit to the South Downs, which reads 'South Down — 2 snipes on Wilmington Hill'. This likely refers to a visit to Wilmington, a hill not only known for its Iron Age hill fort, but for the giant chalk figure carved on the hillside called 'The Long Man of Wilmington'. The site was described by George Clinch in the *English Illustrated Magazine* as 'one of the most interesting

⁶⁹ Jefferies's passion for the sea is evident in works such as 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', 'To Brighton', and in his choice to live in the seaside towns of Brighton and Goring.

⁷⁰ Unpublished notebooks. The last highlighted part of this sentence has been omitted by Samuel Looker in his published transcriptions, which deviate from the originals.

⁷¹ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 45.

monuments of hoary antiquity to be found throughout the kingdom.⁷²

Although since the nineteenth century the ancient origin of the figure has been disputed, the presence of the prehistoric human past at the site, as indicated by surrounding tumuli, is irrefutable. Clinch believed the site of the Long Man to have once been ‘the centre of profound veneration and worship’, and that the ‘cult’ responsible for the figure, and its counterpart, the Cerne Abbas Giant near Dorchester, ‘had no relation to Christianity, but was closely akin to that religion which taught the worship of natural objects and material forms’.⁷³

Being just visible from the carriages on the train journey to Polegate, which was one route to Eastbourne and the coast, it is likely that the figure would have been a familiar sight to Jefferies.

The record of Jefferies’s visit to the area continues in the notebooks with a note about the night of 17 November, which he records as ‘splendid night — moon nearly full but not past’, suggesting that he spent it out of doors observing the stars, as he used to do when living at Coate. Notes for 18 November are claimed by Looker to be the notes for *The Story of My Heart* which Jefferies made while at Pevensey in 1880, which read: ‘Peven. Nearest nature, lasts longest — the stag’s horn — sun longest’.⁷⁴

Archaeological fieldwork and excavation reports during the period 1866 to 1883, during which Jefferies was meditating *The Story of My Heart*,

⁷² George Clinch, ‘Wilmington and the Long Man’, *English Illustrated Magazine*, September 1896, p. 510.

⁷³ George Clinch, ‘Wilmington and the Long Man’, *English Illustrated Magazine*, September 1896, p. 510.

⁷⁴ Unpublished notebooks. In his version, Looker has omitted the phrase ‘lasts longest’. See *The Nature Diaries and Notebooks of Richard Jefferies* ed. by Samuel Looker (London: Grey Walls Press, 1948), p. 102. The significance of these notes is debated by Miller and Matthews, who suggest that the Pevensey visit Jefferies describes in *The Story of My Heart* took place in September 1880, during a family holiday to the area. However, the notebooks do record Jefferies returning to the area again in November that year.

highlighted the significance of small objects in interpreting much larger patterns of human occupation of an area. A particularly common type of prehistoric tool found amidst the chalk landscapes of Sussex was the stag horn, which may be of relevance to the entry: 'lasts longest — the stag's horn.' Deer horn was the second most used material in the creation of various Bronze Age implements and accessories. Mid-nineteenth-century accounts also referred to this material as 'elk horn'. For example, an anonymous article titled 'Opening a Barrow' (1860), published in *All the Year Round*, describes a visit to the home of an antiquary and collector of prehistoric ephemera. The author writes: 'A dog-cart bore me from the station, to the pretty Ramshire cottage, where my antiquarian bachelor friend hoards his flint-axes, elk-horns, torques, old coins, and bronze spear-heads'.⁷⁵ Jefferies's note — 'stag's horn' — stands apart from his other references to deer where he would usually use the proper term 'antler', as he does in *Red Deer, Wild Life in a Southern County, The Gamekeeper at Home*, and 'Summer in Somerset'. The term 'stag-horn' was also specific to the mid-nineteenth-century manufacture of furniture. For example, a report about an exhibition of furniture in 1862 noted that 'stag-horn is becoming very fashionable at Hamburgh and elsewhere [...] Cabinets, chairs, tables, what-nots, chiffoniers have been tastefully and artistically manufactured out of this material'.⁷⁶ Jefferies's specific use of the term 'horn' suggests that he was contemplating the durability of stag horn as a material. This could possibly have been an early meditation on *After London*, published five years later in 1885, in which the Bushmen, based on Jefferies's

⁷⁵ Anon., 'Opening a Barrow', *All the Year Round*, 21 July 1860, p. 346.

⁷⁶ Anon., 'Selections from the Exhibition', *London Journal and Weekly Record of Literature, Science and Art*, 2 August 1862, p. 72.

knowledge of primitive societies, wield weapons with handles made from ‘horn or bone [...] smoothed to fit the hand’ which are used for a variety of purposes.⁷⁷ An 1862 account of how ‘primeval race[s]’ created axes with handles records that ‘the mode of fastening these axes to handles varied, but most usually they were attached, by means of ligaments, to a crooked piece of wood or a stag-horn.’⁷⁸

Further evidence for the role of prehistory in the formation of *The Story of My Heart* is a further notebook entry made at Pevensey — immediately following the reference to the stag-horn — which reads ‘Peven: Orion: still a larger and wider thought and hope’.⁷⁹ This refers to the constellation Orion, possibly the most visible and well known of all the constellations. Professor John North, in *Stonehenge: Neolithic Man and the Cosmos*, argues for the Wilmington hill monument’s ancient origin and suggests that around 3480 BC the figure was carved into the hillside to recognise Orion’s movement across the ridge above, and as such may be a symbol of Neolithic astral religion.⁸⁰ Contemporary accounts of the visibility of the constellations agree that Orion can be seen in temperate zones during the autumn and winter months, which would fit with the chronology of Jefferies’s visit to Wilmington in November 1880. That the constellation could be seen directly overhead at the site would also tally with his notebook entry for the 17 November about the clear night sky.

⁷⁷ Richard Jefferies, *After London* (Norderstedt: BoD Books on Demand, 2013), p. 112.

⁷⁸ ‘A Primeval Race’, *New Monthly Magazine*, November 1862, p. 368.

⁷⁹ Unpublished notebooks.

⁸⁰ John David North, *Stonehenge: Neolithic Man and the Cosmos* (New York: Free Press, 1996), p. 216.

Jefferies had extensive knowledge of the constellations and frequently refers to them in his publications. He alludes to the history of 'Orion' the 'hunter', in his article 'Field Sports in Art' published after *The Story of My Heart* in 1885. The article discusses the earliest prehistoric art as intrinsically related to the constellations, and describes Orion as the most powerful and obvious of all constellations:

The signs of the Zodiac are almost as old as the stars themselves; that is, as old as the time when the stars were first beheld of human eyes. Amongst them there is the Archer — Sagittarius — the chase in the shape of man; greatest and grandest of all the constellations is Orion, the mighty hunter, the giant who slew the wild beasts by strength. There is no assemblage of stars so brilliant as those which compose the outline of Orion; the Hunter takes the first place in the heavens. Art exists in the imagination — imagination drew lines from star to star, and repeated its life on earth in the sky.⁸¹

Sagittarius, 'the Archer' became the hero Felix, in *After London* (1885) which is discussed in the following chapter.⁸² Orion also features in the children's novel *Bevis* (1882) which Jefferies was writing at the time of his visit to Sussex in 1880. For Bevis, who is based upon Jefferies and his own

⁸¹ 'Field Sports in Art', *Field and Hedgerow* (Teddington: Echo Library, 2009), p. 137.

⁸² The hero of the novel is called Felix Aquila. In history Pevensey Castle was called the 'Castle of the Eagle honour', as a result of its long possession by the great Norman family of De Aquila. This piece of history may well be the source of Jefferies's name for Felix.

childhood experiences, the sight of Orion instils a sense of strength and purpose:

At the first sight of Orion's shoulder Bevis always felt suddenly stronger, as if a breath of the mighty hunter's had come down and entered into him.

He stood upright, his frame enlarged; his instep lifted him as he walked, as if he too could swing the vast club and chase the lion from his lair. The sparkle of Orion's stars brought to him a remnant of the immense vigour of the young world, the frosty air braced his sinews, and power came into his arms.⁸³

This passage anticipates a similar passage in *The Story of My Heart*, published the following year, in which Jefferies recounts the effect of Orion on his adult psyche:

The stars burned with brilliance, broad Orion and flashing Sirius — there are more or brighter constellations visible then than all the year; and the clearness of the air and the blackness of the sky — black, not clouded — let them gleam in their fulness. They lifted me — they gave me fresh vigour of soul.⁸⁴

⁸³ Richard Jefferies, *Bevis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 289.

⁸⁴ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 59.

The role of the constellations, viewed from archaeologically-significant hill-top sites, had a more deeply formative role to play in the production of *The Story of My Heart*. In his explanation of the genesis of the book, Jefferies recalls discovering ‘a deep hollow on the side of a great hill, a green concave opening to the sea, where [he] could rest and think in perfect quiet’.⁸⁵ He describes spending ‘day after day, for hours at a time’ in the spot in ‘a condition of intense prayer.’ In this secluded bowl-like valley opening out to the sea at a considerable height above the cliff edge, he ‘began to consider how [he] could put a part of that prayer into form, giving it an object’ and whether the project as whole could do ‘good’ for the wider world. He records that it was here, beneath the bright Lyra constellation, where he divided his vision into three potentially achievable areas:

One evening, when the bright white star in Lyra was shining almost at the zenith over me, and the deep concave was the more profound in the dusk, I formulated it into three divisions. First, I desired that I might do or find something to exalt the soul, something to enable it to live its own life, a more powerful existence now. Secondly, I desired to be able to do something for the flesh, to make a discovery or perfect a method by which the fleshly body might enjoy more pleasure, longer life, and suffer less pain. Thirdly, to contract a more flexible engine with which to carry into execution the design of the will. I called this the Lyra prayer,

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22. After visiting Beachy Head I have identified this hollow to be on the side of the headland, facing Eastbourne. Looker’s draft of *The Story of My Heart* reads ‘ten years afterwards I went up the great hill at Eastbourne and thought the Lyra prayer’. Although Looker has mistakenly added this line of text to the manuscript — it doesn’t appear in the original — I can confirm that Looker’s identification of Beachy Head as the site of the Lyra Prayer is correct, and the description Jefferies gives of the spot in the text matches exactly.

to distinguish it from the far deeper emotion in which the soul was alone concerned.⁸⁶

The secluded setting of this hollow on Beachy Head afforded space for Jefferies to conceive of the form of the book and clarify its objectives. From his notebooks and drafts it is not yet possible to establish an exact date for this visit. However, in the *The Story of My Heart* he writes that it was ‘just afterwards’ when he went to Pevensey and was awed by the Roman wall. As he dates this visit to 1880 in the text, this would seem to date the Beachy Head experience to the same year.⁸⁷ The division of his prayer into three forms marked a development from his earlier coastal experience in 1876, when he made a trip to Worthing — a ‘pilgrimage back to the truth and the reality’ — where he first identified his vision of the earth and cosmos as ‘Sun Life’.⁸⁸

The Beachy Head experience probably formed the basis of the article ‘The Breeze on Beachy Head’, which appeared in the *Standard* in September 1881, and became part of *Nature near London*.⁸⁹ The time Jefferies spent at Eastbourne was crucial, not only for the conceptual formation of *The Story of My Heart*, but for the way in which he decided to tell his story. The differences between the three main settings — London, Wiltshire, and the coast — caused difficulty for him. Drafts for the book show that he jumped from one location to the next and from one time period to another, as if he was

⁸⁶ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 22-23.

⁸⁷ ‘At last, in 1880, in the old castle of Pevensey, under happy circumstances once more I resolved, and actually did write down a few notes.’ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 145.

⁸⁸ ‘Draft’ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 169.

⁸⁹ *The Forward Life*, p. 147.

uncertain about how to structure the narrative. The first section of the 'draft' which Looker includes in the 1948 edition, and the draft titled 'the genesis' in *Field and Farm*, both contain the place names Liddington and Eastbourne, which by the time of the final version had been removed. I suggest that the time Jefferies spent on Beachy Head was to shape the final content of his meditations by the tumulus in Wiltshire. 'The Breeze on Beachy Head' (1881) has a distinctly different flavour to previous articles and resonates with a new strength of voice and resolution to achieve. The immense presence of the cliff expands the thinking process and encourages Jefferies in his belief in wider thought and hope: 'the soul has been living, as it were, in a nutshell, all unaware of its own power, and now suddenly finds freedom in the sun and sky'.⁹⁰ He records standing by the sea with his back to the cliff, and becoming aware of a new developing perspective:

The little rules and little experiences, all the petty ways of narrow life, are shut off behind the ponderous and impassable cliff; as if we had dwelt in the dim light of a cave, but coming out at last to look at the sun, a great stone had fallen and closed the entrance, so that there was no return to the shadow. The impassable precipice shuts off our former selves of yesterday, forcing us to look out over the sea only, or up to the deeper heaven.⁹¹

⁹⁰ 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', *Nature near London*, p. 233.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Within view of Pevensey Castle, Jefferies imagines that he is standing in a timeless bowl of sea and sky, so that ‘a Roman suddenly rounding the white-edge of chalk, borne on wind and oar from the Isle of Wight towards the gray castle at Pevensey (already old in olden days), would not seem strange’.⁹²

The sea is described as being ‘raised like a green mound’, which echoes the ‘green mound’ of ‘primeval cultivation’⁹³ that Jefferies observes on the Wiltshire Downs in *Wild Life in a Southern County* (1878). The ‘green mound’ of the sea is full of latent potential, as if, writes Jefferies, ‘it could burst in and occupy the space up to the foot of the cliff in a moment [...] there is an infinite possibility about the sea ... something in it not quite grasped or understood — something still to be discovered — a mystery’.⁹⁴

Jefferies’s wording anticipates his description of the unopened tumuli on Exmoor in *Red Deer*, published the following year (1884), which he notes are regarded by the locals with superstition and even fear:

[T]here is a prevalent dislike to opening a barrow. The feeling is very strong, and those who own property do not care to go against it. It is believed that certain misfortune will fall on the household of any one digging into a tumulus, and that generally a death follows the intrusion upon the ancient tomb. Possibly this idea may be an unconscious memory of prehistoric times, when sacrifices to ancestors and heroes were made in the precincts of tumuli. They were considered sacred then, and the feeling seems to have lingered on down to the present

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ *Wild Life in a Southern County*, p. 36.

⁹⁴ ‘The Breeze on Beachy Head’, p. 232.

day. Places where battles have occurred, and where human bones are known to lie, must not be disturbed for the same reason.⁹⁵

The sacredness of prehistoric burial grounds became threatened by the 'barrow diggers' of the mid-nineteenth century, who plundered many of the key sites in central England.⁹⁶ Jefferies's term 'green mound' features in excavation reports of prehistoric burial sites during the 1860s. In his account of excavating a certain type of subterranean tomb, known as a Picts Tumulus, which he notes was covered by a 'green mound', the ethnologist Sir Daniel Wilson describes how breaking into the mound revealed a 'series of large chambers, built generally with stones of considerable size, and converging towards the centre'.⁹⁷ This form of internal arrangement, whereby interconnected rooms — often containing burial treasures — lay concealed within an unobtrusive grassy mound, imbued prehistoric burial sites with a sense of mystery and associated wealth. In his discussion of Hardy's representation of Roman burials in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), Andrew Radford discusses the concept of the 'underground tomb as a receptacle of esoteric energy' that can 'impact in potentially surprising ways upon the modern moment'.⁹⁸ A prehistoric burial could, like the sea itself, further knowledge and insight into former conditions, and potentially enrich and further contemporary life and thought.

⁹⁵ Richard Jefferies, *Red Deer* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1894), p. 237.

⁹⁶ In *Red Deer* Jefferies notes that the Exmoor sites had remained relatively immune from this activity.

⁹⁷ *The Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, Vol. 1, p. 116.

⁹⁸ Radford, *Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 37.

An earlier reference to Jefferies's identification of the hidden chamber or tomb as a storehouse of potential, and a clear indication that he aligned the discovery of the human past with psycho-spiritual exploration, occurs in his novel *The Scarlet Shawl* (1874). In a digression about the 'buried' nature of the 'inner heart' of man, Jefferies uses the images of accumulated dust and the 'buried city' to symbolise the potential for humans to reconnect with their inner selves:

Deep, deep down under the apparent man — covered over, it may be, with the ashes of many years, the scoriae of passion, and the lava of ambition, and these, too, spread over with their crust of civilization, cultivated into smiling gardens, and rich cornfields, and happy glorious vineyards — under it all there is a buried city, a city of the inner heart, lost and forgotten these many days. There, on the walls of the chambers of that city are pictures, fresh as they were painted by the alchemy of light in the long, long years gone by. Dancing figures, full of youth and joy, with gladness in every limb, with flowing locks and glances wildly free. There are the green trees, and the cool shade, and the proud peacock in his glory of colour pluming himself upon the lawn. There is the summer arbour, overgrown and hidden with ivy, in whose dreamy, dark recess those lips first met, and sent a throb of love and hope through all the trembling frame. There, too, in those chambers underneath the fallen cornice, are hidden the thirty pieces of silver, the cursed coin for whose possession the city was betrayed, and the heart yielded into the hands of the world. There, also, hidden in still darker

corners, mouldering in decay, but visible even yet, are the bones of the skeletons of those who perished in those dark days, done to death by treachery at the gate. Heap up the ashes upon them; hide them out of sight! Yet deep as it lies hidden, heavy, and dull, and impenetrable as the crust may be, there shall come a time when the light of the sun, seen through a little crevice, shall pour in its brilliance upon them, and shall exhibit these chambers of imagery to the man walking in daytime. He shall awake, and shall walk through these chambers he builded in the olden times; and the pictures upon the walls shall pierce his soul.⁹⁹

The image of the buried city was an implicit reference to Troy, the infamous city buried by sand, excavated by Henrich Schliemann in 1870. The story of Troy, the 'lost city', is recounted in Homer's *Iliad*, but it was not until the nineteenth century that efforts to trace it began. Unearthed from beneath the sands in Turkey, the extent of Troy and its treasures was revealed to the public in 1873, the year Jefferies was writing *The Scarlet Shawl*. Jefferies uses the image of temporarily lost treasures to suggest an imminent dawn of new life for the soul. The 'fresh' pictures, which appear as vibrant as the day they were painted, suggest that the potential for enlightenment — what Jefferies termed in 1875 'a beautiful springtime yet in store for the soul'¹⁰⁰ — lies dormant within us, just beneath the surface. The use of the term 'exhibit' also has archaeological connotations, as it was customary to display newly excavated archaeological finds in museums.

⁹⁹ Richard Jefferies, *The Scarlet Shawl* (Oxon: Petton Books, 2009), p. 127.

¹⁰⁰ 'Village Churches', *The Hills and the Vale*, ed. by Edward Thomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 42.

Jefferies's description of his experience on Beachy Head borrows not only from themes and ideas associated with 1860s accounts of burial sites, and the latent potential perceived therein, but also from imagery associated with the earliest humans. His description of new thought coming to him through the light — 'as if [he] had dwelt in the dim light of a cave, but coming out at last to look at the sun, a great stone had fallen and closed the entrance, so that there was no return to the shadow' — is reminiscent of what the geologist, Principal Dawson, termed in 1874 'a time anterior to the dawn of history' when humans were 'cave-dwellers'.¹⁰¹ The dawn of consciousness of early man, and his evolution away from the lowly animal state of cave dwelling, was believed to be represented in prehistoric art, which was discovered in cave sites in Europe during the mid-to-late nineteenth century.¹⁰² This inclination to use the cave as a symbol might have been encouraged by Jefferies's knowledge of the archaeological sites on the Wiltshire Downs. In his 'History of Swindon' for example, he describes Wayland's Smithy, a Neolithic long barrow and chamber tomb site near Uffington, as a 'cave':

¹⁰¹ Principal Dawson, 'The New World and the Old', *Leisure hour: an illustrated magazine for home reading*, 31 October 1874, p. 699.

¹⁰² Jefferies discusses the symbolic importance of prehistoric art in 'Field Sports in Art' (1885), in which he questions: 'Deeper than the excitement of the chase lies that inner consciousness which dwells upon and questions itself — the soul of the Cave-man pondered upon itself; the question came to him, as he crouched in the semi-darkness, over the fire which he had stirred, 'Will my form and aerial shadow live on after my death like that which passed but now? Shall I, too, be a living dream?'" *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 137. See the reference to the same quotation in Chapter 6.

The country people call it Wayland Smith's cave, and tell a story of an invisible smith, who shod travellers' horses, on condition of their laying a goat upon the altar-stone, and then retiring out of sight.¹⁰³

Jefferies's study of Waylands has come to light through a newly-discovered book titled *The Legend of Waylands Smith*, which he owned when living at Victoria Road, Swindon during the early 1870s.¹⁰⁴

The experience on Beachy Head in 1879/1880 thus seems to have at least in part precipitated the meditative reflections by the tumulus at Liddington in *The Story of My Heart*. As in 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', Jefferies uses the image of the contemplative human being standing at the entrance to a cave, looking out:

Twelve thousand years since the Caveman stood at the mouth of his cavern and gazed out at the night and the stars. He looked again and saw the sun rise beyond the sea. He reposed in the noontide heat under the shade of the trees, he closed his eyes and looked into himself. He was face to face with the earth, the sea, the night; face to face with himself. There was nothing between; no wall of written tradition; no built-up system of culture — his naked mind was confronted by naked earth. He made three idea-discoveries, wresting them from the unknown: the existence of his soul, immortality, the

¹⁰³ *Jefferies' Land*, ed. by Grace Toplis (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton and Kent, 1896), p. 129.

¹⁰⁴ The book is signed 'R. Jefferies', Victoria Road, Swindon. 'Samuel Looker Collection', owned by the Richard Jefferies Society, 2011.

deity. Now, to-day, as I write, I stand in exactly the same position as the Caveman. Written tradition, systems of culture, modes of thought, have for me no existence. If ever they took any hold of my mind it must have been very slight; they have long ago been erased. From earth and sea and sun, from night, the stars, from day, the trees, the hills, from my own soul — from these I think. I stand this moment at the mouth of the ancient cave, face to face with nature, face to face with the supernatural, with myself. My naked mind confronts the unknown. I see as clearly as the noonday that this is not all; I see other and higher conditions than existence; I see not only the existence of the soul, immortality, but, in addition, I realise a soul-life illimitable; I realise the existence of a cosmos of thought; I realise the existence of an inexpressible entity infinitely higher than deity. I strive to give utterance to a Fourth Idea. The very idea that there is another idea is something gained. The three found by the Cavemen are but stepping-stones: first links of an endless chain. At the mouth of the ancient cave, face to face with the unknown, they prayed. Prone in heart to-day I pray, Give me the deepest soul-life.¹⁰⁵

Rather than using the image of the caveman as a static symbol representative of a dead and irretrievable past, Jefferies invests it with imagined life to feel back into a former condition of things. This imaginative position — at the ‘mouth of the ancient cave’ with the darkness of the past behind him — affords a unique perspective so that he feels himself to be ‘face to face with

¹⁰⁵ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 41–2.

nature, face to face with the supernatural, with myself'. By the time Jefferies was writing *The Story of My Heart*, significant advances had been made in interpreting human remains found in caves and tumuli. As declared by Professor Rudolf Virchow in 1878:

As recently as ten years ago, whenever a skull was found in a peat bog, or in pile dwellings, or in ancient caves, people fancied they saw in it a wonderful token of an inferior state, still quite undeveloped. They smelt out the very scent of the ape: only this has continually been more and more lost. The old troglodytes, pile-villagers, and bog-people, prove to be quite a respectable society. They have heads so large that many a living person would be only too happy to possess such.¹⁰⁶

Jefferies recognised this development from scorn to reverence of past societies, and internalised it to represent his personal ambition to discover more about the unknown territories of the mind and soul. By the 1870s, Jefferies had already perceived that the emergent human past was coming to life through increasingly sensitive interpretations of prehistoric sites.¹⁰⁷ In *The Story of My Heart*, by transcending what he termed the 'superstition' of past centuries, Jefferies suggests that the unknown withholds constructive potential, and is not something to be feared. He perceives his mind to be 'naked' and unencumbered — a state reminiscent of the condition of the cave

¹⁰⁶ Rudolf Virchow, *The Freedom of Science in the Modern State: a discourse delivered at the third general meeting of the fiftieth conference of the German Association of Naturalists and Physicians at Munich, on the 22nd of September, 1877* (London: John Murray, 1878), p. 60.

¹⁰⁷ See the earlier reference to Jefferies, 'The Commonest Thing in the World', *Landscape and Labour*, ed. by John Pearson, p. 35.

man — through which he can ‘confront the unknown’. This recalls Plato’s allegory of moving shadows on the wall of a cave to portray the human perception of reality. In *The Republic*, the image of people chained to a cave wall, watching shadows projected by a fire, and identifying associated forms, is analogous to humans’ limited view of reality. The philosopher, who is not confined to the cave, perceives a truer form of reality.¹⁰⁸ As Hall notes, ‘[t]he cave is really an odyssey of the mind’s development from imagining to knowledge of truth [...] [a]nd Plato clearly intended to bring out the extreme difficulty of breaking out of preestablished attitudes and beliefs’.¹⁰⁹

The image of the human mind emerging from the darkness into the light is also used by Hardy near the close of *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* when Tess and Angel Clare are being pursued by police. Hardy writes that ‘the night grew as dark as a cave’,¹¹⁰ a darkness which conceals them until dawn when the police seize Tess. However, perhaps a more striking similarity between this scene at Stonehenge and Jefferies’s experience at Beachy Head is both authors’ use of the image of a ‘cauldron’ or ‘pot’ to represent the immensity of the sky around each ancient burial site. In his account, published in 1891, Hardy writes:

In the far north-east sky, he could see between the pillars a level streak of light. The uniform concavity of black cloud was lifting bodily like the

¹⁰⁸ Robert W. Hall, *Plato* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 71–2.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹¹⁰ *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, ed. by Juliet Grindle and Simon Gatrell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 378.

lid of a pot, letting in at the earth's edge the coming day, against which the towering monoliths and trilithons began to be blackly defined.¹¹¹

In 'The Breeze on Beachy Head' (1881), Jefferies writes:

The vastness conceals itself, giving us no landmark or milestone. The fleck of cloud yonder, does it part it in two, or is it but a third of the way? The world is an immense cauldron, the ocean fills it, and we are merely on the rim — this narrow land is but a ribbon to the limitlessness yonder.

Unlike the tumulus that marks the past human presence in the landscape, the sky bears 'no landmark or milestone' and thus symbolises the unknown territories of the mind. The sky's distance is impossible to measure by the eye alone, which alters perspective. Although Hardy's 'edge' of the earth is akin to Jefferies's 'rim', the two images are used in essentially different ways, and represent differences between the two authors' perspectives. Tess and Angel are presented as being in the darkness of the 'pot', looking up to the 'lifting [...] lid', whereas Jefferies presents himself as being 'on the rim', with the ability to see into 'the limitless yonder'. There is a sense in Hardy's narrative that a force entirely unknown and unconnected to Tess and Angel is lifting the lid of their private world, admitting the light that allows approaching police to put an end to their lives together. By contrast, Jefferies imagines himself to be on the

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 380.

border of a new territory of thought, and as such is distanced, if not immune, from the malign forces which direct the fates of Hardy's characters.

In 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', Jefferies's digression by a tumulus on the cliff top anticipates passages set near Liddington in *The Story of My Heart*.¹¹²

On returning homewards towards Eastbourne stay awhile by the tumulus on the slope. There are others hidden among the furze; butterflies flutter over them, and the bees hum round by day; by night the nighthawk passes, coming up from the fields and even skirting the sheds and houses below. The rains beat on them, and the storm drives the dead leaves over their low green domes; the waves boom on the shore far down.

How many times has the morning star shone yonder in the East? All the mystery of the sun and of the stars centres around these lowly mounds.¹¹³

The experience of the Beachy Head tumulus was integral to the development and expression of the fifteen-page account in *The Story of My Heart* of the tumulus near Liddington. Both settings were wide chalk expanses with prehistoric human pasts, and both were formative to the book as a whole. The speculation — 'How many times has the morning star shone yonder in the

¹¹² The tumulus he refers to in 'The Breeze on Beachy Head' could either have been Frost Hill tumulus, or Long Down tumulus, near Birling Gap.

¹¹³ *Nature near London*, p. 240.

East?’ — echoes the first line of an attempt at *The Story of My Heart*: ‘the sun rises in the morning at Coate, Wiltshire, where I used to live, over the Down called Liddington Hill’.¹¹⁴ Both accounts feature the concept of the tumulus being ‘raised’, passing birds, butterflies, humming bees, and the concept of the day and night passing round in endless circles. In *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies writes:

The sun of the summer morning shone on the dome of sward, and the air came softly up from the wheat below, the tips of the grasses swayed as it passed sighing faintly, it ceased, and the bees hummed by to the thyme and heathbells. I became absorbed in the glory of the day, the sunshine, the sweet air, the yellowing corn turning from its sappy green to summer's noon of gold, the lark's song like a waterfall in the sky. [...] Sweetly the summer air came up to the tumulus, the grass sighed softly, the butterflies went by, sometimes alighting on the green dome. Two thousand years! Summer after summer the blue butterflies had visited the mound, the thyme had flowered, the wind sighed in the grass. The azure morning had spread its arms over the low tomb; the full glowing noon burned on it; the purple of sunset rosied the sward. Stars, ruddy in the vapour of the southern horizon, beamed

¹¹⁴ ‘Draft’, p. 139. In the original manuscript version the word ‘hill’ was struck through and replaced by ‘Down’. Looker’s ‘draft’ is compiled largely from undated material. One ms. leaf is dated June 1881, and another Feb. 1882. It is thus possible that this introductory sentence could have been written in the same year, or even the same month, as ‘The Breeze on Beachy Head’, which was published in September 1881.

at midnight through the mystic summer night, which is dusky and yet full of light.¹¹⁵

The notion of the mounds being a centre, around which the ‘mystery of the sun and of the stars’ revolves, is explored by Jefferies in *The Old House at Coate*, in which his birthplace and gardens become a solar observatory. In the account of the tumulus at Liddington, Jefferies rejects the existence of time, noting that ‘the years, the centuries, the cycles are absolutely nothing; it is only a moment since this tumulus was raised; in a thousand more it will still only be a moment’.¹¹⁶ The terminology he uses to depict the setting of the tumulus was common to archaeological accounts of the time. Digital searches for the phrase ‘tumulus was raised’, across three centuries, show that it only featured in the periodical press in the Victorian era, between 1830 and 1901, and only in antiquarian contexts. The phrases ‘some warrior’ or ‘some chief’ are similarly specific to archaeological accounts.¹¹⁷ For example, an account of the excavation of an ancient Jewish cemetery in Rome, published in 1863 in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, argues that it is ‘beyond dispute the tumulus was raised on the tomb of some great chief’.¹¹⁸

The early stages of writing *The Story of My Heart* thus appear to have come about partly through the imaginative merging of the two experiences of Liddington and Beachy Head. Although ostensibly affording two very different

¹¹⁵ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 28–31.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹¹⁷ In the draft of *The Story of My Heart* the prehistoric man interred in the tumulus is referred to as ‘some chief’, which is changed in the final version to ‘some warrior’.

¹¹⁸ John Henry Parker, ‘Investigation of a Large Celtic Grave-Hill in Cleveland’, *Gentleman’s Magazine*, September 1863, p. 274.

settings of coast and inland hillside, they were closely linked in Jefferies's mind and experience through their archaeological dimension. This task of combining the Beachy Head experience, which was dominated by the open expanse of sea and sky, with his experiences at Liddington during the 1860s, posed difficulty for Jefferies, and he had to work to reconcile them. In the drafts of the book, the two experiences still appear to be distinct, but in the final text the presence of the sea is incorporated into his experience beside the Wiltshire tumulus.

A re-reading of the tumulus passages in *The Story of My Heart*, with the knowledge of his Beachy Head experience, suggests that Jefferies worked the two places into the same passages at a stage close to the completion of the book. It seems that he attempted to negotiate the challenge of combining the two settings into one narrative by first positioning himself on the summit of the Wiltshire Downs with extensive views across the South West. Although the sea would not have been visible to the naked eye, the perspective of the hilltop more comfortably accommodates the presence of the sea than any other choice of inland setting. As Jefferies lies on the grass by the tumulus, looking dreamily up to the sky, he describes the feeling that he can enlarge his thought and presence through imagining the sea:

By the blue heaven, by the rolling sun bursting through untrodden space, a new ocean of ether every day unveiled. By the fresh and wandering air encompassing the world; by the sea sounding on the

shore — the green sea white-flecked at the margin and the deep ocean; by the strong earth under me.¹¹⁹

This reference to the sea recalls his description of the hollow at Beachy Head where ‘the faint sound of the distant waves’ drifted up to him from his position on the cliff edge, and ‘the sea [lay] palest green’ below him.¹²⁰ In the final version of *The Story of My Heart* he swiftly guides the narrative back to Liddington: ‘Then, returning, I prayed by the sweet thyme, whose little flowers I touched with my hand; by the slender grass; by the crumble of dry chalky earth I took up and let fall through my fingers’.¹²¹ It is possible to see how the passage in ‘The Breeze on Beachy Head’ about ‘a couch prepared with thyme to rest on’ and ‘the rim’ are developed in *The Story of My Heart* to become part of the meditation on the Wiltshire downs:

I was utterly alone with the sun and the earth. Lying down on the grass, I spoke in my soul to the earth, the sun, the air, and the distant sea far beyond sight. I thought of the earth’s firmness — I felt it bear me up; through the grassy *couch* there came an influence as if I could feel the great earth speaking to me. I thought of the wandering air — its pureness, which is its beauty; the air touched me and gave me something of itself. I spoke to the sea, though so far, in my mind I saw

¹¹⁹ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 6.

¹²⁰ ‘Genesis’, p. 173.

¹²¹ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 6.

it, green at the *rim of the earth* and blue in deeper ocean; I desired to have its strength, its mystery and glory.¹²² (my emphasis)

Further support for the proposed affinities between the two landscapes can be found through analysis of the amendments which Jefferies made between the draft of the book and the final text. In the draft account of the Wiltshire tumulus, Jefferies imagines ‘Travelling in an instant across the sea’, which was changed in the final version to ‘travelling in an instant across the distant sea’, suggesting that ‘distant’ was added later. The same passage in the draft version refers to ‘the old, old sea which lay but just yonder at the edge (as it seemed to me)’.¹²³ The use of brackets suggests that Jefferies was working out how to incorporate his meditations by the sea into an inland setting. In the final version this reference becomes ‘the sea, though so far, in my mind I saw it, green at the rim of the earth’. Thus the draft version implies that the sea is close ‘just yonder’, but the later version adds that it was ‘though so far’ and only seen ‘in [his] mind’. Furthermore, the phrase ‘the edge’ does not appear in the final version, but does feature in the ‘Genesis’ draft, in which the sea appears to be right beside him as ‘the edge of abyss’.¹²⁴ The omission of this phrase suggests that it originated from his experience in the hollow at Beachy Head, where the sea is just beyond the cliff edge. Other references to the sea in the final version are similarly followed by a few words to convey its being far away, such as ‘far beyond sight’ — as if to justify its otherwise unlikely role in an inland setting.

¹²² Ibid., p. 5.

¹²³ ‘Draft’, p. 142.

¹²⁴ ‘Genesis’, p. 169.

In her analysis of the tumulus passages in *The Story of My Heart*, Lynne Hapgood posits that Jefferies drew from a convention that was integral to nineteenth-century culture, which unified 'nature, the sublime, and personal vision in a neo-Romantic artistic transcendence', and which resulted in 'a private resolution of the cultural tensions in which [Jefferies] felt caught'.¹²⁵ She goes on to suggest that Jefferies's position of worship, face down upon the ground, indicates a sexually charged nature coupled with an 'unspecific meaningfulness that could fill a spiritual vacuum'.¹²⁶ However, this reading largely overlooks the context of Jefferies's inner conflict, its origins, and his ambition for the book to contribute to the eventual improvement of human social and spiritual welfare. Jefferies attempts to express his inner thoughts and desires occupied him for more than fifteen years, and were closely related to certain locations. More than simply trying to resolve 'cultural tensions', as Hapgood suggests, Jefferies was attempting to resolve spiritual conflicts which he claimed to be able to trace back through humanity. Integral to this process was the experimental search for a new language of expression.

Certain key phrases which only appear in the final version of the book suggest that Jefferies was drawing from other literary works which valued the role of personal and cosmic contemplation in spiritual development. 'Untrodden space', for example, features in Daniel Defoe's *History of the Devil* (1726) in a summary of Milton's depiction of the Devil and his angels in *Paradise Lost*.

¹²⁵ Lynne Hapgood, *Margins of Desire: the Suburbs in Fiction and Culture, 1880–1925* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 67.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

That at length they found the infinite untrodden space on a sudden spread full with glorious bodies, shining with self-existing beauty, with a new, and to them, unknown lustre, called light.¹²⁷

While it is known that Jefferies read Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, which he refers to in his essay 'Village Organisation' (1875),¹²⁸ a reference to Defoe a year earlier in *The Scarlet Shawl* reveals that he had also read *The History of the Devil*. The reference — 'Defoe somewhere discusses the question as to which causes most mischief in the world — the devil walking about without his cloven hoof, or the cloven hoof walking about without the devil',¹²⁹ indicates Jefferies's familiarity with *The History of the Devil*, which devotes a chapter to the Devil's cloven foot. Jefferies's use of Defoe's phrase 'untrodden space' represents a more dramatic depiction of celestial territories than in the drafts for the book where the phrase does not appear. The phrase, along with other descriptions of the sky over the sea, such as 'circumambient ether',¹³⁰ seems to have been inspired by his experiences on Beachy Head where the vast expanses of sea and sky afforded by the height of the cliff are some of the most dramatic in England.

There is also evidence to suggest that in these introductory passages of *The Story of My Heart*, where he struggles to establish a foundation for the

¹²⁷ Daniel Defoe, 'Of the Extraordinary Appearance of the Devil, and Particularly of the Cloven Foot', *The History of the Devil*, in *The Novels and Miscellaneous Works of Daniel Defoe* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1871), p. 350.

¹²⁸ Richard Jefferies, *The Hills and the Vale*, p. 185.

¹²⁹ Richard Jefferies, *The Scarlet Shawl* (Oxon: Petton Books, 2009), p. 176.

¹³⁰ Research for this thesis has shown that 'circumambient ether' is a nineteenth-century scientific term to describe the space around the earth.

rest of the narrative, Jefferies might have been influenced by a biography titled *The History of Pel Verjuice, the Wanderer* (1853) based on the work of the lecturer, humanitarian and social reformer, Charles Reece Pemberton. Pemberton was described by his editor, John Fowler, in 1843, as ‘one of the most remarkable and affection-inspiring men of genius that ever lived’,¹³¹ having been perceived to have done more ‘for some of the best interests of humanity’ than any other man. Pemberton’s ambition and reputation, combined with his deeply reflective and spiritually inquisitive nature, would have appealed to Jefferies, who sought to culture similar qualities in himself, and there are noticeable similarities between the authors’ autobiographies. Pemberton’s autobiographical ‘Pel Verjuice’ papers were first serialised in the *Monthly Repository* in 1833–34, and partly reprinted and edited by Fowler in *The History of Pel Verjuice* in 1853. In the text Fowler describes Pemberton’s love of the natural world, and his fiery inner nature:

Always the blue sky, the beautiful landscape, with its farms and villages, sleeping in the sunshine, made a Sabbath to his soul. If man frowned upon him, nature loved him. Trees, birds and wild flowers were his friends — and no one ever, I think, had a deeper love for them than he had [...] No one who might have seen him lying on the grass in such company, could have imagined that there lay slumbering in the depths of this man’s soul a passion and a power so grand and so vast as were really there; genius capable of embodying the most terrible tragedy,

¹³¹ *The Life and Literary Remains of Charles Reece Pemberton*, ed. by William Johnson Fox (London: C. Fox, 1843), p. 9.

and of enchaining thereby the minds, and making tremble the hearts of thousands. But so it was. Eden and Etna were united in him. Flowers and beauty, wrath and fire.¹³²

This passage is similar to Jefferies's description of his own impulse to lie on the grass at Liddington Hill in the opening pages of *The Story of My Heart*:

Had any shepherd accidentally seen me lying on the turf, he would only have thought that I was resting a few minutes; I made no outward show. Who could have imagined the whirlwind of passion that was going on within me as I reclined there! I was greatly exhausted when I reached home. Occasionally I went upon the hill deliberately, deeming it good to do so; then, again, this craving carried me away up there of itself.¹³³

Both authors' desire to write for the purpose of social improvement was experienced as a burning and irresistible impulse, one that was fed by engagement with the natural world and the human past. *The Story of My Heart* is brimful with images of fire and burning, such as 'I burn life like a torch', and 'the hot light shot back from the sea scorches my cheek — my life is burning in me',¹³⁴ which infer Jefferies's connection with an intense and elemental form of energy. In *Richard Jefferies: a Tribute*, Samuel Looker titles

¹³² *The History of Pel Verjuice the Wanderer*, ed. by January Searle (London: James Watson, 1853), p. 45.

¹³³ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 8.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

his selections from Jefferies's notebooks 'Thoughts that Breathe and Words that Burn', which was the title of a selection made from the writings of Francis Bacon.¹³⁵ Pemberton, too, was described by his editor, January Searle, as being of a fiery disposition:

his present thoughts are his past sensations. They were indelibly burnt into his being. The vividness with which anything by which he had been affected, returned upon him seemed absolutely preternatural. The minutest objects of a scene, in their dimensions and proportions, were retained by him with the fidelity of a daguerreotype [...] The language of his writings may sometimes appear exaggerated, but it is strictly true to himself, even when most vehement. The words that burn in his compositions had first shaken his frame, flushed his cheek, clenched his teeth, and fevered his pulse.

Searle continues that Pemberton had 'no toleration for cant', and could easily detect the 'subtler forms of hypocrisy and conventionalism which so much pervade the profession of religion and the conduct of education'.¹³⁶ Hypocrisy was one of Jefferies's concerns, and featured in a number of his works, as did issues of social reform, including the education of the rural poor. It is also notable that Pemberton uses the unusual phrase 'unhewn fragments'¹³⁷ to describe a roughly built wall, just as Jefferies uses the phrase in the 'genesis'

¹³⁵ See Francis Bacon, "*Thoughts that breathe and words that burn*," from the writings of Francis Bacon, baron of Verulam, viscount St. Albans, and lord high chancellor of England (London: E. Stock, 1893).

¹³⁶ *The History of Pel Verjuice, the Wanderer*, p. 19.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

draft of *The Story of My Heart* to symbolise the throwing together of words and the construction of a foundation for the ‘soul expression’ of the book. In his narrative, Pemberton incorporates the phrase into his recollections of his rural birthplace: a garden ‘circumscribed by a wall of rough, unhewn fragments from the neighbouring rocks’, which prompts memories of his ‘poor father’ who built and tended it. Not dissimilar to Jefferies’s autobiography, this setting of the book in factual memories precipitates the deeper meditations and reflections for which it was to become known.¹³⁸

A further influence on the meditations by the Wiltshire tumulus in *The Story of My Heart* might have been the work of the American philosopher, physician and clairvoyant, Andrew Jackson Davis. In 1850, Davis published *The Great Harmonia; being a philosophical revelation of the natural, spiritual, and celestial universe*.¹³⁹ The book, which was a treatise on Davis’s own insights achieved through an elevated state of consciousness, features language which was later to appear in *The Story of My Heart*. The two books share the phrases ‘the power of the ages’ and ‘the interminable universe’, and the words ‘invisible’, ‘energy’, and ‘grandeur’. Both speculate on death and the possible state thereafter, as well as sharing similar opinions on the nature and value of science, the concept of design in nature, ‘chaos’, ‘immortality’ and ‘beauty’. Davis’s ‘boundless universe’ and ‘boundless firmament’ are echoed in Jefferies’s phrase ‘boundless space’ in *The Story of My Heart*, and both books speculate on the concept of time. In the following passage from *The*

¹³⁸ Substantial parts of Jefferies’s earlier autobiographical works, including *The Old House at Coate* and *Wild Life in a Southern County* are set at his birthplace, Coate Farm. Jefferies’s father, James Lockett, was responsible for extending the house and planting the extensive walled gardens.

¹³⁹ The book was reprinted in several parts from 1861–1883.

Great Harmonia, Davis speculates on the nature or shape of the infinite and the place of the individual within the wider universe:

So also is Infinity an eternal expanse, and this life is but a single inch thereof, and if that inch be traversed a million of times it still remains a part of the illimitable whole, distinct, identical, inseparable.¹⁴⁰

This idea of infinity is a theme of the tumulus passages in *The Story of My Heart* where Jefferies imagines the continuance of the spirit of the warrior interred there:

it appears to me purely natural, and not supernatural, that the soul whose temporary frame was interred in this mound should be existing as I sit on the sward. How infinitely deeper is thought than the million miles of the firmament! The wonder is here, not there; now, not to be, now always.¹⁴¹

Davis also uses an unusual phrase 'give me more life',¹⁴² which later featured in Jefferies's *The Old House at Coate*: 'The sun shone and I said: Give me more life, I held out my palm to hold the sunlight like water. Let me be filled with the life of light as my hand is filled with water when I dip from the

¹⁴⁰ Andrew Jackson Davis, *The Great Harmonia*, vol. 2 (Google Ebook, 1851) <<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=KaYot1MiuW0C&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>> [accessed 25 November 2012], p. 366.

¹⁴¹ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 34.

¹⁴² *The Great Harmonia*, p. 101.

brook'.¹⁴³ The source of this phrase appears to be Psalm 119: 40. It features in the work of Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–92) — perhaps the most famous preacher in England during the later-nineteenth century — and is currently untraceable in any other context.¹⁴⁴ Spurgeon uses the phrase in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpit: sermons*, parts 261–272, in his exposition on the Psalms and David's wish to be granted immortality: 'Thou pitying God, give me more life. O thou who willest not the death of any, give me more life. O thou that lovest as a father loves, give me more life'.¹⁴⁵ Spurgeon regularly preached sermons at London locations, which Jefferies may have attended. For example, on 2 August 1877, a show at the Crystal Palace celebrated Spurgeon's attendance by the production of a 'fire portrait' of the preacher in the sky.¹⁴⁶ Jefferies is known to have attended the Crystal Palace fêtes when he was living close by at Sydenham as a youngster, and might also have done so when staying there in 1876.¹⁴⁷ Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*, the book for which he was best known, was published in instalments in the London Metropolitan Tabernacle's periodical, *The Sword and the Trowel*, from 1865–1885,¹⁴⁸ and contains religious imagery which later featured in *The Story of My Heart*. For example, the sentence, 'there is nothing like beginning in the heart out of which are the issues of life', and his long digression on

¹⁴³ *The Old House at Coate*, p. 60.

¹⁴⁴ Digital searches show that the phrase only appears in *The Great Harmonia*, and in Spurgeon's *The Treasury of David*.

¹⁴⁵ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpit: sermons*, parts 261–272 (Charleston: BiblioBazaar, 2010), p. 239.

¹⁴⁶ Anon., *Morning Post*, 2 August 1877, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷ See Appendix 2 for Jefferies's letter to the *Astronomical Register* (1870), in which he writes, 'I have seen almost all astronomical and meteorological phenomena, but never observed so intense a light emitted by a meteor. It somewhat resembled the effect produced by the coloured rockets at the Crystal Palace fêtes'.

¹⁴⁸ *The Treasury of David* was also published in book form in 1882.

'dust',¹⁴⁹ which occurs in the same narrative as the phrase 'give me more life', bears thematic similarities to the opening paragraph of *The Story of My Heart*:

The story of my heart commences seventeen years ago. In the glow of youth there were times every now and then when I felt the necessity of a strong inspiration of soul-thought. My heart was dusty, parched for want of the rain of deep feeling; my mind arid and dry, for there is a dust which settles on the heart as well as that which falls on a ledge. It is injurious to the mind as well as to the body to be always in one place and always surrounded by the same circumstances. A species of thick clothing slowly grows about the mind, the pores are choked, little habits become a part of existence, and by degrees the mind is enclosed in a husk. When this began to form I felt eager to escape from it, to throw it off like heavy clothing, to drink deeply once more at the fresh fountains of life. An inspiration — a long deep breath of the pure air of thought — could alone give health to the heart.¹⁵⁰

Like Spurgeon, who 'begin[s] in the heart', Jefferies begins *The Story of My Heart* with the image of his dusty heart. The symbol of a husk that needs to be cast aside in order to promote spiritual growth was common to religious doctrine of the time. Spurgeon quotes from Martin Luther and Deuteronomy

¹⁴⁹ 'The best and brightest things that are in this world are made of dust; and as for ourselves, although we have within us a new and higher life that has no fraternity with the dust, there is an old life belonging to us which is brother to the dust — which saith to the worm, "thou art my sister." "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," is true of every one of us. [...] the new life in us craves for something higher, but the old nature tries to be contented with dust. It clings to it; the dust cleaves to it and it cleaves to the dust' (pp. 230–31).

¹⁵⁰ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 3.

when he writes: ‘Thus, between the upper and nether millstone (Deut 24:6), they are broken in pieces and humbled, and the husks being thus bruised off, they come forth the all-pure wheat of Christ’.¹⁵¹ It is known that Jefferies attended sermons during the 1860s when living at Coate, which on occasion became the subjects of articles he published in the *North Wilts Herald*. In 1867 Jefferies wrote a ‘sermon on 12 Luke 52v’, which Matthews and Treitel presume to be copied rather than composed,¹⁵² and in 1891 Jefferies’s brother, Charles, recalled that ‘for reporting the sermons for two years my aunt gave Richard a silver watch’.¹⁵³ Jefferies’s interest in ecclesiastical matters extended well into the 1870s when he published a series of articles concerning ‘The Poetry of the Bible’¹⁵⁴ in a new, but short-lived, periodical titled *The Broad Churchman* (1873), and in 1878 ‘The Cottage Preacher’, part of *Wild Life in a Southern County* (1879).¹⁵⁵

Further similarities between *The Story of My Heart* and Davis’s *Great Harmonia* include the importance placed upon the role of the senses in existential inquiry and the idea that small things could withhold greater symbolic importance, which in both books include ‘a leaf’, ‘dust’, ‘stars’ and

¹⁵¹ Martin Luther, v. 11, cited from Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* (London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1883), p. 21.

¹⁵² *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies*, p. 28.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Efforts to trace these articles have been unsuccessful. *The Broad Churchman* ran from January–May 1873, and was ‘designed to represent the Third Party of Section of the National Church, which revolting from Ecclesiasticism on the one hand, and Puritanism on the other, desires to render the Church more adequate to the exigencies of the Age. *The Broad Churchman* will adopt a strongly humanitarian line. It will deal with all Political and Social Subjects independently and liberally, and will treat Questions of Art and Science from an earnest and sympathetic point of view’ (*Athenaeum*, 25 January 1873, Advertisements, p. 99).

¹⁵⁵ Jefferies’s brother Charles recorded that ‘when [Jefferies] went to London he took advantage of the public libraries, and read assiduously religious controversial books’. (‘Did Richard Jefferies Die a Christian? Reminiscences by People Who Knew Him’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 22 September 1891, cited in W. J. Keith, ‘Jefferies’ Reading’, *Richard Jefferies Society Journal* 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 17–22 (p. 18)).

'atoms'. Both authors discuss the properties of matter in relation to soul, and discourse widely on the effectiveness of their terminology, such as 'mind' and 'soul'.¹⁵⁶ Jefferies openly debates the limitations of language in *The Story of My Heart*, stating that 'there is no familiar term' for 'obscure and remote causes' which cause the 'difficulties' in life.¹⁵⁷ He finds fault with the term 'inhuman' which 'does not express [his] meaning', and suggests that 'anti-human is better'.¹⁵⁸ He discusses the usefulness of the term 'soul-work' which is 'better suited to [his] meaning than "miracle"',¹⁵⁹ and in defining his approach to the differences between mind and soul he writes:

The mind of man is infinite. Beyond this, man has a soul. I do not use this word in the common sense which circumstances have given to it. I use it as the only term to express that inner consciousness which aspires.¹⁶⁰

Whether Jefferies read *The Great Harmonia* is as yet unknown, but it is quite possible that, during the seventeen years in which he developed *The Story of My Heart*, he would have referenced other published examples of spiritual autobiography to assist him with writing his own. Yet despite the

¹⁵⁶ *The Great Harmonia*, p. 250.

¹⁵⁷ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 131.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁶⁰ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 114. 'The mind of man is Infinite' is another unique phrase which is only traceable in one other context before or during the nineteenth century. It appears as a referenced article in *Reason and faith: with other essays* by Henry Rogers (London: Longmans, 1866), p. 254. Belief in the infinity of the mind was characteristic of the Romantic poets, in particular Blake (see, for example, Bryan Aubrey's *Watchmen of Eternity: Blake's debt to Jacob Boehme* (Maryland: University Press of America, 1986), p.10, which refers to 'Blake's belief that the mind of man is infinite').

latent affinities between the two texts, *The Story of My Heart* goes further in its method of inquiry than *The Great Harmonia*; Jefferies develops ideas laid out by Davis and takes them forward. The tumulus passages in *The Story of My Heart* are among the most quoted and best-known of Jefferies's work, and while *The Story of My Heart* is replete with natural phenomena, including birds and insects, neither nature nor archaeology feature in *The Great Harmonia*.

Unlike *The Great Harmonia*, in which Davis's thoughts and insights are essentially disconnected from his immediate surroundings (being more focused on the sky and what lies beyond), each episode of thought in *The Story of My Heart* is deeply engaged with a geographical or archaeological feature or place. This decision to set *The Story of My Heart* in the prehistoric landscapes of Wiltshire and Sussex distinguishes the book from other spiritual books of the era. When Davis first published *The Great Harmonia* in 1850 the prehistoric past remained obscure, and although sites were being identified, archaeology — as then an emergent subject — could not provide adequate knowledge or expertise to interpret them. It seems that knowledge of the prehistoric past, and awareness of past societies' inclination to align monuments and burial grounds with the sun, provided a rich foundation for Jefferies's ideas. The tumulus scenes in *The Story of My Heart* lead naturally into contemplation of the human condition through the centuries, which are linked by the presence of the sun. The sun is central to Jefferies's enquiry, not only as a connective force between all forms of life, but as a symbol of his ambition to invest his thoughts and experiences with a 'universal' quality and appeal.

The word 'cosmos' does not appear in Davis's book, but features nine times in *The Story of My Heart*. In his introduction to *The Hills and the Vale*, Edward Thomas quotes from Maurice Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness* (1899), in which Bucke argues for the incompleteness of Jefferies's cosmic vision.¹⁶¹ Bucke was literary executor and biographer to Walt Whitman, who he believed was a perfect example of the subject. According to Bucke, cosmic consciousness:

shows the cosmos to consist not of dead matter, governed by unconscious rigid, and unintending law; it shows it on the contrary as entirely immaterial, entirely spiritual and entirely alive; it shows that death is an absurdity, that everyone and everything has eternal life.¹⁶²

In his analysis of Jefferies, Bucke seems mainly to draw from Henry Salt's *Richard Jefferies: a Study* (1894), and from isolated passages in *The Story of My Heart*. He claims that Jefferies attained only partial illumination. However, Bucke's definition of cosmic awareness overlooks the significance of the prehistoric world. For Jefferies, cosmic awareness was felt more deeply in archaeological settings. Furthermore, although the thoughts and feelings which Jefferies documents in *The Story of My Heart* may appear fragmentary and unsustainable, the book — as a 'true [...] record'¹⁶³ — is more concerned

¹⁶¹ *The Hills and the Vale*, pp. xxvi–xxvii.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ In his letter to Longman which accompanied the manuscript for *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies wrote that 'my book is a real record — unsparing to myself as to all things — absolutely and unflinchingly true' ('Notes on Books', 30 November 1883, cited in *The Story of My Heart: My Autobiography* (London: Longmans, 1922), p. xiv).

with expressing the challenge of maintaining the experience itself through the carefully combined choice of language and setting.

Bucke argues that the development of cosmic consciousness is personal and unique to the individual.¹⁶⁴ That Jefferies experienced this more intensely at ancient burial sites suggests that the prehistoric past was integral to his vision. His earlier archaeological fieldwork and reporting had to some extent prepared him — his knowledge of archaeological terms, for example, aided his expression — but by the time of writing *The Story of My Heart* he had lost interest in the actual formula of fieldwork. Jefferies's 'cosmic consciousness' thus seems to have naturally emerged from his study and experience of prehistoric landscapes and their astronomical alignments. Furthermore, this approach appears to deviate from earlier trends in spiritual literature, many of which borrowed from Biblical timescales and explanations of human history, making Jefferies perhaps the first author to use prehistoric landscapes in a spiritual context. The role of the prehistoric continued to develop in Jefferies's work, and assumed its ultimate form in his science fiction novel, *After London*, to be discussed in the following chapter.

¹⁶⁴ *Cosmic Consciousness*, p. 25.

6

Jefferies and Civilisation

London and Ancient Civilisation

In 1877 Jefferies moved to Tolworth, a semi-rural environment which provided material for *Nature near London*, a collection of essays first published serially in the *Standard* from 1880 to 1883.¹ During this time Jefferies regularly visited Central London and incorporated it into *The Story of My Heart* as a setting. As ‘the great centre’² and embodiment of British culture and society, London was a gateway to further experience and knowledge of past and present human life. In *Restless Human Hearts* (1875) the character Neville, while residing in London, embodies Jefferies’s ambition to understand the relation between the human and natural worlds:

He ought to study Man. He studied man at Ascot, at Hurlingham, at Kensington, by the Thames. He grew more and more restless. While he had lived with Nature, though [sic] he could not penetrate behind her veil.³

The National Gallery⁴ and the sculpture galleries at the British Museum were two of Jefferies’s thinking places — what he termed in *The Story of My Heart* his ‘London pilgrimages’. The British Museum, the largest museum of human history and culture in Britain, housed the country’s most prized archaeological collections, which grew during the 1870s after British

¹ The last few essays in the book are composed from material gathered during his Sussex trips of 1879/1880.

² ‘Meadow Thoughts’, *The Life of the Fields* (p. 56).

³ *Restless Human Hearts*, vol. 2 (London: Tinsley, 1875), p. 291.

⁴ In *The Story of My Heart* Jefferies seeks respite from the busy city by musing on Titian’s *Venus and Adonis* in the National Gallery (p. 65).

archaeologists began systematic excavations in foreign countries. A reference to ‘the broad steps that lead up to the entrance of the British Museum’⁵ in *Restless Human Hearts* suggests that Jefferies had visited the British Museum at least as early as 1874.⁶ In *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies records that the statuary represented to him the ideal in human form:

Not only in grassy fields with green leaf and running brook did this constant desire find renewal. More deeply still with living human beauty; the perfection of form, the simple fact of form, ravished and always will ravish me away. In this lies the outcome and end of all the loveliness of sunshine and green leaf, of flowers, pure water, and sweet air. This is embodiment and highest expression; the scattered, uncertain, and designless loveliness of tree and sunlight brought to shape. [...] Unless of the human form, no pictures hold me; the rest are flat surfaces. So, too, with the other arts, they are dead; the potters, the architects, meaningless, stony, and some repellent, like the cold touch of porcelain. No prayer with these. Only the human form in art could raise it, and most in statuary.

⁵ *Restless Human Hearts*, vol. 1, p. 68.

⁶ The destination would have been within easy travelling distance of his aunt’s house in Sydenham where he lived in the 1860s and where he returned to stay for periods of time until his move from Swindon to Surbiton in 1875. Thomas quotes a letter to Jefferies’s aunt, Mrs Harrild, dated 1868, which proves Jefferies’s appreciation of Greek statuary: ‘Everything beautiful is Greek; the greatest poet was a Greek — Homer. The most beautiful statues — those at Rome in the Vatican — were sculptured by Greeks. The Greek cast of countenance is the most beautiful; when perfect, it is almost divine’. In Edward Thomas, *Richard Jefferies, His Life and Work* (London: Hutchinson, 1909), p. 64.

I have seen so little good statuary, it is a regret to me; still, that I have is beyond all other art. Fragments here, a bust yonder, the broken pieces brought from Greece, copies, plaster casts, a memory of an Aphrodite, of a Persephone, of an Apollo, that is all; but even drawings of statuary will raise the prayer. These statues were like myself, full of a thought, for ever about to burst forth as a bud, yet silent in the same attitude. Give me to live the soul-life they express. The smallest fragment of marble carved in the shape of the human arm will wake the desire I felt in my hill-prayer.⁷

In the presence of the statues, Jefferies experienced the same 'desire' as he had on the Wiltshire Downs which allowed him to feel more '[him]self': 'I felt as I did lying on the turf listening to the wind among the grass; it would have seemed natural to have found butterflies fluttering among the statues'.⁸

Andrew Rossabi suggests that the 'broken pieces brought from Greece' are likely to be the Elgin marbles from the Parthenon in Athens.⁹ He identifies Jefferies's idealisation of the classical era as part of a more general reaction to the industrial and scientific progress of the late Victorian era which had accentuated spiritual confusion.¹⁰ The sudden revelation of the fallibility of Biblical chronology contributed to a growing sense that the Victorian age was in a grey area somewhere between an old world and a new. The beauties of the natural world, art, music and poetry promised to elevate the mind and

⁷ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 20–21.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁹ Andrew Rossabi, 'Richard Jefferies and the Classics', *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 17 (2008), 19–26 (p. 20).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

soul, and as such were encouraged and written passionately about in the periodical press. Ancient Greeks lived closer to the natural world, with firm belief in the tenets of classical myth and philosophy. By comparison, the Victorian age was in what Adam Storey Farrar termed in 1863 a condition of ‘crisis in belief’, which he suggested had been caused by the challenges of modern thought.¹¹ Farrar identified this to be the fourth such crisis in the history of the Christian Church, following the heathen resistance against the early Church, the re-emergence of liberal thought in the Middle Ages, and the resurgence of classical literature.¹²

Such spiritual uncertainty generated space for new more experimental approaches to life and thought which were characterised by new publications and societies.¹³ An anonymous article titled ‘Snow’ in *Sharpe’s London Magazine* (1867) identifies the hopeful promise of a new era in store for the soul:

The snow has fallen under a cold temperature, and the flakes are perfectly crystallised; every shrub we pass bears wreaths which glitter as gorgeously as the nebula in Perseus; but in another hour of sunshine every one of those fragile outlines will disappear, and the white surface glitter no longer with stars, but with star-dust. On such a day, the universe seems to hold but three pure tints — blue, white, and green. The loveliness of the universe seems simplified to its last

¹¹ Adam Storey Farrar, *History of Free Thought in Reference to the Christian Religion* (Teddington: Echo Library, 2010), p. 290.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ For example, the *Metaphysical Magazine: a monthly review of the occult sciences and metaphysical philosophy*.

extreme of refined delicacy. That sensation we poor mortals have, of being just on the edge of infinite beauty, yet with always a lingering film between, never presses down more closely than on days like this. Everything seems perfectly prepared to satiate the soul with inexpressible felicity if we could only, by one infinitesimal step farther, reach the mood to dwell in it.¹⁴

The condition of 'being just on the edge of infinite beauty', with an obstructive 'lingering film' between the mind and what lay essentially beyond it, was akin to the 'thin [...] crust' that Jefferies perceived between the artificiality of mankind and the natural world:

There is but a thin, transparent sheet of brittle glass between the artificial man and the air, the light, the trees, and grass. So between him and the other innumerable organisms which live and breathe there is but a thin feeble crust of prejudice and social custom. Between him and those irresistible laws which keep the sun upon its course there is absolutely no bar whatever.¹⁵

Jefferies's desire to 'burst through'¹⁶ this crust — to allow the 'li[f]e' and 'breath' of natural things to enter and work through the body and mind — was sustained by beauty. Statuary offered a permanent representation of past

¹⁴ Anon., 'Snow', *Sharpe's London Magazine of entertainment and instruction for general reading*, January 1867, p. 15.

¹⁵ Richard Jefferies, 'Nature and Eternity', *The Spring of the Year*, ed. by Samuel J. Looker (London: Lutterworth, 1946), p. 76.

¹⁶ 'Absence of Design in Nature', *The Old House at Coate*, p. 64.

beauty which would otherwise have been lost — what Jefferies described after seeing the Venus de Milo in Paris as ‘the beautiful made tangible in human form’.¹⁷ Contemplating statuary afforded time to formulate the human ideal into something more tangible than the fleeting glimpses he had experienced in the natural world. Sculpted from the earth’s raw material, these figures embodied wealth, enlightenment, healthy physique, and the warmth of the Greek climate, which encouraged his belief in the possibility of improvement for the soul:

These were they who would have stayed with me under the shadow of the oaks while the blackbirds fluted and the south air swung the cowslips. They would have walked with me among the reddened gold of the wheat ... These had thirsted of sun, and earth, and sea, and sky. Their shape spoke this thirst and desire like mine¹⁸

Jefferies perceived that archaeology, as a process of retrieval, brought to light former conditions of life and furnished the mind with ‘new saints and new ideals’.¹⁹ Discoveries of lost civilisations during the 1840s and 1850s set the scene for systematic explorations into what became known as ‘the old world’. One of the best known was the ancient civilisation of Lykia, now South West Turkey, discovered by Charles Fellows between 1838 and 1844. Fellows published his researches in 1839, and donated the worked marble, plaster casts, drawings and plans to the British Museum in 1843. The sculpture and

¹⁷ ‘Nature in the Louvre’, *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 143.

¹⁸ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 66.

¹⁹ Rossabi, p. 20.

architectural items caused a sensation when they were displayed and came to influence Victorian cemetery architecture in tombs of the Gothic revival.

In *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies uses the idea of discovering a new civilisation as a metaphor for his ambition to realise a 'fourth idea':

Three ideas the Cavemen primeval wrested from the unknown, the night which is round us still in daylight — the existence of the soul, immortality, the deity. [...] I desire to advance further, and to wrest a fourth, and even still more than a fourth, from the darkness of thought. I want more ideas of soul-life. I am certain that there are more yet to be found. A great life — an entire civilization — lies just outside the pale of common thought. Cities and countries, inhabitants, intelligences, culture — an entire civilization. Except by illustrations drawn from familiar things, there is no way of indicating a new idea. I do not mean actual cities, actual civilization. Such life is different from any yet imagined. A nexus of ideas exists of which nothing is known — a vast system of ideas — a cosmos of thought.²⁰

The desire to 'wrest' truth 'from the darkness of thought' is analogous to the advancing knowledge of past civilisations which came to light through excavation. Archaeology and the advancement of knowledge — 'Cities and countries, inhabitants, intelligences, culture' — had provided Jefferies with the factual basis for what he termed the 'first three ideas', which he believed to be the soul, immortality, and the concept of a deity. The nebulous 'fourth idea'

²⁰ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 39.

could only be given shape by ‘illustrations drawn from familiar things’. Evidence of early mankind’s spiritual relationship with the earth continued to emerge through discoveries of Bronze Age and Roman objects bearing sun and animal motifs.²¹ Yet the ancient Greek discoveries, with their own context of written history and philosophy, were perceived to be more relevant to the Victorian era, and their emphasis on the beauty of the human form suggested a more fundamentally human connection with the universe.

Although Jefferies recognised the sculptures to be a poor representation of their original state — ‘The statues are not, it is said, the best; broken too, and mutilated, and seen in a dull, commonplace light’²² — it was more widely understood that part of their function had been to reflect the light with dazzling effect. Henry George Lidell recognised the word ‘marble’ to be derived from a Greek word meaning ‘shining stone’ and from the verb ‘to flash, sparkle, gleam’.²³ Stone lions, which form part of the Lykian displays at the British Museum, have missing stones from their mouths. These are thought to have reflected and held the light, and would have flashed in the sun to catch the attention of passers-by.²⁴ The fragmentary nature of the collections appealed to Jefferies, whose own vision was one of tantalising glimpses of a more complete and fulfilling human state. The study of ancient sculptures and civilisations was widely recognised to be limited by an incomplete material record and the absence of supporting documentary evidence. In the preface to *A History of Ancient Sculpture*, published in 1883

²¹ See, for example, Schliemann’s discoveries.

²² *The Story of My Heart*, p. 65.

²³ Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (New York: Harper, 1875).

²⁴ Information taken from the display boards at the British Museum on a visit dated 18 October 2011.

— the year of Jefferies's trip to the sculpture galleries in Paris and the publication of *The Story of My Heart* — Lucy M. Mitchell²⁵ wrote:

Fragments of a great artistic past have come down to us, now torn from their original surroundings, and wrapped in mystery to our changed modern world. For centuries these monuments have lain buried beneath the soil, or, when visible, have too often suffered sadly from neglect. Sundering from this vast treasure what belongs to the plastic art, we find the sculptural monuments widely scattered, and often hopelessly isolated, so that a feeling of discouragement will sometimes come over one attempting to solve the riddles propounded. Here it is that the archaeologist comes to our aid, with his new-born science, which dates hardly farther back than the days of Winckelmann; and bringing to bear upon his subject the patient labor of the excavator and of the conscientious collector, the resources of profound learning and of a comparative spirit, and the breadth of a scientific vision which is able to classify and group the sundered fragments, he makes the disjointed members more and more parts of an organic whole.²⁶

A review of Mitchell's book in the *Academy* (1884) commented on the rapid growth of classical archaeology and the changing nature of the role of the archaeologist:

²⁵ Lucy Myers Wright Mitchell (1845–1888) was an American historian, author, and an ancient art expert. Mitchell's book was one of the first on classical sculpture and established her as a classical archaeologist.

²⁶ Lucy M. Mitchell, *A History of Ancient Sculpture* (New York and London: Dodd, Mead and Co., and Kegan Paul and Trench, 1888), preface.

The discoveries of the last ten years have doubled the labours of the historian of Greek art. They have, indeed, completely revolutionised his method. A hard necessity is laid upon him. He must find himself at home not only in Hellas, but also in Egypt, in Chaldea and Assyria, in Phoenicia and Asia Minor. The student of to-day imperatively demands in art as in science to know the *origines* of things.²⁷

Sixteen years since Jefferies had begun his antiquarian researches in Wiltshire, new discoveries had revolutionised archaeology and facilitated its development into a respected discipline. Jefferies's interest in archaeology had by now become an integral part of his metaphysical questioning, which he employed to seek out the very boundaries of thought itself. The capacity to imagine back, and into the future, brought a deeper sense of the present. Archaeological relics become pointers, or routes, for the imaginative mind:

The great stone of the fallen cromlech, crouching down afar off in the plain behind me, cast its shadow in the sunny morn as it had done, so many summers, for centuries — for thousands of years; worn white by the endless sunbeams — the ceaseless flood of light — the sunbeams of centuries, the impalpable beams polishing and grinding like rushing water: silent, yet witnessing of the Past; shadowing the Present on the

²⁷ Jane E. Harrison, 'A History of Ancient Sculpture', *Academy and Literature*, 7 June 1884, p. 408.

dial of the field: a mere dull stone: but what is it the mind will not employ to express to itself its own thoughts?²⁸

Jefferies perceived that the condition of fragmentation — exemplified by ancient sculpture — was analogous to the condition of the human psyche which had become dissociated from the unity of its origins. This disconnection had arisen primarily through the dogmatic teachings of organised religion and through too great a reliance on the value and accumulation of facts and knowledge:

Sometimes I came in from the crowded streets and ceaseless hum; one glance at these shapes and I became myself. Sometimes I came from the Reading-room, where under the dome I often looked up from the desk and realised the crushing hopelessness of books, useless, not equal to one bubble borne along on the running brook I had walked by, giving no thought like the spring when I lifted the water in my hand and saw the light gleam on it. Torso and limb, bust and neck instantly returned me to myself.²⁹

Jefferies concludes that throughout historic and prehistoric eras the sun has been the single constant: 'Burning in the sky the sun shines as it shone on me in the solitary valley, as it burned on when the earliest cave of

²⁸ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 66.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

India was carved'.³⁰ The action of the sun that 'burned on' becomes a connective force that links the disconnected mind sunk beneath the 'crushing hopelessness of books' to the present. In his discussion of the futility of pursuing knowledge for its own sake, Jefferies alludes to 'uncertain marks left of a sunken Polynesian continent' — a reference to the mysterious evidence of a submerged landmass that contemporary geologists are yet to clearly interpret.³¹ This metaphor suggests that knowledge is a weight that needs to be shed in order to vivify the inner mind and to avoid its submersion beneath centuries of 'accumulated' fact.³²

Jefferies employs water imagery in his depiction of the Royal Exchange. Standing on the 'apex' in front of the building, where converging roads allow ceaseless streams of traffic to flow past, and amidst the intense bustle — at the very centre of the Victorian commercial world — he questions how he might usefully work towards meeting the needs of wider humanity:

Is there any theory, philosophy, or creed, is there any system or culture, any formulated method able to meet and satisfy each separate item of this agitated pool of human life? By which they may be guided, by which hope, by which look forward?³³

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 74–5.

³¹ As summarised by David Kalakaua in *The Legends and Myths of Hawaii* (1888) (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1990): 'The gigantic ruins of temples and other structures found on Easter and one or two other islands of the equatorial Pacific are almost unanswerable arguments in favour of the theory of a sunken Polynesian continent; but the question will probably never be removed beyond the field of surmise' (p. 18).

³² 'Nothing has been accumulated for our benefit in ages past. All the labour and the toil of so many millions continued through such vistas of time, down to those millions who at this hour are rushing to and fro in London, has accumulated nothing for us. Nothing for our good.' *The Story of My Heart*, p. 116.

³³ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 72.

Similarities between this passage, where human life becomes a 'pool', and his description of the headland in 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', suggest a connection between the two experiences. In both accounts, Jefferies stands on an 'apex' or 'promontory' and observes the passage of 'currents' or 'streams', which allows him to imagine back through time.³⁴ The meditation by the Royal Exchange considers that the study of ancient texts may be essentially fruitless and unable to yield what Jefferies termed in 'Nature and Books' 'honey for the inner mind and soul'.³⁵ Jefferies describes having found no answers to his questions in the work of Pliny, Diogenes Laertius, Aristotle, Descartes or Plato. He alludes to the Zoroastrian text called the Zend, the Buddhist Sanscrit, and the life-guiding principles of the Chinese teacher, Confucius.³⁶ He mentions the Aztec or Incan government tradition of using strings to record information, the Egyptian hieroglyphics which occupied the minds of many Victorians at the time,³⁷ and the 'aged caves of India' — probably India's sacred caves, many of which were used as temples in Buddhist tradition.³⁸ Like the lost civilisations of Nineveh, Troy and Lykia, Ancient India became the subject of great interest during the mid-to late-nineteenth century. Not only did the country yield rich evidences of the human

³⁴ In 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', Jefferies writes that he would not be surprised to see a 'trireme from old Rome' pass by. In *The Story of My Heart* he writes: 'looking from this apex of the pavement promontory outwards from our own land to the utmost bounds of the farthest sail' (p. 74).

³⁵ Richard Jefferies, 'Nature and Books', *The Pageant of Summer* (London: Quartet Books, 1979), p. 35.

³⁶ Zoroastrianism is the oldest world religion and is considered to have been the most influential: 'Zoroastrianism is the oldest of the revealed world-religions, and it has probably had more influence on mankind, directly and indirectly, than any other single faith'. Mary Boyce, *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 1.

³⁷ See, for example, the work of Flinders Petrie in Egypt.

³⁸ These caves featured in the periodical press: see, for example, William Simpson, 'Ancient Buddhist Remains in Afghanistan', *Fraser's Magazine*, February 1880, p. 189.

past but the activities of contemporary Indian tribes — known as the ‘fire-worshippers’ — also generated interest. There was, for example, a novel published in 1861 titled *Life in the Land of the Fire-Worshippers*, edited by Frederica Bremer (1861),³⁹ and a letter from the American poet, critic and travel author Bayard Taylor who was in Bombay in 1853, recorded their activities in the *London Journal* as follows:

They are, as is well known, followers of Zoroaster, recognising one god and one evil principle, who contend for the mastery of the universe. They worship the sun, as the representative of God, fire in all its forms, and the sea. Their temples contain no images, but only the sacred fire; and though they have fixed days for the performance of various rites, they repeat their prayers every morning, soon after sunrise.⁴⁰

This form of elemental worship was closer to the life of the soul that Jefferies envisioned than anything suggested by other religions.⁴¹

However, Jefferies argues that this form of rich elemental experience is unattainable through the study of texts or the pursuit of knowledge. He refers to the Egyptian inscriptions and papyri as containing nothing of certain or truthful value:

³⁹ The author was given the name Charles de H****.

⁴⁰ Anon., ‘The Fire-Worshippers’, *London Journal*, 24 September 1853, p. 56.

⁴¹ As mentioned previously, *The Story of My Heart* is replete with images of fire and burning. Jefferies alludes to the inadequacies of the Christian burial tradition, suggesting that to ‘be burned on a pyre of pine-wood, open to the air, and placed on the summit of the hills’ with his ashes to be ‘scattered abroad [...] freely sown wide and broadcast’, would be ‘the natural interment of man’ (p. 38).

Take a broom and sweep the papyri away into the dust. The Assyrian terra-cotta tablets, some recording fables, and some even sadder — contracts between men whose bodies were dust twenty centuries since — take a hammer and demolish them. Set a battery to beat down the pyramids, and a mind-battery to destroy the deadening influence of tradition. The Greek statue lives to this day, and has the highest use of all, the use of true beauty. The Greek and Roman philosophers have the value of furnishing the mind with material to think from. Egyptian and Assyrian, mediaeval and eighteenth-century culture, miscalled, are all alike mere dust, and absolutely useless.⁴²

In his analysis of this passage, Radford comments that dust — as a relic of former life — was despised in the nineteenth century.⁴³ While Radford recognises that Jefferies ‘exalts “soul-life” as a condition of becoming instead of having been’ he identifies Jefferies’s ‘rejection of historical insight and orthodox chronological markers’ as a ‘chief problem’.⁴⁴ He suggests that this is due to the lack of insight the rejection affords into Jefferies’s imaginative development, but also because of the generalisation it makes between eighteenth century, mediaeval and Middle Eastern archaeological discoveries. Radford suggests that Jefferies’s references to ‘Nineveh’ and ‘the bearded bulls of stone’ recall the work of archaeologist Sir Austen Henry Layard, who

⁴² *Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 97.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

discovered the lost city of Nineveh in the 1840s and 1850s.⁴⁵ Radford finds Jefferies guilty of a too 'haughty dismissal'⁴⁶ of the value of the past, and points out that in its very condemnation of earlier traditions Jefferies's own narrative paradoxically 'mobilizes Gothic motifs', including the image of an ancestral hand silently shaping the present.⁴⁷ However, this interpretation fails to distinguish between subliminally incorporated imagery and Jefferies's conscious intention to challenge the authority of the historical and archaeological past and the 'spell' that it held over the mind of man. Although Jefferies's experiment with literary form and language was bound to some extent to reflect the conditions and trends of his time, the overall ambition of *The Story of My Heart* should be considered paramount. Jefferies's conviction that the study of the past for its own sake should be 'swept away' was part of the process of clearing 'the old trammels'⁴⁸ so that the mind might be free to experience 'the immense forces of the universe'.⁴⁹ His perception that the same sun shone on him in the Wiltshire valley as had lit the world of ancient India illuminates an eternal condition of sameness that connects the human condition through time. This notion dissolves the idea of separation between the present and the past, and causes the human past — when understood as something distinct or to be studied in its own right — to seem essentially irrelevant.

⁴⁵ These discoveries were published in 1848 as *Nineveh and Its Remains* (*Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 61). Radford cites Shawn Malley, who wrote that Nineveh captured the British imagination during the mid-to late-nineteenth century (p. 61).

⁴⁶ *Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 64.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ *Restless Human Hearts*, vol. 2, p. 78.

⁴⁹ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 76.

As inscriptions promised to reveal insights into entirely new civilisations, Jefferies sought to codify what he perceived to be his own unique inscription in his soul. An extract from Jefferies's notebooks, published by Samuel Looker, reads, 'everyone has a scripture, a Koran, in his own soul',⁵⁰ and the process of identifying that inscription promised to move towards a form of answer that lay 'just outside the pale of common thought'. However, Jefferies was not looking back in order to idealise the past. The ideal was not the past itself, or the object of the thought, but the idea or condition that it expressed. He emphasised that the past had gone, the old beliefs could not be brought back to life, and that their very presence — and mistakenly assumed importance — in everyday life impeded psychological freedom. To discover something new, it was necessary for past traditions to be 'erased' and not clung to as truths. Part of this process involved an appreciation of previous cultures' attitudes to death, and their recognition that death symbolised a point of entry into the world of eternal life.

The Xanthian tombs at the British Museum, part of the Lykian displays, were described in 1889 as 'the glory of the British Museum'⁵¹ and represented a new culture that was similar and yet distinct from the Greeks'. Their undecipherable symbols and inscriptions, and unsolvable chronology, became a topic of discussion in the periodical press.⁵² Schliemann's excavations in Mycenae recovered human figures and clay tablets which were on display at

⁵⁰ Samuel J. Looker, 'Thoughts that Breathe and Words that Burn', *Richard Jefferies: A Tribute* (Worthing: Worthing Art Development Scheme, 1946), p. 31.

⁵¹ Arthur Lincoln Frothingham, 'Archæological News', *American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts*, 5, 3 (1889), pp. 198–233 (p. 209).

⁵² See, for example, a letter quoted by A. H. Sayce in the *Academy and Literature* which suggests that the Lykian story needed a clear chronology, which might be obtained by deciphering text on what was known as the Horse Tomb ('The Ancient History of Lykia', 11 May 1889, p. 329).

the British Museum during the early 1870s. An article about these discoveries by A. H. Sayce mentions a 'Trojan hone' with an unknown inscription and a discussion fronted by Professor Max Müller about marks on terracotta disks 'which might be taken for letters', and their frequent depiction of the sun and the constellations.⁵³ In *The Open Air*, Jefferies refers to the excitement surrounding the translation of the Assyrian inscriptions:

How fond Nature is of spot-markings! — the wings of butterflies, the feathers of birds, the surface of eggs, the leaves and petals of plants are constantly spotted ... The histories, the stories, the library of knowledge contained in those signs! It was thought a wonderful thing when at last the strange inscriptions of Assyria were read, made of nail-headed characters whose sound was lost; it was thought a triumph when the yet older hieroglyphics of Egypt were compelled to give up their messages, and the world hoped that we should know the secrets of life. That hope was disappointed; there was nothing in the records but superstition and useless ritual. But here we go back to the beginning; the antiquity of Egypt is nothing to the age of these signs — they date from unfathomable time. In them the sun has written his commands, and the wind inscribed deep thought. They were before superstition began; they were composed in the old, old world, when the Immortals walked on earth. They have been handed down thousands upon thousands of years to tell us that to-day we are still in the

⁵³ A. H. Sayce, 'Dr. Schliemann's Discoveries', *Academy*, 7 March 1874, p. 258.

presence of the heavenly visitants, if only we will give up the soul to these pure influences. The language in which they are written has no alphabet, and cannot be reduced to order. It can only be understood by the heart and spirit. Look down into this foxglove bell and you will know that; look long and lovingly at this blue butterfly's underwing, and a feeling will rise to your consciousness.⁵⁴

Jefferies argues that because it is impossible to bring back former beliefs or conditions, archaeology cannot enrich or further the lives of people in the present. The 'secrets of life' are not to be found in old 'records', suggesting that pre-history — a time when humans engaged directly with the world around them and not through written traditions — was a fertile time for the soul. In *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies perceives the 'sound' of these past beliefs as 'indistinguishable noise' which is 'nonresolvable' and 'in [...] contempt'. The original sociocultural framework or 'pattern' needed to understand past traditions 'has been lost' and it is essentially fruitless to try and recreate it. By comparison, the 'messages' inscribed in nature — the markings of a butterfly or foxglove which 'can only be understood by the heart and spirit' — remain consistent over time and can be universally appreciated. The music of these signs and symbols, which bears the 'written [...] commands' of the sun, and the 'inscribed deep thought' of the wind, was 'composed in the old, old world' when humans were more connected to natural phenomena — long before religious traditions channelled the mind and soul into increasingly isolated structures. Jefferies termed this religious

⁵⁴ 'The Pine Wood', *The Open Air* (Fairfield, IA: 1st World Publishing, 2004), p. 75.

dogmatism 'superstition' as it essentially distracted the mind away from the simple truth that will 'rise to [...] consciousness' if allowed.

The separation that religious traditions caused between the human condition and the natural world was a process that Jefferies worked to reverse in himself. He recognised that resistance has to be let go — 'if only we will give up the soul to these pure influences'⁵⁵ — and that answers cannot be found through studying the past. In *The Story of My Heart* he describes the process of clearing the mind:

The mind must acknowledge its ignorance; all the learning and lore of so many eras must be erased from it as an encumbrance. It is not from past or present knowledge, science or faith, that it is to be drawn.

Erase these altogether as they are erased under the fierce heat of the focus before me. [...] In the march of time there fell away from my mind, as the leaves from the trees in autumn, the last traces and relics of superstitions, and traditions acquired compulsorily in childhood. Always feebly adhering, they finally disappeared.

There fell away, too, personal bias and prejudices, enabling me to see clearer and with wider sympathies. The glamour of modern science and discoveries faded away, for I found them no more than the first potter's wheel. Erasure and reception proceeded together; the past accumulations of casuistry were erased, and my thought widened to receive the idea of something beyond all previous ideas. With disbelief,

⁵⁵ Ibid.

belief increased. The aspiration and hope, the prayer, was the same as that which I felt years before on the hills, only it now broadened.

Experience of life, instead of curtailing and checking my prayer, led me to reject experience altogether. As well might the horse believe that the road the bridle forces it to traverse every day encircles the earth as I believe in experience. All the experience of the greatest city in the world could not withhold me. I rejected it wholly. I stood bareheaded before the sun, in the presence of the earth and air, in the presence of the immense forces of the universe. I demand that which will make me more perfect now, this hour. London convinced me of my own thought.⁵⁶

London tested his inner convictions which had been sustained by his experiences in the natural world, but in the end it 'convinced' him 'of [his] thought'. The past is 'rejected', and the soul has to unlearn the misleading 'layers' of accumulated facts and assumptions about the relation of the self to the world. In this way, 'disbelief' in prescribed ways of thinking leads to increased belief in the connective 'presence' of the sun and the wider universe, which can be internalised and expressed uniquely within each individual. As part of the unlearning process, Jefferies perceived that 'past accumulations' of knowledge and meaning — exemplified by the nineteenth-century fascination with ancient civilisations — had no intrinsic value for the

⁵⁶ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 76–79.

soul and were a distraction away from the direct and ‘immense’ universal presence.

The Setting and Origin of *After London*

After London (1885) follows the adventures of Felix Aquila in a post-apocalyptic landscape where social structures have collapsed.⁵⁷ London is at the centre of an ecological disaster — a submerged, poisonous ruin, covered by an acrid swamp — and the flooded Thames valley has created a great lake that extends into the south west. The *Athenaeum* recognised the book’s ‘prehistoric nature’, and declared it to be ‘a romance of the future [...] wrought out in a fashion that shows Mr. Jefferies at his best in some ways, and at his worst in others’.⁵⁸ The book’s title, and its bold suggestion of a future without London as a capital city, prompted a reviewer in the *Spectator* to reflect on the loss of past societies and consider the collapse of British civilisation:

It is far easier to attempt to realise the changes of the past than to imagine those of the future, yet these are none the less sure. However remote it may be, the time must come when England will lose her place in the van of progress and civilisation, when her population will dwindle and her cities decay. The fate that has befallen other realms will

⁵⁷ Miller and Matthews cite a letter (1885), quoted by Thomas, in which Jefferies writes that he had completed the manuscript for *After London* by 1882, and that any subsequent work on the text was ‘finishing touches’ (p. 436).

⁵⁸ Anon., ‘*After London; or Wild England*’, *Athenaeum*, 11 April 1885, p. 463.

overtake her. 'Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, where are they?' and some day England's name must stand in the same category.⁵⁹

The reviewer quotes from the fourth canto of Byron's *Childe Harold*. An allusion to the same text was made in 1975 by Scott Nearing, author and lecturer on social and economic subjects: "Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, where are they?" asked Byron. He might have added: "What were they? How did they come into being? What was the nature of their experience?"⁶⁰ As a founder of America's back-to-land movement, Nearing asked whether the Western world was going to 'follow blindly and unthinkingly' in the 'footsteps' of fallen empires. Both Jefferies and Nearing recognised a constructive link between the study of past ways of life and of how contemporary people lived and used the land.⁶¹ In his analysis of *After London*, John Parham notes that Jefferies 'scarcely bothers' to explain the causes of the environmental catastrophe which has led to the changed condition of England.⁶² Indeed, Jefferies seems less concerned about cause and effect, and more interested in the implications of ailing social and political structures on the mind and soul.

Jefferies had already explored the imaginative potential of discovery in *Bevis*, when the boys pretend that the environment of the reservoir at Coate is a new and unexplored world. *After London*, in which Felix embarks on a solo

⁵⁹ Anon., 'After London', *Spectator*, 4 July 1885, p. 882. The decline of England was pertinent to Ruskin, who in *The Stones of Venice* suggests that England is at risk of following the demise of the sea empires of Tyre and Venice. (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1851), p. 1.

⁶⁰ Scott Nearing, *Civilisation and Beyond: Learning from History* (Teddington: Echo Library, 2006), p. 5.

⁶¹ *After London* is considered one of the earliest environmental novels — see, for example, John Parham, *The Environmental Tradition in English Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 92.

⁶² *Ibid.*

voyage across the great lake, continues what Edward Thomas termed ‘the games of Bevis’, where the boys sail the narrow brooks and camp on the islands of the reservoir.⁶³ In ‘The Defence of Sport’, written for the *National Review* in 1883 as a response to the current debates surrounding the cruelty of blood sports, Jefferies reflects on his own experiences around Coate. He refers to sport as an ‘instinct’ that betters mental and physical health, and suggests that a man will be better equipped in all areas of life and thought if he is first well educated in the life of the outdoors:

With gun, or rod, or in the saddle, a man [...] is better, larger in heart and mind for exercise in the field. He becomes himself; the layers of interest, self, and prejudice which circumstance have placed around him disappear. He forgives and forgets; his vision opens, and his heart expands. So severe is the pressure of the ties that it is not every one’s fault if years and years of contained labour ultimately blind the moral sense [...] A pliant rod and silken line, beguiling the footsteps away beside a trout stream, will open a new view of the world. The management of the rod and line, the art to throw it exactly where the ripple runs swiftly at the foot of the rapid, gradually takes up the mind [...] The very rush of the water against the fishing-boots recalls the strained brain to flesh and blood; the nerves resume their long-suspended functions, and the thrill of life courses to and fro. Sounds of ripples, and splash, the leap of trout, the soft loving sigh of the wind in the trees [...] charm the inner existence into accord with the earth. The

⁶³ Edward Thomas, *Richard Jefferies* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), p. 233.

wound-up sternness of thought melts away, and the fisherman discovers how beautiful it is simply to live.⁶⁴

Jefferies claims that sport acquaints the sportsman with natural and meteorological phenomena, including haloes around the sun and the sighting of Mercury, and provides insight into the geological makeup of the earth itself. He writes that when shooting, 'the reeds, and ferns, and various growths through which I pushed my way, explained to me the jungles of India, the swamps of Central Africa, and the backwoods of America; all the vegetation of the world'.⁶⁵ 'The Forbidden Land' in *Household Words* (1852) explains that the spirit of adventure was integral to the mid-Victorian imagination:

It is natural to men to have a strong curiosity about the least known parts of the world they live in. There are thousands of children in every country in Europe — to say nothing of America — whose hearts beat as they read the story of the first voyage of Columbus; and, when these children grow up to be men and women, they read the story with more and more interest; with not less sympathy with the spirit of adventure of these ancient mariners, and with a more experienced sense of the perseverance and heroism which accomplished the acquisition of a hemisphere. The time for such curiosity to be felt and indulged is not over yet; for there are large spaces of our globe which are still almost unknown to us [...] There are some which we know only on the

⁶⁴ 'The Defence of Sport', *Chronicles of the Hedges*, ed. by Samuel J. Looker (London: Phoenix House, 1948), pp. 255–56.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

testimony of a ship's crew or two, who have seen at night, miles off across a surging sea, volcano fires lighting up vast plains of snow. And there is one great country; which, having been familiarly talked of two or three centuries before Columbus looked abroad over the Atlantic, has since been shut up from observation, and has by degrees become the profoundest secret of its kind that is shrouded by every eye but that of heaven. Its inhabitants are compelled to let the sun and stars know about their country, but they have taken all possible care that nobody else shall. Thibet is the very Bluebeard's closet of the great round house we live in. For several centuries the certain penalty for peeping and prying into it has been death. [...] When Indian officers repair to the skirts of the Himalaya mountains for coolness in the summer months, they look up, as generations before them have done, to the vast snowy peaks towering in the sky, and feel how provoking it is to be unable to learn anything of what lies on the other side.⁶⁶

The concept of 'what lies on the other side' was a constant source of mystery for Jefferies which he expressed through the metaphor of adventure.⁶⁷

Jefferies's admiration for Columbus is apparent in *Restless Human Hearts* (1875): 'the sailors who accompanied Columbus must have strained their eyes upon those native shores from which they were speeding into the great

⁶⁶ Anon., 'The Forbidden Land', *Household Words*, 24 July 1852, pp. 431–2.

⁶⁷ In *Bevis* the concept of 'the other side' is manifested in a mysterious story that Bevis recounts about entry into another world: "They told him that only one was let through about every thousand years, and the reason they are so careful people shall not enter Thibet is that they may not stumble on the bronze door" (p. 321).

Unknown'.⁶⁸ In *Bevis*, Jefferies contrives for the boys to embark on their voyage on the same date that Columbus set sail: 'The morning of the 3rd of August — the very day Columbus sailed — the long desired day, was beautifully fine, calm, and cloudless. They were in such haste to start they could hardly say "Good-bye"'.⁶⁹ Further, W. J. Keith notes that the boys' boat is 'named Pinta after one of the ships in Columbus' expedition'.⁷⁰

Divided into two parts — 'The Relapse into Barbarism' and 'Wild England'⁷¹ — the setting of *After London* may have been partly inspired by Jefferies's time on the south coast during 1879–1880. Passages from 'Some Uncultivated Country — Downs' (first published in *The Times* in September 1881) anticipate the opening chapters of *After London* which describe an England overgrown by an 'immense forest'⁷² and populated by wild species of dog, cat, pig and sheep:

The sward is the original sward, untouched, unploughed, centuries old. It is that which was formed when the woods that covered the hills were cleared, whether by British tribes whose markings are still to be found, by Roman smiths working the ironstone (slag is sometimes discovered), by Saxon settlers, or however it came about in the process of the years.⁷³

⁶⁸ *Restless Human Hearts*, p. 53.

⁶⁹ *Bevis*, p. 239.

⁷⁰ W. J. Keith, *Richard Jefferies: A Critical Study* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 110.

⁷¹ 'Wild England' is also the alternative title for the book.

⁷² *After London*, p. 3.

⁷³ *The Open Air*, p. 172.

Jefferies speculates about the 'original' condition of the Downs, when the Wealden Forest was cut down by invading tribes. Britons, Romans and Saxons, representing different epochs of past civilisation, marked the landscape in individual ways, but the turf that remains 'untouched' and 'centuries old' is a fertile and rich preserve of their activity. 'Downs' was followed by a second part entitled 'Some Uncultivated Country — Forest' on 24 September 1881. This instalment refers to a 'southern forest' populated by wild boar and ancient oaks, which Matthews and Trietel suggest was Ashdown Forest, part of the only remaining Sussex Weald.⁷⁴

Snorting as they work with very eagerness of appetite, they are almost wild, approaching in a measure to their ancestors, the savage boars. Under the trees the imagination plays unchecked, and calls up the past as if yew bow and broad arrow were still in the hunter's hands. So little is changed since then [...] The sounds are the same — the tap as a ripe acorn drops, the rustle of a leaf which comes down slowly, the quick rushes of mice playing in the fern. [...] these are the same sounds and the same movements, just as in the olden time.⁷⁵

In a landscape that 'is as wild as wild can be without deer or savage beasts', Jefferies imagines that it would not be unusual to see a knight from the time of the Crusades riding by. The reference to the 'almost wild' boar and their 'ancestors, the savage boars' anticipates the opening of *After London* which

⁷⁴ *The Forward Life*, p. 147.

⁷⁵ 'Some Uncultivated Country — Forest', 24 September 1881, in *The Open Air*, p. 177.

describes ‘the true wild boar’ as an ancestor of three species of wild pig — ‘the descendants of the various domestic pigs of the ancients’.⁷⁶ These introductory pages appear to have been informed by Jefferies’s knowledge of prehistory and the study of past civilisations. The wording anticipates the opening paragraphs of the archaeologist Hodder Michael Westropp’s *Early and Imperial Rome* (1884), which delineate the emergence of civilisation.⁷⁷ Westropp describes the developing ability of early mankind to craft ‘arms and implements for the chase’, and the transition from ‘living in a wild and uncultivated state’ to the domestication of animals by shepherds and herdsmen.⁷⁸ He articulates the ‘sequence’ of ‘phases’ from ‘hunting’, to ‘pastoral’ to ‘agricultural’:

nations and cities took in early times a similar and almost identical course in their origin and development. The earliest men of the hunting phase lived a wandering and nomad life. The earliest pastoral inhabitants planted their first habitations on the summit of a hill, and threw up a rampart of earth with a fosse at the base of the hill, to secure themselves from attacks of surrounding tribes, while their flocks and herds wandered in the pastures in the valleys and plains below. The mound, the trench, the palisade, formed their earliest means of protection, their earliest fortification.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ *After London*, p. 14.

⁷⁷ Westropp was an authority on prehistoric archaeology. He published the very first *Handbook of Archaeology* in 1867, and in 1872 coined the term ‘Mesolithic’ to represent the intermediary period between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic.

⁷⁸ Westropp, *Early and Imperial Rome* (London: E. Stock, 1884), pp. 1–4.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

In *After London*, Jefferies describes a similar pattern of civil development whereby England is populated by pastoral nomadic tribes and governed by a mediaeval hierarchical system. Castles and mansions, some of which are relics of historical England, are defended by palisades, ramparts, and buttressed enclosures.

The location of the forest in *After London*, and its hidden depths, may have been inspired by Jefferies's knowledge of Pevensey Bay and Castle and its original position at the southernmost point of the Weald. Known as 'the vast forest of Anderida',⁸⁰ from which the Roman station took its name, the Weald stretched from Ashdown in north Sussex to Pevensey in the south.⁸¹ Julius Caesar's landing at Pevensey in 55BC marked the beginning of Roman interest in Britain, which would later lead to a full-scale invasion. The fort at Pevensey was constructed near the end of the Roman era, around 350AD, and was a key site in the process of Rome's decline. The historian Edward Gibbon described the siege of Pevensey by the Saxons, which destroyed the last of the Britons:

The fields of battle might be traced, almost in every district, by monuments of bones; the fragments of falling towers were stained with

⁸⁰ Sussex Archaeological Society, *Sussex Archaeological Collections relating to the History and Antiquities of the County*, vol. 31 (Brighton: Sussex Archaeological Society, 1881), p. 42.

⁸¹ Jefferies was contemplating the landscape of *After London* in *Wild Life in a Southern County* (1878): 'If the sheep and cattle were removed, and the plough stood still for a century, ash and beech and oak and hawthorn would reassert themselves, and these wide, open downs become again a vast forest, as doubtless they were when the beaver and the marten, the wild boar and the wolf, roamed over the country'. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 30.

blood; the last of the Britons, without distinction of age or sex, were massacred in the ruins of Anderida.⁸²

Pevensey was the first castle to be adopted as part of the Norman Conquest in 1066. In *The Story of My Heart* Jefferies records the time he spent at Pevensey as having precipitated the early stages of writing the book. He specifically mentions the site as a Roman stronghold:

immediately the ancient wall swept my mind back seventeen hundred years to the eagle, the pilum, and the short sword. The grey stones, the thin red bricks laid by those whose eyes had seen Caesar's Rome, lifted me out of the grasp of housewife, of modern civilization, of those minutiae which occupy the moment [...] With all their ponderous weight they made me feel myself: all the time, all the centuries made me feel myself this moment a hundred-fold.⁸³

This can be more clearly understood when read in the context of Gibbon's seven-volume work *The History and Decline of the Roman Empire*, which Jefferies owned and read.⁸⁴ In Volume One, Gibbon lays out the reasons for the decline of the Roman Empire, on which he bases the rest of the work:

⁸² Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 7 vols. (vol. 3) (London: Harper and Brothers, 1856), p. 624.

⁸³ *The Story of My Heart*, pp. 26–27. This passage is also cited in the previous chapter.

⁸⁴ Gibbon's account of the fall of Rome was widely revered and has since stood alone as an authoritative and unrivalled account. Jefferies's son Harold recorded that his father had owned a set of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Harold Jefferies, 'Memories of Richard Jefferies', in Samuel J. Looker, ed., *Concerning Richard Jefferies* (Worthing: Aldridge Brothers, 1944), p. 20. Cited in W. J. Keith, 'Jefferies' Reading', *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 2 (1993), pp. 17–22 (p.19).

The heavy weapons of their ancestors, the short sword, and the formidable pilum, which had subdued the world, insensibly dropped from their feeble hands ... the loss of armies, the destruction of cities, and the dishonour of the Roman name, ineffectually solicited the successors of Gratian to restore the helmets and cuirasses of the infantry. The enervated soldiers abandoned their own, and the public, defence; and their pusillanimous indolence may be considered as the immediate cause of the downfall of the empire.⁸⁵

Jefferies's references to the 'short sword' and the 'pilum' directly recall Gibbon's terminology. In the presence of the ancient fortification the grip of 'modern civilisation' is momentarily loosened. What had once been the last stronghold of the Britons, and the site for the emergence of a new civilisation, becomes an imaginative holding ground for the thought-world of *The Story of My Heart*, and the catalyst for Jefferies to begin the book.

However, the experience of Pevensey in 1880 appeared to set in motion an inner movement and aspiration that was also integral to Jefferies's conception of *After London*. Evidence for the nineteenth-century awareness of Anderida as a site of extinction, and its fictional potential, can be found in the preface to a novel titled *Anderida; or, the Briton and the Saxon* (1874), which refers to Gibbon's description of the siege of Pevensey Castle:

⁸⁵ Gibbon, p. 439.

here is one peculiarity which strikes us in the name of the river at whose mouth Anderida was situated. It is well known that the early names given to the natural features of a country have extraordinary permanence. More especially is this the case with rivers which are lines of communication rather than of division. It is difficult to persuade the inhabitants along the whole course of a stream to consent to a change, and they are not likely to be simultaneously extirpated. The principal rivers of the Sussex coast have retained their Celtic names through all vicissitudes. A Welshman today has no difficulty in explaining why his fathers, two thousand or more years ago called one Adur, another Rother or Arun. There is, however, one exception, the river which washed the foot of the mound where stood the last fortress of the Saxon shore must have had a British title, but the Saxon name Ashburne replaces it. The conquerors were so savage in their wrath that mere slaughter and destruction were not enough, the place must be wiped out — forgotten. This was done so effectually that in recent times we have with difficulty identified Anderida with the fortress shell between Pevensey and Westham, while the ancient name of the river is lost for ever. There must have been some especial reason for this exceptional severity, it does not appear that other places experienced such ferocious treatment.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Thomas Crowther, *Anderida; or, the Briton and the Saxon* (London: Bickers and Son, 1875), pp. xiii–xi.

The setting of this 'exceptional' lost city which fell under unusually 'savage' and violent circumstances could have contributed to Jefferies's conception of the fall of Britain's capital city in *After London*. Accounts at the time Jefferies was writing acknowledge Pevensey and Eastbourne as having been part of a major settlement which, like the forest, was also known by the name of Anderida:

Anderida was a great haven, and ships could ride at anchor under the towers of the Roman city. The towers are there still, but the sea, which bore the fleet of Normandy, has gone back. A marshy flat and a wilderness of shingle cut off the present Pevensey from the sea [...] In fact the true history and nature of the English Conquest is written in unmistakeable characters in the soil and ruins of Anderida.⁸⁷

Anderida thus not only symbolised a fallen city but marked the end of the longest-known civilisation in human history. The author adds that Pevensey 'may perhaps be set down as the most memorable spot in Britain' for the reason of its long and complex history:

we know of no place in Britain where two events of equal moment happened on the same spot. Anderida did not actually behold the beginning of the English Conquest of Britain, but it beheld the completion of one of its most important stages. It did not behold the actual turning point of the Norman Conquest of England, but it did in

⁸⁷ Anon., 'Anderida', *Saturday Review*, 6 February 1869, p. 179.

actual fact behold its beginning [...] Nowhere do great historic memories crowd more closely together than in the historic land of the South-Saxon. It is no long journey from Pevensey to Hastings; it is a shorter journey still from Hastings to Battle. And it is not without significance that, on the hill of Senlac itself, on the site of the furthest English outpost, on the furthest point to which the great battle can have reached, the road branches off which bears the speaking inscription "To Lewes." So it was; Lewes, in a sense, wiped out Senlac and made England England once again. But, without Senlac, Lewes could never have been. And, without Anderida, Senlac could never have been. All three hang together. The birth of the English nation, its momentary eclipse, its final regeneration, all follow on each other in close sequence of cause and effect. Anderida, in the fifth century, played one of the greatest parts in that utter wiping out of all things Roman and Celtic [...] There is no spot in Britain where an Englishman is more irresistibly called on to stand and muse on the origin and fortunes of his race [...] Not a Briton did the English conqueror leave within the walls of Anderida, but the walls which those Britons so vainly defended are still there to remind us of that day. Here they stand, ruined and desolate [...] Those massive walls and solid towers were built, in true Roman fashion, for eternity, and the mere hand of time has, as ever, fallen lightly upon them [...] On that coast indeed the works of man have been more lasting than the works of nature.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Ibid.

The 'utter wiping out of all things Roman and Celtic' is implicitly recognised in Jefferies's account of a decayed 'ancient' civilisation that survives in fragments. The unrivalled concentration of historical and archaeological sites along the south coast, where 'works of man have been more lasting than the works of nature', would have encouraged the imaginative conception of an English landscape dotted with ruins and relics of former times. Further, the extensive marshland around Pevensey may have aided Jefferies's conception of London as submerged beneath marshes.⁸⁹

Miller and Matthews write that the book is a developed version of *The Rise of Maximin*, published in the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1876–77. Both stories have the 'same [...] basic structure' and share a setting in an imagined geographical region and social condition, as well as similar landscapes of 'great forests and hills and unexplored freshwater seas', populated by 'wild beasts and fierce nomadic tribes'.⁹⁰ The authors also note that Felix, the hero of *After London*, resembles Maximin: both are twenty-five years old, and 'are men of resource and ambition, learned beyond their peers, proud, solitary, distrusted, out of sympathy with their times and in love with remote, exalted females. Indeed, both are portraits of the young Jefferies'.⁹¹ This hypothesis for an early genesis of *After London* affiliates the book with Jefferies's interest in Roman civilisation, which was at its peak from 1874 to 1880. Jefferies's fascination with the beginning of England during this time might be surmised

⁸⁹ Pevensey was part of the chain of sites along the Kent and Sussex coast called 'cinque ports', from the Normandy-French meaning five-ports, which may be related to 'Ponze', the name of the local town that Felix visits.

⁹⁰ Miller and Matthews, p. 431.

⁹¹ Ibid. Miller and Matthews also note that a story Jefferies began in 1879 titled 'The Backwoods' is very close in theme and language to the opening scenes of *After London* (p. 436).

from his naming his first son, born in 1875, 'Harold', which may have been after Harold Godwinson, the last Anglo-Saxon King of England who defended the country against William the Conqueror in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings. Felix was also the name of the Roman Pontiff who was ruling at the time of the fall of Anderida, and Felix's surname — Aquila — matches the name of the Norman family of de Aquila that occupied Pevensey.⁹² The origins of the Italo-Norman family name can be traced to L'Aigle, which translates into Italian as Aquila, with both names meaning 'eagle', and the family's long affiliation with Pevensey Castle meant it became known as the Castle of the Eagle Honour. Jefferies's specific reference to the 'eagle' in his description of Pevensey in *The Story of My Heart* thus indicates that he was drawing from his own knowledge of its Norman history. As this description was recalling an experience that took place in 1880, it seems likely that he would have developed his fictional representation of Pevensey and the Forest of Anderida in *After London* soon after.

Further evidence for the early genesis of the book is suggested by the shape and layout of the fortified sites in *After London*. A clue comes from Jefferies's admission in *The Story of My Heart* (1883) that his passion for archaeology had 'long since' become 'extinct.' If *After London* had been conceived later in his career, then this comment would seem to be at odds with the meticulous alignment of the book's key places with features of archaeological and prehistoric settings. The layout of the fortified houses and castles in *After London* suggest that Jefferies's imaginative construction of the book was shaped by his knowledge of the Wiltshire Downs and the historic

⁹² This is also discussed in the previous chapter.

sites of the South Coast, which again would associate the book with *Wild Life in a Southern County* (1878) and his time on the South Coast during 1880 and 1881. The 'Old House', the seat of the Aquila family, with the 'South Road' running through it, recalls the layout of the hillforts on the Wiltshire Downs which are intersected by the Ridgeway.⁹³ The archaeologist Hodder M. Westropp comments that Britain has 'several instances of such earth-ramparts' which provide 'evidence of the custom of that primitive period', and cites the 'most interesting' example as Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight.⁹⁴ Jefferies probably visited the Isle of Wight in 1874 when he stayed at Ventnor. Matthews and Trietel have suggested that this may have been his honeymoon destination after his marriage in July.⁹⁵

Although there is no definitive evidence that Jefferies visited Carisbrooke Castle — his earliest known literary notebook being 1876 — the castle's position at the centre of the island and part of the capital town made it one of the best-known tourist attractions, and he probably would have visited it with his wife during their trip in 1874. However, an earlier reference to Carisbrooke Castle in 'History of Swindon' (1867–8) suggests that he might have visited the island in the late 1860s. The reference to Carisbrooke occurs in relation to Snap village in Wiltshire, 'where there is a deep well, with a wheel made to revolve by a pony'. He adds a footnote — 'Cf the well at Carisbrooke Castle'⁹⁶ — which refers to the extant well at the castle rotated by the plodding action of a donkey. The absence of a reference for this footnote,

⁹³ Cherbury Camp in Wiltshire is one of the only forts to be intersected by the Ridgeway, and is part of the chain of sites in the Vale of White Horse.

⁹⁴ Hodder Michael Westropp, *Early and Imperial Rome* (London: E. Stock, 1884), p. 2.

⁹⁵ *The Forward Life*, p. 65.

⁹⁶ *Jefferies' Land*, p. 97.

and the use of 'Cf', meaning 'confer', suggests that he may be alluding to his own knowledge of the Castle, rather than having taken the information from a secondary source. Furthermore, a visit to the Isle of Wight — particularly well-known for its wealth and diversity of archaeological sites — would fit into the chronology of his interests at this time. His research for his histories, published in the *North Wilts Herald*, reached its climax during the late 1860s and early 1870s in 'History of Swindon', 'History of Malmesbury', 'History of Cirencester', and *A Memoir of the Goddards* (1873). These texts featured tens of historical and archaeological sites, including castles, priories, stone circles, caves, monoliths, and churches, and the Isle of Wight would have been of particular interest to Jefferies.⁹⁷

Jefferies's notebook entry concerning his visit of 1874 reads: 'the intense love and beauty of nature — every grain of sand — I can see the grains at Ventnor now '74 and the fragments of pebbles joy in each. But not in this the answer to the soul. A double feeling'.⁹⁸ The Isle of Wight was a retreat not only for those seeking health remedies, but for writers, artists and aristocracy. Queen Victoria had a residence at Osborne House, and Ventnor itself was frequented by royalty from other countries who came to support the charitable body in charge of the Royal National Hospital for Consumption, built half a mile outside of Ventnor in 1869. The hospital had an illustrious

⁹⁷ Andrew Rossabi has pointed out that the house belonging to Jefferies' Aunt — 'Shanklin Villa' — may indicate a family connection with the Isle of Wight, and that Jefferies could have visited the island with his Aunt and Uncle when he lived with them in the 1860s (private conversation June 2012).

⁹⁸ Cited in Matthews and Trietel, p. 65.

patronage and ran fundraising events, including a biennial festival, supported by royalty, peerage, and local celebrities.⁹⁹

The reference in *After London* to a steep sloping down grazed by wild goats and deer is reminiscent of the stretch of coast around Ventnor. Now, as in the nineteenth century, wild goats graze the slopes of Bonchurch Down at Ventnor to control the growth of scrub. In the 1870s, when Ventnor was known as a resort for consumptives due to its temperate climate, goats were regularly shipped over from the mainland. They were kept on the southern, wilder side of the island for their milk, which was believed to be a remedy for tuberculosis. A news column from the *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle* in 1869 observed that:

A flock of about twenty or thirty goats were landed on the slipway Tuesday last. It appears that many poor people at the back and central parts of the island find that the animals can be kept with very little trouble, and that they find ample sustenance where a sheep or cow would starve; and a demand for them has in consequence sprung up. As goats' milk is esteemed very nourishing by medical men, especially to those who have a consumptive tendency, it finds a ready sale in Ventnor and Bonchurch at the rather high price of 8ds per quart.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ See an account of the Biennial festival in April 1872, attended by the Bishop of Winchester. The article remarks that a 'large and influential' gathering supported the event ('Multiple arts and culture items', *Standard*, 1 April 1872, p. 3.) In 1874, the year Jefferies was in Ventnor, the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia visited the hospital in August and planted 2 trees ('English and Foreign Gleanings', *Star*, 22 August 1874, np). In September 1874 there was a nationally publicised Grand Bazaar and Promenade Concert held under the patronage of the Empress of Austria (*Isle of Wight Observer*, 19 September 1874, p. 5).

¹⁰⁰ Anon., 'Isle of Wight', *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, 10 July 1869, p. 9.

Jefferies's reference to deer grazing in open parkland in *After London* would fit with the history of the island which has been grazed by deer since the eighteenth century. An article in the *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle* (1848) states that deer are especially common in Appuldurcombe Park:

This Park, the seat of the Earl of Yarborough, is one of the most extensive and attractive residences in the Isle of Wight [...] [It] includes one of the highest eminences in the island, from whence the sea can be seen nearly all round; and a view of many interesting parts of England is likewise obtained. The park is beautifully interspersed with fine old trees, principally ashes, oaks, and horse chestnuts; it is pastured by a herd of goats and deer, which add much to its romantic grandeur.¹⁰¹

The vantage-points of Carisbrooke and Appuldurcombe Park would have afforded a unique perspective of the south of England and the course of the Solent, on which the 'Sweet Water Sea' of *After London* may have been modelled. Geology has established that the Solent is a strait created by the erosive action of the sea through a narrow gap. During the Roman era it was possible to wade across to the island at low tide. The Solent narrows between the headland of Hurst Castle and the cliff top crowned by Fort Albert, so that the two points almost connect. The geography is reminiscent of the narrowing

¹⁰¹ Anon., *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, 3 June 1848, p. 4.

straits of White Horse in *After London*, where 'north and south' almost meet. Moreover, the formation of the Solent, when standing on ground level, appears more like a river, and seems disconnected from the English Channel. The close proximity of open down land, beech forest, and wooded valleys, fringed at the extremity by white chalk cliffs, recalls the landscape of the Isle of Wight, described thus in 1872:

All readers surely know the white chalk, the special feature and the special pride of the south of England. All know its softly-rounded downs, its vast beech woods, its short and sweet turf, its snowy cliffs, which have given — so some say — to the whole island the name of Albion — the white land.¹⁰²

There is no doubt that the 'inland lake' of *After London* is partly derived from Coate Reservoir and Jefferies's home landscape; as John Fowles writes in his introduction to *After London*, the book sprang from 'that unassuageable inner landscape, or lost domain, of the early years at Coate Farm near Swindon'.¹⁰³ However, the perspective over the south of England from the Isle of Wight could have broadened Jefferies's vision of his homeland and encouraged the more ambitious version of his autobiographical *The Rise of Maximin*.

Further evidence for the role of the Isle of Wight in the formation of *After London* can be seen in similarities between Thyma Castle — the home of Aurora — and Carisbrooke Castle. Jefferies describes Thyma Castle as

¹⁰² 'Cosham', *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, 12 October 1872, p. 8.

¹⁰³ John Fowles, 'Introduction', in Richard Jefferies, *After London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. xiv.

situated 'fifteen miles to the south', 'the last outpost of civilisation', which is compatible with the position of the Isle of Wight directly south of Jefferies's Wiltshire landscape. Carisbrooke constitutes a mediaeval fortress on the site of a late Norman fortified stronghold, with Roman and Saxon associations, and is unique for its encapsulation of centuries of human history into one place. In this respect the site embodies Jefferies's ambition in *After London* to represent a broad spectrum of human history, from primitive to mediaeval society. Carisbrooke was twinned with Pevensey Castle as both were part of the same Saxon Shore defence system. As noted by Westropp, Pevensey was a good example of this combination of different eras, but Carisbrooke was better.¹⁰⁴

Westropp describes Carisbrooke as 'surrounded by earthen ramparts of British origin, while the massive Norman keep stands upon a lofty artificial mound (the original British fastness), overlooking the rest of the hill.'¹⁰⁵ The castle stands in the wooded Bowcombe valley, fringed by Bowcombe and Garston Downs.¹⁰⁶ The area was a favourite haunt of Tennyson, a resident of the Island, whose work Jefferies often cited, and there is a 'Tennyson Walk' through beech trees to the right of the castle.¹⁰⁷ Fenimore Cooper noted in 1837 that the vale contained both the town of Newport and the village of Carisbrooke, with the castle situated on its own hill within:

¹⁰⁴ *Early and Imperial Rome*, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix 6.

¹⁰⁷ In the nineteenth century, beech trees populated this area of the island. Cf. Berthold Seeman, who wrote that 'in the station at Carisbrooke Castle only Beech-trees occur', *Journal of Botany: British and Foreign* (London: West, Newman and Co., 1871), p. 301.

Externally, it is a pile of high battlemented wall, completely buried in ivy, forming within a large area, that was once subdivided into courts, of which however, there are, at present, scarcely any remains. We found an old woman as warder, who occupied a room or two in a sort of cottage that had been made out of the ruins. The part of the edifice which had been the prison of Charles I. was a total ruin, resembling any ordinary house, without roof, floors, or chimneys [...] The whole work stands on a high irregular ridge of a rocky hill, the keep being much the most elevated.¹⁰⁸

Jefferies describes Thyma as enclosed by a 'high' wall, without 'towers or bastions', which recalls the layout of Carisbrooke before the later addition of its towered gateway:¹⁰⁹

The ground suddenly sloped down into a valley, beyond which rose the Downs; the castle stood on a green isolated low hill, about half-way across the vale. To the left a river wound past; to the right the beech forest extended as far as the eye could see.¹¹⁰ The slope at their feet had been cleared of all but a few hawthorn bushes. [...]

¹⁰⁸ J. Fenimore Cooper, *Recollections of Europe* (Paris: J. Smith, 1837).

¹⁰⁹ For photographs of Carisbrooke please refer to Appendix 6.

¹¹⁰ The order of words 'extended as far as' only occurs in *The Amateur Poacher*. 'The rushes grew nearer the shore of the meadow — the old ones yellow, the young green: in places this fringe of rush and sedge and flag must have been five or six yards wide, and it extended as far as could be seen up the brook' (p. 50). Also *Restless Human Hearts* vol. 2: 'Their boughs met overhead, forming a pointed arch, which extended as far as the eye could see, till the effect of perspective lessened its distinctness, and the path seemed to lose itself in a wall of leaves which receded' (p. 185). The full phrase 'extended as far as the eye could see' occurs four times in *The Rise of Maximin* (Oxon: Petton Books, 2012), pp. 111, 129, 139, 178), thus further connecting the work with *After London*. These were published in the middle period of

Down in the valley the stockade began; it was not wide but long. The enclosure extended on the left to the bank of the river, and two fields on the other side of it. On the right it reached a mile and a half or nearly, the whole of which was overlooked from the spot where they had passed. Within the enclosures the corn crops were green and flourishing; horses and cattle, ricks and various buildings, were scattered about it. The town or cottages of the serfs were on the bank of the river immediately beyond the castle. On the Downs, which rose a mile or more on the other side of the castle, sheep were feeding; part of the ridge was wooded and part open. Thus the cultivated and enclosed valley was everywhere shut in with woods and hills.

The isolated round hill on which the castle stood was itself enclosed with a second stockade; the edge of the brow above that again was defended by a stout high wall of flints and mortar, crenellated at the top. There were no towers or bastions. An old and ivy-grown building stood inside the wall; it dated from the time of the ancients; it had several gables, and was roofed with tiles. This was the dwelling-house. The gardens were situated on the slope between the wall and the inner stockade. Peaceful as the scene appeared, it had been the site of furious fighting not many years ago. The Downs trended to the south,

Jefferies's career, 1875–1879, thus associating the language and formation of *After London* with this time.

where the Romany and the Zingari resided, and a keen watch was kept both from the wall and from the hills beyond.

Both Cooper and Jefferies mention the presence of extensive ivy, and Cooper's reference to a one-or two-roomed dwelling may relate to Jefferies's description of the dwelling house within the walls of Thyma, which has only two rooms. The buildings within the walls of Carisbrooke range in date and history, and like the dwelling house of Thyma, most have tiled roofs and gables. Felix's excursion away from the castle during the feast leads him through gardens on tiered slopes and onto a road that leads into a town — 'It consisted of some hundred or more houses, built of wood and thatched, placed without plan or arrangement on the bank of the stream. Only one long street ran through it, the rest were mere by-ways'. The setting of thatched houses on the bank of a stream, the castle on a hill above, and tiered gardens, matches the terraced gardens of Carisbrooke which lead to Carisbrooke village. Lukely stream runs through the village, and in the nineteenth century the village dwellings were thatched. The close proximity of Thyma Castle to a river and a Beech forest fits with the setting of Carisbrooke, where the River Medina, one of the major rivers on the island, runs through Carisbrooke village. In addition to a line of Beech trees along one of the lanes leading to the castle, there is a beech forest on Carisbrooke Castle Hill, described in a contemporary online account:

There are many impressive Beech trees on the banks of the lane, which was used as one of five emergency retreat routes to the castle

when a French invasion threatened [...] Before joining Castle Hill pause to view the Beech trees behind you to your left — they are among the tallest on the Island. Beech woods are uncommon on the Island and this one does well as it is sheltered from prevailing, salt-laden south westerly winds.¹¹¹

Further suggestion that Thyma was modelled on Carisbrooke can be found in Felix's strolling 'to and fro on the bowling green', which Jefferies specifically refers to as being 'at the rear of the castle'. The bowling green at Carisbrooke is a large green expanse situated to the rear of the castle, and was created for Charles I when he was imprisoned there. Aurora's request to have the ruined chapel at Thyma rebuilt may be recalling the commissioning of the original chapel at Carisbrooke by Countess Isabella in the 13th Century. Jefferies describes the chapel as 'beside the castle, long since fallen to decay', which corresponds to the location of the chapel of St. Nicholas at Carisbrooke next to the castle's main gate. Historian William Page recorded that the chapel building of 1734 was partly dismantled in 1856 to create a 'pseudo ruin', which is what Jefferies would have seen during his visit in 1874, or before.¹¹² Built on the same site as the Norman chapel of 1070, the building remained in this ruinous condition until it was rebuilt and repaired in 1904, seventeen years after Jefferies's death.

¹¹¹ The Histree Trail, 'Champions and Churchyards' <<http://www.histreetrail.com/documents/Champions%20&%20Churchyards.pdf>> [accessed 20 November 2012].

¹¹² William Page, 'Parishes: Carisbrooke', *A History of the County of Hampshire*, Vol. 5 (1912), pp. 221–235 <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42081>> [accessed 25 March 2012]. Appendix 6 shows a postcard of St. Nicholas Chapel in 1905, the year after it was rebuilt.

Jefferies may also have borrowed from the castle's history in his depiction of the Baroness. The owner of the castle in the 13th Century was Isabella de Fortibus, Countess of Devon, who inherited large estates in the Isle of Wight and became one of the richest women in England. Isabella is known to have been the first person to use glass in the windows at Carisbrooke, and during the thirty years that she lived there she made many improvements to the castle. In *After London*, Jefferies specifically refers to 'a large window' at Thyra — 'now thrown wide open that the sweet spring air might enter, which window was the pride of the Baroness, for it contained more true glass than any window in the palace of the Prince [...] preserved with the greatest care through the long years past'.¹¹³ The photos in Appendix 6 show a similar window at Carisbrooke named 'Countess Isabella's Window'.

The history of the chapel, the Norman origins of Carisbrooke, and Jefferies's use of the Norman family name 'Aquila' for his hero, all point to the author's affinity with the Norman era. More specific allusions, which directly associate the civilisation of *After London* with the Norman period, occur in the description of the great banquet held at Thyra Castle where the guests drink from 'flagons of maple wood' and 'earthenware cup[s]'.¹¹⁴ Jefferies's reference to 'the thin wine of Gloucester, costly as it was, grown in the vineyard there, and shipped across the Lake, and rendered still more expensive by risk of pirates' recalls William of Malmesbury — leading historian of the 12th Century — who recorded the main vineyards of the Norman era as having been in the

¹¹³ *After London*, p. 118.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 123.

Vale of Gloucester, and 'the wine of Gloucester' to have been as good as French wines.¹¹⁵

Jefferies's imaginative portrayal of the condition of 'wild England' and the nature of its inhabitants stemmed partly from his interest in even earlier epochs of British history. These debates were epitomised by publications such as Samuel Lysons's *Our British Ancestors: who and what were they?* (1865), which, based on a paucity of material evidence, were partly guided by conjecture, and left the terrain of the imagination open to further suggestion. Jefferies's desire to experience ancient British landscapes contributed to the publication of *Red Deer* (1884), a topographical and observational study of the wild red deer on Exmoor. When researching the book in the summer of 1883, Jefferies befriended Arthur Heal, huntsman of the Devon and Somerset Stag Hounds, and accompanied him on excursions around Exmoor to learn about the habits of the deer and the technicalities of the chase. In *After London*, where society has returned to a mediaeval state of 'barbarism', Felix depends upon his skills as an archer and hunter to survive. The research for *Red Deer* allowed Jefferies to experience firsthand the finer details of the chase, and provided valuable insight into an ancient form of human occupation and relationship with the land and its wild inhabitants. His wish to observe and record stag hunting on Exmoor, rather than sporting activities

¹¹⁵ John Steane remarks in *The Archaeology of Medieval England and Wales* that 'William of Malmesbury in the twelfth century describes the Vale of Gloucester as the principal wine-growing district in England' (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1985), p. 276. See also James Eccleston (1847): 'Gardens, orchards, and vineyards are mentioned in the great survey, and the wine of Gloucester is said by William of Malmesbury to have been very little inferior to the wines of France'. *An Introduction to English Antiquities: intended as a companion to the History of England* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1847), p. 124.

taking place in Sussex or Wiltshire, also symbolised his developing vision — moving outwards from Coate as the centre of his boyhood and his literary imagination — to explore new territories, not only geographically, but spiritually too.

In *Red Deer* he refers to the range of sports that took place on Exmoor, including salmon fishing, otter hunting, stag hunting, black game shooting, as well as pheasant and partridge shooting. Often he seeks to sensitively portray the instincts of the deer and afford the animal — as the object of the chase — a point of view. He relays, for example, the common occurrence of a hind under pursuit by hounds seeking to ensure her fawn is safe.¹¹⁶ Jefferies's motives for writing the book have not been plainly defined, but the project clearly continues his desire to observe and record activity in the landscape, a process imbued with deeper spiritual meaning. In a letter to Charles Longman, sent with the manuscript of the book, Jefferies wrote: 'The chase of the wild stag is a bit out of the life of the fifteenth century brought down to our own times. Nothing has interested me so much'.¹¹⁷ His fascination with the chase in *Red Deer*, which he perceives as a link to the previous centuries, continues a stream of thought from *The Story of My Heart*, which celebrates the relationship between the hunter and the hunted. The only mention of the chase in *The Story of My Heart* is directly associated with his prehistoric imagination:

¹¹⁶ *Red Deer*, p. 184.

¹¹⁷ Samuel J. Looker and Crichton Porteous, *Richard Jefferies: Man of the Fields* (London: John Baker, 1965), p. 193.

My heart looks back and sympathises with all the joy and life of ancient time. With the circling dance burned in still attitude on the vase; with the chase and the hunter eagerly pursuing, whose javelin trembles to be thrown; with the extreme fury of feeling, the whirl of joy in the warriors from Marathon to the last battle of Rome, not with the slaughter, but with the passion — the life in the passion; with the garlands and the flowers; with all the breathing busts that have panted beneath the sun. O beautiful human life! Tears come in my eyes as I think of it. So beautiful, so inexpressibly beautiful!¹¹⁸

Jefferies states that his passion was ‘not with the slaughter’ but with the pageant of human life as he imagines it through the ages. While his experience of the London crowds denotes anxiety at the emptiness of ordinary human goals and aspirations, his portrayal of prehistoric hunters and warriors suggests a more noble form of human occupation, closely associated with the natural and animal worlds. This connection between the mind of man, nature and animals is something that Jefferies believed that modern living — especially city living — was losing touch with.

In *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies uses the idea of the chase to explain the subtle workings of the mind and soul. He records his thoughts and feelings on the Wiltshire Downs, imagining a time when man ‘hurled the spear and shot with the bow’. The landscape had been the site of many battles, possibly including the Battle of Baden where the British fought the invading Saxons. Jefferies’s own battle was an inner one, which has been frequently

¹¹⁸ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 93.

misunderstood. W. J. Keith in his *Critical Study* acknowledges the mixed reception that Jefferies's views have received. He suggests that sentences such as 'Give me an iron mace that I may crush the savage beast and hammer him down. A spear to thrust through with, so that I may feel the long blade enter and the push of the shaft', which so disturbed W. H. Hudson, are 'lapses' and evidence of Jefferies's 'strange destructive instinct'.¹¹⁹ He argues that although these passages can be understood more clearly in the context of D. H. Lawrence's phrase 'blood-intimacy', which he discusses with reference to *The Amateur Poacher*, they are 'generally unnecessary elements in the general tenor of the work'.¹²⁰ However, the idea of the chase was an inherent part of Jefferies's developing vision. Jefferies writes of the immense struggle he had in writing the book — being unable to find the right words to express himself, coupled with the feeling that he needed to write such a record at all, however poorly it was (at least initially) received. His interest in the savage human instinct might also be understood in terms of his wish to understand and celebrate the human condition in all its varied states. He perceived that through the ages the fight for survival had remained an enduring instinct that was common to the whole human race, with the savage and brutal being just one exaggerated form.

Jefferies's association with the chase originated from time he spent on the Wiltshire Downs as an adolescent. His records of sporting events formed part of his close observation of society during the 1860s and 1870s. When he was writing for the Swindon papers during the 1860s, hare coursing was

¹¹⁹ W. J. Keith, *Richard Jefferies: a Critical Study* (London Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 95.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

reaching its peak of popularity, with over 150 coursing clubs in Britain, which regularly attracted crowds of up to 80,000 people. The National Coursing Club was established in 1858 to monitor and refine the breeding of pedigree greyhounds in response to the unprecedented level of interest in the sport. It was a unique activity as it crossed the class divide, although by the late-nineteenth century it became a predominantly working class entertainment. The number of agricultural articles Jefferies was writing in the 1870s meant that he attended agricultural events, including fairs, markets, shows, and exhibitions. Many of the farmers and labourers whom Jefferies would have met at these events would have participated in coursing. In his biography of Jefferies, Edward Thomas notes that to the south of Coate, 'close at hand', 'lay the Downs — the solitary, arable slopes, the solid beech clumps, [and] the coursing and racing turf of Ashdown and Lambourn.'¹²¹ Lambourn, a village six miles east of Swindon, is known as the Valley of the Racehorse, and horses have been trained there since the eighteenth century. Even closer to Coate was Ashdown Park, the home of the Earl of Craven, who in the nineteenth century set up his home as one of the most well-known venues in the country for coursing meetings. An article in 1862 in *Baily's Sporting Magazine* illustrates the significance of Ashdown, stating that 'The Ashdown picture is the great talk of the coursing world'.¹²²

In his description of the Wiltshire downs in *The Amateur Poacher*, Jefferies writes that the close proximity of horse-racing establishments adds

¹²¹ Edward Thomas, *Richard Jefferies: his Life and Work* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1909), p. 3.

¹²² Anonymous, 'Our Van', *Baily's Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, 1 February 1862, p. 155.

to the general atmosphere of indulgence, with 'Betting, card-playing, ferret-breeding and dog-fancying, poaching and politics' being the chief occupations of the locals.¹²³ In 'Walks in the Wheatfields', Jefferies writes that 'hares are almost formed on purpose to be good sport' and that 'coursing is capital, the harriers first-rate'. His passion for the sport is further evident in his account of coursing on the Downs in *The Amateur Poacher* — scenes which Edward Thomas identified as 'the finest thing in the book'.¹²⁴ When Jefferies visits the Sarsen public-house, he goes coursing with Dickon, the landlady's son:

Dickon taps the dashboard as the mare at last tops the hill, and away she speeds along the level plateau for the Downs. Two greyhounds are with us; two more have gone on under charge of a boy. Skirting the hills a mile or two, we presently leave the road and drive over the turf; there is no track, but Dickon knows his way [...]

A hare starts from the verge and makes up the Downs. Dickon slips the hounds, and a faint halloo comes from the shepherds and ploughmen. It is a beautiful sight to see the hounds bound over the sward; the sinewy back bends like a bow, but a bow that, instead of an arrow, shoots itself; the deep chests drink the air. Is there any moment as joyful in life as the second when the chase begins?¹²⁵

¹²³ Richard Jefferies, *The Amateur Poacher* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1879), p. 102.

¹²⁴ Edward Thomas, *Richard Jefferies*, p. 123.

¹²⁵ *The Amateur Poacher*, pp. 97–100.

In *World's End* he writes: 'this Down was known as Berbury Hill, and the level plain was often called Berbury racecourse. For from time immemorial rustic sports, and local races between the horses of the neighbouring farmers, had taken place twice a year under the Berbury Hill'.¹²⁶ Jefferies's interests in coursing and racing, and his familiarity with newspapers, may be responsible for the similarities between the names of characters in his work and the names of well-known greyhounds and racehorses of the era which appeared in the sporting pages.¹²⁷ The table in Appendix 7 lists some well-known thoroughbred greyhounds and horses which appeared in the sporting sections of newspapers that Jefferies both read and contributed to, such as the *Daily News* and the *Graphic*. Some of these dogs were racing at Ashdown when Jefferies lived in Swindon, and the horses at Epsom when he was living in Sydenham and Surbiton. There was, for example, a dog named Carlotta racing at Ashdown in 1874, the year before the name featured as the malicious villainess in *Restless Human Hearts*, and in 1879 the Epsom Derby was won by Sir Bevys, which was the name of the protagonist (a young Jefferies) in *Wood Magic* (1881).¹²⁸ However, a number of newspapers appear to have spelt the horse's name as 'Bevis' with an 'i' rather than a 'y'. In the 1860s, a greyhound named 'Dewy Morn' shot to fame in the racing world. Jefferies published a novel with this title in 1884.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ *World's End*, vol. 2, pp. 4–5.

¹²⁷ In 1874 Jefferies proposed a new paper of his own, which never came to fruition. *The Forward Life*, p. 66.

¹²⁸ Anon., 'Coursing', *York Herald*, 8 October 1874, np. In *Wood Magic* the name is spelt "Bevis".

¹²⁹ 'Dewy Morn' was a greyhound who raced to fame during the early days of hare-coursing in the 1860s when she won the prestigious Ardrossan St Leger. 'Sporting Intelligence' in the *Glasgow Herald*, 14 February 1872, p. 5 mentions a hare-coursing event starring a pup called 'The Collier' — from a litter of Dewy Morn and sired by a dog named 'Liddington'. Dewy

Jefferies's notebook entries from 1876 record that he attended the Epsom Derby in June, then one of Britain's largest sporting fixtures. It was the year when he was separated from his wife and young son, while he sought to establish his career. During this time, staying in Surbiton with his aunt Ellen, he wrote short stories for the magazine *London Society* and agricultural articles for the *Livestock Journal*.¹³⁰ From his notebooks it is clear that he attempted to place an article about the Derby Day with several major newspapers to try to gain greater notice. The Derby was one of the most prestigious race meetings in the world and was attended by the full range of society. An account of the event in the *Essex Standard* recorded that 'the attendance at Epsom on Wednesday exceeded that of any other Derby Day', and noted that 'visitors were favoured with the most delightful weather for either road or rail'. The race was won by an outsider — Kisber — which stunned the racing world in Vienna and Hungary. The race was described as 'more interesting this year than ever', with Kisber's 'great victory' stamping him 'beyond doubt as one of the best horses we have seen for some years'.¹³¹

Jefferies approached the racecourse from Epsom Station, from where he could clearly see the racecourse. He notes the 'immense mass of people' at the station, calculating that if 60 trains came to the station platform, each

Morn's owner, John Dunlop, lived in Ayrshire, Scotland. However, the link with Liddington Hill, Wiltshire, might also suggest a local connection. Another greyhound named 'Dewy Morn', which belonged to Mr. R. D. Dugate of the South Essex Racing Club, was born in 1879 and raced at Windsor and Brighton (Greyhound data <<http://www.greyhound-data.com/d?i=1172360>> [accessed 28 January 2013]).

¹³⁰ In the two years following the Derby, Jefferies wrote the following articles about or concerning horses: 'The Horse as a Social Force', *Livestock Journal*, 1877; 'Dangers of Hunting', *Livestock Journal*, 1877, and 'Horses in Relation to Art', *Magazine of Art*, 1878.

¹³¹ Anonymous, 'The Derby Day', *Essex Standard*, *West Suffolk Gazette*, and *Eastern Counties' Advertiser*, 2 June 1876, p. 8.

containing 800 people, this would make 48,000 people.¹³² Jefferies's observation of the exceptional crowds is supported by a report in the *Cheshire Observer* that speculated on the unprecedented size of the crowds:

Great as may have been the gatherings in former years all now have been surpassed. No accurate statistics can be compiled of the hundreds of thousands who annually assemble on the Downs, but a judicious observer who takes a bird's eye view from the commanding height of the top of the Grand Stand can well form a tolerable accurate estimate of the attendance, and compare one year with another. All who attempted this agreed that they never remembered to have seen so great a mass of spectators thronging around that as a centre. Dividing into two solid lines that never lost cohesion as far as Tattenham Corner, streaming down into the hollow, and fairly hiding the hill side up the opposite swell of the Downs. It might be that the estimate of 'more than half a million people' was well founded.¹³³

More than just the extraordinary appearance of the Derby, Jefferies made a note on training — saying that 'nothing can be done without great preparation' and that this was 'a lesson in life to all'. This note to himself reflects the entries in his notebooks for that year, which are tinged with anxiety about the uncertainty of his career, and illustrate his determination to succeed. The note

¹³² These selections are taken from John Pearson's transcriptions of the 1876 notebooks, which were published in part in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 15 (2006), pp. 3–10. Subsequent quotations draw from both the published and unpublished transcriptions.

¹³³ Anon., 'The Derby Day', *Cheshire Observer*, 3 June 1876, p. 8.

could be an early indication of Jefferies's plans to write *The Story of My Heart*, for it is followed by an entry on Sunday 9 July that mentions writing papers about the 'grass and flowers and sun and breeze', and 'my joint religion and truth that I wish to write and publish [...] my own real art thoughts: as well as other things'.

The site of the Derby, high up on Epsom Downs, is a centre which drew people from all over the world. On a clear day, race-goers can see the whole of London from the spot. Ten years later, in *Amaryllis at the Fair* (1887), Jefferies recalls the Derby Day gathering as the finest crowd he had ever witnessed:

The first time I saw the wonderful crowd of the Derby Day — perhaps the largest crowd in the world — I could scarcely believe my eyes, for I found on passing through it that the hundreds of thousands of people there had nothing more to amuse them than they would have found at an ordinary country fair [...] The next finest crowd is the crowd on August bank-holiday all along the Brighton beach, and there it is just the same. Nothing for the folk but Punch, brass bands, and somersaulters — dull old stories in my grandmother's time. Xerxes offered a reward to anyone who could invent him a fresh pleasure — the multitude of the Derby Day and Brighton beach should do the same. But indeed they do, for an immense fortune would certainly be the reward of such a discoverer.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Richard Jefferies, *Amaryllis at the Fair* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1906), p. 109.

This reflection imparts something of the original feelings which Jefferies experienced at the Derby. The sight of the crowds, the expectation and excitement, he perceived were to a large degree dependent on something transient and what he terms 'dull'. He wished for such happiness and enjoyment to be longer, more lasting; to provide what he terms in *The Story of My Heart* 'Something to shape this million-handed labour to an end and outcome, leaving accumulated sunshine and flowers to those who shall succeed'. Horses fascinated Jefferies; he envied their strength, endurance and beauty of form, writing in *The Story of My Heart* that he wished himself to be 'physically perfect, in shape, vigour, and movement', and that his own build was disappointingly 'slender' — a frame that would 'not respond to labour, [nor] increase in proportion to effort'.¹³⁵ In a similar way to his appreciation of horses' 'grace of movement'¹³⁶ that was unique to the animal, he believed that contact with the environment through sport or observation of physical activity could benefit and improve the mind and physique of humans, bringing him 'a more eager desire of soul-life':

Splendid it is to feel the boat rise to the roller, or forced through by the sail to shear the foam aside like a share; splendid to undulate as the chest lies on the wave, swimming, the brimming ocean round, then I know and feel its deep strong tide, its immense fulness, and the sun glowing over; splendid to climb the steep green hill: in these I feel myself, I drink the exquisite joy of the senses, and my soul lifts itself

¹³⁵ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 89.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

with them. It is beautiful even to watch a fine horse gallop, the long stride, the rush of the wind as he passes — my heart beats quicker to the thud of the hoofs, and I feel his strength. Gladly would I have the strength of the Tartar stallion roaming the wild steppe; that very strength, what vehemence of soul-thought would accompany it. But I should like it, too, for itself. For I believe, with all my heart, in the body and the flesh, and believe that it should be increased and made more beautiful by every means.¹³⁷

Rich in human and animal life, the races could well have been an incentive to Jefferies to follow his own course; to pursue the objective which he outlined in the poem 'The Grave of the Last Abbot' in 1869 to 'overthrow' the dark ignorance that clothed the human mind, and admit the light.¹³⁸ The summer of 1876 was certainly a time for reflection. That he had *The Story of My Heart* in mind is suggested by his description of a trip he took to Worthing to visit the sea — in response to a feeling that he was 'getting farther and farther from that which was truest within'.¹³⁹ He describes it as 'a true Pilgrimage [...] back to the truth and the reality', an afternoon spent amongst corn fields, by the waves, and amongst living things.¹⁴⁰

By this time Jefferies had discovered that writing about what he knew about nature and the countryside could offer a vehicle of expression for his true inner thoughts and feelings. It could be that the vibrancy of the Derby Day

¹³⁷ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 90.

¹³⁸ *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies*, p. 38.

¹³⁹ *The Story of My Heart*, ed. by Samuel J. Looker (London: Constable and Company, 1947), pp. 168–9.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 169. Jefferies records seeing wheatears and ripening corn, which indicates the summer, possibly a month or so after the Derby at Epsom.

experience, and his observations of the formulation and design behind the success of a Derby winner, strengthened his own resolve to condense his thoughts and feelings into the form of a book. Moreover, there are two historical figureheads that feature in *The Story of My Heart*, both of which Jefferies would have associated with the 1876 Derby. He notes that the crowds remind him of Xerxes's army: 'the black dots move across the dim sun as you approach from Epsom Station'.¹⁴¹ Xerxes was King of Persia in 486 BC and features in Jefferies's notebooks, in *The Story of My Heart*, and in *Amaryllis at the Fair*. The second figurehead which appears in *The Story of My Heart* is Julius Caesar, which was the name of the horse that came third behind Kisber that day at the Derby. Both Xerxes and Caesar are presented in *The Story of My Heart* as symbols of leadership and ambition, qualities which Jefferies saw to a degree in himself and wished to develop.

Jefferies's observations of horse racing encouraged reflection on the spiritual relationship between man and horse, which had its origins in primitive times. In *After London* Felix lives in Wiltshire, on the remaining uplands, and the prehistoric chalk White Horse at Uffington, Berkshire, is one of the book's fictional landmarks. The symbol of the galloping horse is used to convey courage and strengthen the connection between Felix and his prehistoric ancestors. The lake across which he sails is divided into two by 'the straits of White Horse, where vessels are often weather-bound, and cannot make way against the wind', and where ships are forced to slow down and are sometimes pulled along by ropes from the banks. When Felix sets sail on the

¹⁴¹ Descriptions of an ominous marching army in *The Rise of Maximin* bears similarity to this note: see pp. 140–1.

great lake on an 'unknown voyage', he passes the White Horse, which is the last 'bold headland' before the open sea:

As he drew near White Horse, five white terns, or sea-swallows, flew over; he did not welcome their appearance, as they usually preceded rough gales. The headland, wooded to its ridge, now rose high against the sky; ash and nut-tree and hawthorn had concealed the ancient graven figure of the horse upon its side, but the tradition was not forgotten, and the site retained its name.

The White Horse was the subject of an article published in the *Child's Companion* (1878) which described the monument as:

a white horse, a *very* white horse, and an old horse, a *very* old horse. We cannot be quite sure *how* old it is, but it must be, we believe, nearly a thousand years since its birth [...] in a wide and fertile valley — a valley dotted with haycocks, and green with the fresh springing corn; the shadow of a range of soft seedling downs falls across it, and on the steep hillside yonder, sharp and clear, stands out the figure of a giant horse. It is not standing still as if its work was done; but galloping at full speed, as if hurrying in the race or rushing to the battle.¹⁴²

The article identifies the hill as the site of King Alfred's battle against the Danes, who are described as 'rude and savage' and armed with 'battle-axes

¹⁴² M. K. M., 'The Horse on the Hill', *Child's Companion*, 1 March 1878, p. 40.

and bows and arrows'. The White Horse was then ordered to be carved at the request of Alfred to mark his victory. Jefferies writes that although years of social and political unrest have caused the site to become overgrown, the tradition of scouring the horse 'was not forgotten'.¹⁴³ Andrew Radford identifies the White Horse in *After London* as representing 'a cluster of evocative legends that encrypt clues about the nation in its moment of origin'.¹⁴⁴ He calls the book a 'determinedly sombre opus' that is ambivalent towards Felix's future and that shows an England that has 'forfeited [its] cultural identity'.¹⁴⁵ However, this state of cultural flux is perhaps necessary to illuminate the enduring archetypal symbols of humanity which are too often masked over by the 'overgrowth' of social and political influences. The loosening of these structures provides the opportunity for Felix to explore, more liberally, the meaning of his existence. This newfound freedom in embracing the disintegration of social customs is epitomised when Felix encounters a servant and struggles to overcome his prejudices:

He felt it an important moment; he felt that he was himself, as it were, on the balance; should he adhere to the ancient prejudice, the ancient exclusiveness of his class, or should he boldly follow the dictate of his mind? He chose the latter, and extended his hand to the servant as he rose to say good-bye. The act was significant; it recognised man as

¹⁴³ Jefferies discusses the history and origins of the White Horse in 'History of Swindon', *Jefferies' Land*, ed. Grace Toplis (London: Simpkin, Martial, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1896), pp. 126–130. He refers to having read *Scouring of the White Horse*, written by Thomas Hughes in 1859.

¹⁴⁴ *Mapping the Wessex Novel*, p. 84.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

distinct from caste. The servant did not know the conflict that had taken place.¹⁴⁶

In a manner reminiscent of the 'bold' White Horse, which has become an implicit 'landmark [sic] of the mind', Felix 'boldly follow[s]' his own inclination to transcend the notion of servitude and accepts the servant as an equal.¹⁴⁷ The White Horse is thus not, as Radford suggests, a 'cultural' motif symbolising long-lost belief systems, but an enduring part of the human psyche. Invested with courage by its long association with previous battles on the site, the horse is internalised by Felix as a symbol of the human endurance and bravery experienced through centuries by the prehistoric peoples who created it.¹⁴⁸ As such, the horse is manifested in Felix at a critical moment when he gathers the courage to fight for his life in a tribal battle: 'Now the rage of battle burned in Felix; his eyes gleamed, his lips were open, his nostrils wide like a horse running a race'.

¹⁴⁶ *After London*, p. 188.

¹⁴⁷ In *The Amateur Poacher* Jefferies writes: 'By night the stars shine, and there is no fathoming the dark spaces between those brilliant points, nor the thoughts that come as it were between the fixed stars and landmarks of the mind' (p. 240).

¹⁴⁸ An earlier affiliation between prehistoric sites and the symbol of the galloping horse occurs in *Wild Life in a Southern County* where Jefferies describes the Ridgeway as a 'broad green track'. This term featured in written accounts of race meetings. *Bell's Magazine* recounts that: 'just as a clearance of the course had been effected [...] attention was directed in an opposite direction by the buzz of admiration which on all sides greeted the unmistakeable fitness of Gladiateur, as [...] he was led down the broad green track to the saddling enclosure.' *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 3 June 1865, p. 4. Gladiateur's victory at Epsom was unparalleled until the dramatic win by Kisber at the 1876 Derby. The phrase continued to be used in the 1880s: 'the broad green track down which the horses are to come' ('The Derby Day', *Standard*, 6 June 1889, p. 3). And in the 1890s: 'when the eye wearies of the broad green track, with its clamorous and multi-coloured crowd, it has only to turn to that great belt of trees which rise like a primeval forest against the horizon. The plain that stretched to the course is one of verdant meadows and wood ridges. All these were at their best, green and bright and full of Summer promise' ('The Ascot Races', *Standard*, 15 June 1898, p. 8).

In the landscape of *After London* the White Horse is a symbolic crossing point — ‘the key of the world’ — where north and south meet. When planning his voyage Felix uses the hill as a vantage-point to assess the best route for his sea voyage:

What was there behind the immense and untraversed belt of forest which extended to the south, to the east, and west? Where did the great Lake end? Were the stories of the gold and silver mines of Devon and Cornwall true? And where were the iron mines, from which the ancients drew their stores of metal?

Led by these thoughts he twice or thrice left his labour, and walking some twenty miles through the forests, and over the hills, reached the summit of White Horse [...] North and South there nearly met. There was but a furlong of water between them. If ever the North came down there the armies would cross. *There was the key of the world.*

Jefferies’s identification of the spot as a crossing point for the northern armies, to invade the south, senses the place’s potential to facilitate conflict and change, a characteristic that befits the historical importance of White Horse hill as a site of battle.

However, the symbol of a key is brimful of potential to unlock, or to open, a door into a new state or condition, and can be understood as a metaphor for Felix’s aspiration to begin his journey into unknown lands. An anonymous article (1877) about the allegorical meaning of keys refers to their

'mysterious' and 'extraordinary multiplying powers'. The author remarks that stray keys represent locked potential:

you have forgotten or you have failed to learn what that key could have unlocked for you; it remains a monument of vanished possibilities, those chief though unknown disappointments of life; it is the visible but unintelligible record of something you ought to have and have not [...] Maybe we are richer in such keys than we know. Maybe we possess some of them allegorically as well as tangibly [...] [W]hen we have all learned, men and women, to keep and to use our real and our metaphorical keys, the Golden Age will have returned, considerably improved, and we shall be a world of sages.¹⁴⁹

The key was a powerful symbol in the nineteenth century and was closely associated with personal property and objects of value. Jefferies's incorporation of the symbol into the landscape of *After London* might be understood as a metaphor for his overall ambition for the book. Miller and Matthews suggest that the characters of Felix and Aurora represent Jefferies and his wife, Jessie.¹⁵⁰ W. J. Keith noted his surprise that criticism had not explored the 'autobiographical possibilities' of *After London*.¹⁵¹ Miller and Matthews suggest that *After London*, if written during the time Jefferies was trying to put together *The Story of My Heart*, 'may have been a kind of alternative autobiography [...] a genuine attempt to make sense of his life as it

¹⁴⁹ 'Keys', *Examiner*, 11 November 1876, p. 1268.

¹⁵⁰ Miller and Matthews, p. 437.

¹⁵¹ W. J. Keith, *Richard Jefferies: A Critical Study*, cited in Miller and Matthews, p. 437.

was'.¹⁵² They hypothesise that Felix's journey represents the aforementioned 'unhappy period of enforced absence from his loved ones' of 1876 when Jefferies lived in London while looking for work.¹⁵³ The romance between Felix and Aurora symbolises a time of hope, romance, ambition and resolve; when on honeymoon with his new wife, Jefferies was making preparations for their future and for their first child, born in May 1875. The role of the symbolic key in the context of the White Horse — one of the most prominent and mysterious archaeological monuments in Wiltshire — embodies the aspiration of the young Jefferies to unlock his potential as a husband, father, and writer. Furthermore, Felix's adventure into the buried city represents Jefferies's endeavour to retrieve or unlock an inaccessible part of his self, or soul — preparation for *The Story of My Heart* which is a more obviously metaphysical voyage.¹⁵⁴ His statement that 'the mind of so many thousand years has worked round and round inside the circle of these three ideas as a boat on an inland lake. Let us haul it over the belt of land, launch on the ocean, and sail outwards' represents a move forward from *After London*, where Felix's adventure, mimicking Bevis's experience on the reservoir, is essentially contained within the parameters of the inland lake.¹⁵⁵ The 'boat' of *The Story of My Heart* aims to get beyond the 'narrow circle' of the lake and 'launch on the ocean', thus representing a bolder and genuinely unknown experiment in autobiographical content and style.

¹⁵² Miller and Matthews, p. 437.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ In 'Nature and Books' Jefferies writes: 'Hence it is clear there exists in the intellect a layer, if I may so call it, of thought yet dumb-chambers within the mind which require the key of new words to unlock. Whenever that is done a fresh impetus is given to human progress'. *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 18.

¹⁵⁵ *The Story of My Heart*, p. 40.

The image of a key is employed elsewhere in the book to convey potential. Following the ecological disaster which swamps the south of England, seeds carried by aeronautical spinners are referred to as 'keys', which contribute to the rampant overgrowth of nature in the region:

Of old time the cattle would have eaten off the seed leaves with the grass so soon as they were out of the ground, but now most of the acorns that were dropped by birds, and the keys that were wafted by the wind, twirling as they floated, took root and grew into trees.

In horticulture these twirling seeds are also known as helicopters, and Jefferies's reference to them stems partly from his fascination with flight.¹⁵⁶ In *The Old House at Coate*, with a view to designing his own flying machines, he made the following observation about the flight of insects:

As the engineer touches a valve and immediately the wheels revolve, yet when whirling at their highest speed he does not feel any exertion, so the insect having admitted by conscious will the vital force to the machinery of its flight has no further effort, no more than we have to maintain the beating of the pulse [...] the action of the zoistic electricity

¹⁵⁶ Jenny Kennedy, in *Primary Science: Knowledge and Understanding* writes that 'Ash 'keys', sycamore 'helicopters' and dandelion 'parachutes' are all adapted for dispersal by the wind' (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 45. The word 'helicopter' originates from the French *hélicoptère*, which in 1861 was a neologism invented by Gustave de Ponton d'Amecourt. The Greek etymology of the word stems from *helix/helik* meaning 'twisted, curved' and *pteron* meaning 'wing'. The *Annual Record of Science and Industry* for 1874–78 notes that the first helicopter was constructed in 1784 by Launoy and Bienverin. The first machine helicopter was perfected in 1871 and could rise to eight feet (*Annual Record of Science and Industry*, ed. by Spencer Fullerton Baird (London: Harper Brothers, 1876), p. 503).

re-commences, and they buzz across the fields, traversing distances which, in comparison with their own size are immense¹⁵⁷

The 'whirling' of insects' wings is compared to the 'leaf which the wind whirls' and both are processes driven by a vital force. *Webster's Dictionary* for 1913 defines 'Zoism' as an obsolete biological doctrine that attributed the 'phenomena of life [...] to a peculiar vital principle; the theory of vital force.' As the passage forms part of a wider discussion about the life force, this is likely to be the definition which Jefferies was working with. However, *Webster* further defines the term as 'reverence for animal life or belief in animal powers and influences, as among savages'. Spirals were prominent symbols in prehistoric art and depicted an inner journey or movement.¹⁵⁸ Ernest Albert

¹⁵⁷ *The Old House at Coate*, pp. 73–74.

¹⁵⁸ Mabel Beatty wrote of the spiral that: 'This symbol is found in every kind of place, in every type of manifestation, in fact, all progress is a spiral, and hence the spiral is the symbol of evolution in all planes of existence. The true spiral begins from a small whorl and gradually increases in circumference or girth, or the better word is extent. Imagine the Centre (and remember no symbol can start without this centre), and from this Centre, which is Life, issues life Essence. Essence suggests a loosely woven or cloudy emanation, fluid or gaseous; this essence is projected, whether in a dense cloud or tenuous one, it takes on a shape of rings of ever widening extent, just as a pebble thrown in a pond causes ever widening rings of movement on the surface, so these sparks of Divine Life or Energy, sent off from the Great Centre, depart into what we must call space, and as they go they cause rippling or vibratory clouds; as they pursue their course there is apparently no mathematical precision in their work, yet every turn of the spiral, every ripple of vibration bears a perfect proportion to the preceding ripple of vibration.' *Man Made Perfect: The Science of Spiritual Evolution* (Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2005), p. 88.

The image of a spiral features in the following of Jefferies's works:

'Round the cone a strip of thin lathing is coiled on a spiral; could any one stand on these steps and draw the inside [...] Could perspective be so managed as to give the idea of the diminishing hollow and spiral?' *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 49

'Bevis drew several sketches to try and get at it, and at last twisted the end into a spiral of two turns. The match, which is a piece of cord prepared to burn slowly, was to be inserted in the spiral' (*Bevis*, p. 220).

'He flies to the trunk of the apple tree (other birds fly to the branches), and then proceeds to ascend it, going round it as he rises in a spiral.' *Wild Life in a Southern County*, p. 175

In *Restless Human Hearts*, when Noel becomes entangled in weeds: 'Clearly it was twisted — it was round his leg in a spiral. How to undo a spiral? Why, of course, he must untwist it — that was the secret. But which way must he turn to do so? Experiment only could decide'. Vol. III (London: Tinsley, 1875), p. 13.

Parkyn, in *An Introduction to the Study of Prehistoric Art* (1915) commented on how frequently spiral motifs featured in prehistoric symbolism:

The apparently insoluble, but ever fascinating, question why we are pleased with some designs more than with others is immediately presented to us when we turn to spiral ornament. No simple ornamental motive seems to have so great an attraction as the spiral.¹⁵⁹

Spirals featured in a range of archaeological evidence, from rock carvings to personal ornaments, such as rings and brooches, which suggests that prehistoric man had celebrated the spiral pattern found in nature. Sir Daniel Wilson noted that the 'Wampum' (sacred shell beads) belonging to the Iroquois tribes of North America were 'made of spiral fresh-water shells, strung on deerskin thongs or sinews',¹⁶⁰ and in *The Prehistoric Annals* mentioned the discovery of a 'spiral bronze ring'.¹⁶¹ Reports of Schliemann's activities in Greece recorded a 'treasure trove at Mycenae' which contained 'rock-cut tombs' and handmade pottery 'with rude black or dark red ornamentation of circles and spiral lines'.¹⁶² Schliemann was intent on recovering this 'lost city of treasures', which had been detailed by Homer in *The Iliad*.

¹⁵⁹ Ernest Albert Parkyn, *An Introduction to the Study of Prehistoric Art* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1915), p. 196.

¹⁶⁰ Sir Daniel Wilson, *Prehistoric Man: Researches into the Origin of Civilisation in the Old and the New World*, Vol. 2 (London: Macmillan and Co., 1876), p. 75.

¹⁶¹ *The Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, vol. 1, p. 474.

¹⁶² Letter from Schliemann printed in *Bury and Norwich Post, and Suffolk Herald*, 12 December 1876, p. 2.

Fowles identified Homer's *Odyssey* as the 'principal literary influence' on *After London*.¹⁶³ Both it and *After London* delineate a challenging journey through an unknown landscape and the implicit discovery of new psychic terrain. Like the 'twirling [...] keys' of the sycamore, Felix's movement through the landscape is imbued with potential to change into a new state or condition. Like Odysseus and his relationship with Penelope, Felix is inspired to continue his quest by the love of a woman he has left behind.¹⁶⁴ In 'The Wiltshire Downs', first published in the *Graphic* (1877), Jefferies alludes to a buried city on the slopes beside Liddington Hill:

Down in the valley below see those half-effaced lines and trenches — they are the relics of a buried city, a British city, where the spade has turned up coin and arrow-head, and quern — the stone mortar in which they pounded and ground their corn. The shout of battle, the whistle of the arrow, the groan of the wounded has been heard upon this hill, the green sward has been stained red with the blood of hapless men. The sandalled foot of the Roman has trod the broad green track.¹⁶⁵

Felix's journey to the buried city symbolises Jefferies's attempt to recover what he termed in *The Scarlet Shawl* the 'buried city, a city of the inner heart,

¹⁶³ John Fowles, 'Introduction', in Richard Jefferies, *After London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. xiv.

¹⁶⁴ See also the hero of *The Rise of Maximin*, who is fortified by his feelings for Genevre: 'Sometimes it was almost decided to stay where they were and to found a kingdom; but Maximin's heart remembered Genevre. No, he must push on and return for her' (p. 123).

¹⁶⁵ 'The Wiltshire Downs', *Landscape and Labour*, ed. by John Pearson (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1979), p. 23.

lost and forgotten these many days'.¹⁶⁶ The translation of the image into material form in *After London*, where Felix ventures into the burial site, suggests that the book was the fruition of Jefferies's thought during the 1870s, thus lending support for an early genesis for the book. A further connection between Jefferies and the work of Homer, and evidence that Jefferies directly associated Felix's journey with that of Odysseus, can be found in his description of Felix as 'many-sided', which directly recalls Homer's 'many sided Odysseus'. Notably, spiral designs feature in *The Iliad* to describe the prehistoric craftwork which Hephaestus creates: 'Nine years did I stay with them, and many beautiful works in bronze, brooches, spiral armlets, cups, and chains, did I make for them in their cave, with the roaring waters of Oceanus foaming as they rushed ever past it; and no one knew'.¹⁶⁷

Felix's resolve to begin his journey takes place at a party held by the family of the local Baron, where he feels out of place — 'He heard them allude to him; he quickened his pace, but heard one say, "He's nobody; he hasn't even got a horse"'¹⁶⁸ — and determines to change the course of his life ('he could not stay; he *must* do it').¹⁶⁹ His transformation from 'nobody' to 'King' is achieved through a series of stages. The first occurs when Felix loses his horse in an attack by the wild bushmen who live in the forest and who thieve and kill to survive. Felix becomes the object of the chase itself; alone, without the bravery or protection of his horse (which saved him and took the stray arrow), he has to rely on his resourcefulness. The Bushmen feature in 'Fields

¹⁶⁶ *Restless Human Hearts*, p. 237.

¹⁶⁷ Homer, *The Iliad and The Odyssey*, trans. by Samuel Butler, ed. by James H. Ford (Texas: El Paso Norte Press, 2006), p. 201.

¹⁶⁸ *After London*, p. 126.

¹⁶⁹ *After London*, p. 132.

Sports in Art', published in the same year as *After London*, which discusses the role of the chase in prehistoric consciousness:¹⁷⁰

Deeper than the excitement of the chase lies that inner consciousness which dwells upon and questions itself — the soul of the Cave-man pondered upon itself; the question came to him, as he crouched in the semi-darkness, over the fire which he had stirred, 'Will my form and aerial shadow live on after my death like that which passed but now? Shall I, too, be a living dream?' The reply was, 'Yes, I shall continue to be; I shall start forth from my burial-mound upon the chase in the shadow-land just as now I start forth from my cave. I shall entrap the giant woolly elephant — I shall rejoice at his capture; we shall triumph yet again and again. Let then my spear and knife be buried with me, but chip them first — kill them — that I may use their spirit likenesses in the dream-chase.'

With a keen-edged splinter of flint in the daylight he incised the outlines of the mammoth upon a smooth portion of its tusk — its image was associated with his thoughts of a future life, and thus Art in its earliest inception represented the highest aspirations of man.

If any one asks, is the application of Art to the chase really so old, so very very old, as this? I refer them to the stars. How long ago is it since

¹⁷⁰ Jefferies's earlier interest in the chase is evident in *Bevis* in which the two boys imagine themselves to be 'savages' who hunt (p. 82). *The Gamekeeper at Home* (1878) and *The Amateur Poacher* (1879) suggest a fascination with hunting and the primal instincts of sport.

the constellations received their names? At what date were they first arranged in groups? Upon the most ancient monuments and in the most ancient writings they have the same forms assigned to them as at this day, and that too in countries remote from each other. The signs of the Zodiac are almost as old as the stars themselves; that is, as old as the time when the stars were first beheld of human eyes. Amongst them there is the Archer — Sagittarius — the chase in the shape of man; greatest and grandest of all the constellations is Orion, the mighty hunter, the giant who slew the wild beasts by strength.¹⁷¹

The phrases 'Start[ing] forth from my cave' and 'start[ing] forth from my burial-mound upon the chase' refer to the prehistoric awareness of a spiritual life that can be continued after death. The chase, which can be begun in the same manner from a cave or burial mound, thus becomes an occupation that bridges the life and death worlds. One of Jefferies's sources for this essay may have been the work of anthropologist Hodder M. Westropp who published papers in the same periodicals as Jefferies.¹⁷² Jefferies's reference

¹⁷¹ 'Field Sports in Art', *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 137.

¹⁷² During the period Jefferies was planning and writing *After London*, Westropp published articles in the *Athenaeum* and the *Academy*. Westropp also published a *Handbook of Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Archaeology* (1878), *Phallic Worship* (1875), and *Ancient Symbol Worship*. It is possible that Jefferies may have corresponded with and even met Westropp. In the early 1870s Westropp moved to Ventnor, and oversaw the building of a new house, St. Muir, in 1876. Online genealogical accounts show that Westropp and his wife had a son in 1868 in County Cork, but that their daughter, Jane, was born on the Isle of Wight in 1874. As Westropp was one of the most prominent archaeologists of his era it is possible that Jefferies might have approached him for advice during his compilation of his archaeological research of Wiltshire. Jefferies wrote to other celebrity scientists and archaeologists at this time, including Sir Richard Owen and Reverend Canon Jackson. The aforementioned event at the Royal National Hospital, Ventnor, which took place in September 1874, the summer Jefferies was on the island, was attended by Mrs. Hodder Westropp (*Isle of Wight Observer*, 19 September 1874, p. 5).

to the 'Bushmen of Southern Africa' as 'the lowest race of savages'¹⁷³ who paint hunting scenes on the walls of the caves they inhabit, correlates with Westropp's 'On Rock Carvings' (1869),¹⁷⁴ which later became a chapter in *Pre-historic phases: or, Introductory essays on pre-historic archaeology*. Westropp records that: 'at the Cape, the Bushmen, one of the rudest existing races of humanity, live much in caves, and frequently paint on the walls of them the animals of the neighbourhood, and sometimes battle and hunting scenes — always in profile.'¹⁷⁵ 'Field Sports' appears to be based on extant anthropological observations, which are developed to speculate on the workings of consciousness. Jefferies's wording is similar to Westropp's depiction of hunting scenes 'in profile':

Afterwards resting in the cave round about the fire and thinking of the mighty work of sport which had been accomplished, the finger of the savage would involuntarily describe the outline of the creature so laboriously captured. His finger might describe it upon the scattered ashes whitening the ground beside him. Or it might describe the outline simply in the air.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ 'Field Sports in Art', *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 137.

¹⁷⁴ 'International congress of prehistoric archaeology: transactions of the third session', pp. 49–50.

¹⁷⁵ 'On Rock Carvings', *Prehistoric Phases or, Introductory essays on pre-historic archaeology* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1872), p. 184.

¹⁷⁶ 'Field Sports in Art', *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 135. Westropp's work was predated by Dr. W. H. J. Bleek, who researched the tribes of Southern Africa in the early 1870s, and published two reports on the Bushmen in 1873 and 1875. See W. H. J. Bleek, *A Brief Account of Bushman folk-lore and other texts* (London: Trubner and Co., 1875).

In describing the structure of the imagined civilisation in *After London*, Jefferies assumes the role of anthropologist: 'Bushmen have no settled home, cultivate no kind of corn or vegetable, keep no animals, not even dogs, have no houses or huts, no boats or canoes [...] A "camp" is ruled by the eldest [...] They are depraved, and without shame, clad in sheep-skins chiefly, if clad at all, or in such clothes as they have stolen'.¹⁷⁷ Felix's survival of the Bushmen's attack denotes a movement towards a new phase of spiritual existence — one that nevertheless requires engagement with the primitive tribal nature. Through proving himself to a shepherd tribe in a battle which takes place on a prehistoric burial ground, Felix experiences, for the first time, 'the rage of battle', and is anointed 'King':

Felix ran at full speed; swift of foot, he left the heavy spearmen behind. Alone he approached the horsemen; all the Aquila courage was up within him. He kept the higher ground as he ran, and stopped suddenly on a little knoll or tumulus. His arrow flew, a gipsy fell. Again, and a third. Their anger gave them fresh courage; to be repulsed by one only! Twenty of them started to charge and run him down. The keen arrows flew faster than their horses' feet. [...]

Now the rage of battle burned in Felix; his eyes gleamed, his lips were open, his nostrils wide like a horse running a race. He shouted to the spearmen to follow him, and snatching up his quiver ran forward [...]

¹⁷⁷ *After London*, p. 25.

Breathless, Felix sat down on the knoll, and the spearmen swarmed around him [...] Then, for the first time, they understood the immense power of the yew bow in strong and skilful hands.

Felix was overwhelmed; they almost crushed him with their attentions; the women fell at his feet and kissed them. But the archer could scarcely reply; his intense nervous excitement had left him weak and almost faint; his one idea was to rest [...]

His adventures in the marshes of the buried city, his canoe, his archery, were talked of the livelong night.¹⁷⁸

The higher ground of the archaeological landscape — what Jefferies terms a ‘knoll, or tumulus’ — is used to give Felix strategic advantage. Felix’s courage, summoned at the critical moment from the animal world — symbolised by the internalised symbol of the White Horse — gives him focus and clarity, and allows him to use his bow and arrow successfully. Jefferies explains that it is not the weapon used or the strength of the hunter, but ‘the mind [that] is the arrow that slays the monster’. Felix has become ‘the chase in the shape of the man’¹⁷⁹ — represented by the constellation Orion, an enduring archetype of the prehistoric world.¹⁸⁰ The battle scenes in *After London* mark a development of the chase as represented in *The Amateur Poacher* and *Red Deer*, which focused on the interrelation between mankind

¹⁷⁸ The phrase ‘livelong night’ is used by Homer in a similar context in *The Odyssey* when Odysseus relays his adventures (Homer, *The Iliad and the Odyssey* ([no place]: Special Edition Books, 2006), p. 89.

¹⁷⁹ ‘Field Sports in Art’, *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 135.

¹⁸⁰ Jefferies’s source for the detailed information about tribes people in Southern Africa may have been Hodder M. Westropp’s ‘On Rock Carvings’, *International congress of prehistoric archaeology: transactions of the third session* (London: Longmans, 1869), p. 47.

and animal. The chase becomes a contest and the ultimate test of mental and physical endurance. The setting of the prehistoric burial site for the critical battle of Felix's adventure unites the two worlds of life and death, and past and present, into one continuous 'now', in which the importance of recognising the present moment in all its vibrant force becomes paramount to Felix's survival. Felix's ability as archer and heroic explorer is revered by the women of the tribe, who kiss his feet in a manner similar to the disciples of Jesus, suggesting that the spiritual dimension of his journey is closely associated with physical prowess and endurance.

The shepherds' victory, and Felix's subsequent return to the home of the tribe at Wolfstead, lead him to build a defensive enclosure to protect the land and its inhabitants. He encourages the shepherds to construct a fort consisting of a 'circular wall, breast high, with embrasures or crenellations', which instills in him 'a sense of mastership [...] as if he could rule the whole country'. After realising the benefits of Felix's endeavours, tribal chiefs in other parts of the land begin to construct similar defences. During an excursion into the forest, Felix discovers an area connected to the great lake by a river of several miles, which he perceives to be an ideal spot for an enclosure of his own:

A little clearing only was wanted to make the place fit for a castle and enclosure. Through the grass-land opposite he traced the course of a large brook down to the lake; another entered it on the right, and the lake gradually narrowed to a river on his left. Could he erect a tower

there, and bring Aurora to it, how happy he would be! A more beautiful spot he had never seen, nor one more suited for every purpose in life.

[...] He went on till he reached the mouth of the river, and had then no doubt that he was standing once more on the shore of the Sweet Water sea. On this, the southern side, the banks were low; on the other, a steep chalky cliff almost overhung the river, and jutted out into the lake, curving somewhat towards him. A fort on that cliff would command the entrance to the river; the cliff was a natural breakwater, so that there was a haven at its base. [...]

Felix was much taken with this spot; the beauty of the inland lake, the evident richness of the soil, the river communicating with the great Lake, the cliff commanding its entrance; never, in all his wanderings, had he seen a district so well suited for a settlement and the founding of a city. If he had but a thousand men! How soon he would bring Aurora there, and build a tower, and erect a palisade!¹⁸¹

These passages appear to have been informed by Jefferies's knowledge of the archaeology of the Saxon Shore forts at Pevensey and Carisbrooke. Constructed by the Romans as a defence against attacks from Saxon and Angle Pirates, Pevensey is considered one of the best examples of coastal defence in Britain. Pevensey is widely recognised as the site that gave rise to British identity, but more than this, 'the story of Pevensey Castle illustrates every stage in the coastal defence of England against invaders coming across

¹⁸¹ *After London*, p. 276.

the Channel, from Roman times to the Second World War.¹⁸² As Felix chose this spot for its suitability for ‘every purpose’, the Romans chose Pevensey for its situational advantage. The opening pages of *Anderida* describe how the site might have originally appeared under the direction of the Romans, describing it as a ‘position [...] of great strength’. Felix’s accession as ‘King’ and his sense of ‘mastership’ might be recalling the early explorations of Julius Caesar after landing at Pevensey. Furthermore, Jefferies’s reference to a ‘castle’ and to Felix’s musings — ‘never, in all his wanderings, had he seen a district so well suited for a settlement and the founding of a city’ — echo the setting of the fort at Pevensey. Both sites are situated on the shore of open sea (Jefferies referring to the great lake as the ‘Sweet Water Sea’), and both contain a castle within a raised enclosure.

The fall of *Anderida* signified the emergence of Saxon Wessex, the name of which Hardy would later revive through his fiction. At this time, the name of the Roman Pontiff, or Pope, was ‘Felix’. The name may have been chosen by Jefferies in order to associate his hero with the Pope’s role of supreme ruler over the Catholic Church. To navigate the huge lake that covers most of the South, Felix, in the manner of his prehistoric predecessors, crafts a canoe from a felled birch tree. Felix and his brother Oliver depend upon their abilities as huntsmen, craftsmen, and warriors to survive. Felix’s weapons and tools — a bow and arrow, ‘boar spear’, and a set of ‘chisels and gouges’ — recall those used by hunter-gatherer tribes. These implements featured in the study of prehistoric weaponry; palaeontologist Sir John Evans,

¹⁸² William Douglas Simpson, *Exploring Castles* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1957), p. 142.

for example, remarked in 1881 that ‘several socketed instruments [...] cannot be regarded as other than chisels and gouges’.¹⁸³ ‘Celts, Chisels and Gouges’ in *Primitive Industry* (1881) discusses the etymology of the word ‘celt’ which stems from the Latin *Celtis*, meaning ‘chisel’, which being ‘universally applied to certain polished cutting implements of stone [...] may be considered as the typical form of implement’.¹⁸⁴ This derivation of ‘Celt’ from ‘chisel’ identifies the tool as a symbol of Celtic culture. Felix’s use of his tools thus associates him with Celtic communities which were reliant upon their skills as craftsmen.

The beginning of Felix’s journey, and the realisation of his ambition to create a new civilisation, depend on his ability to successfully carve and launch his canoe — a process fraught with difficulty. That Felix crafts a ‘canoe’ rather than the boat or raft which feature in *Bevis*, associates his adventure with early human history. Archaeological accounts from the 1860s and 1870s had established the importance of mariners in the history of mankind. Daniel Wilson’s *Prehistoric man: Researches into the Origin of Civilisation in the Old and the New World* (1862) contains a section titled ‘The Maritime Instinct: The Canoe’, which claims that:

As the type of oceanic migration, the canoe claims a prominent place among the primitive arts of man. In it we see the germs of commerce,

¹⁸³ Sir John Evans, *The ancient bronze implements, weapons, and ornaments: of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1881), p. 163.

¹⁸⁴ Charles Conrad Abbott and Henry Carvill Lewis, *Primitive industry: or, Illustrations of the handiwork, in stone, bone and clay, of the native races of the northern Atlantic seaboard of America* (Salem: G. A. Bates, 1881), p. 35.

maritime enterprise, and much else that is indispensable to any progress in civilisation.¹⁸⁵

References to canoes elsewhere in Jefferies's work lend further support to the role of archaeology in the formation of his works. In *World's End* (1877), Jefferies writes: 'The trunk had been of very large size, but now resembled a canoe standing upon end'. In *The Amateur Poacher* (1879): 'The bark from the trunk comes off in huge semi-cylinders almost large enough for a canoe. But that from the branches is best'. And in the autobiographical *Bevis* (1882): 'it was only the same reason that stayed his hand from barking an oak or a beech to make a canoe of the bark, remembering that if he got the bark off in one piece the ends would be open and it would not float properly'.¹⁸⁶ *The Amateur Poacher* and *Bevis* both refer to the bark of a tree coming away in one piece to make a canoe.¹⁸⁷ In *After London* a new, more carefully thought-out method of craftsmanship is employed. Felix's canoe is 'dug away with chisel and gouge' over several months to create a sturdy eleven-foot-long craft, three feet wide, and made of 'black poplar [...] because it was the lightest wood, and would float best'.¹⁸⁸ These dimensions are consistent with archaeological discoveries of the period. A report read by Mr. Alexander Currie to the Dudley and Midland Geological Society in 1869 commented on

¹⁸⁵ Sir Daniel Wilson, *Prehistoric man: Researches into the Origin of civilisation in the Old and the New World* (Cambridge: Macmillan, 1862), p. 119. See Appendix 8 for a list of contents.

¹⁸⁶ Richard Jefferies, *World's End* (London: Tinsley, 1877), p. 3; *The Amateur Poacher*, p. 59; *Bevis*, p. 2.

¹⁸⁷ By 1884 Jefferies's perspective on material culture had changed. In 'The Modern Thames' he writes: 'would a canoe do? Somehow a canoe would not do. I never took kindly to canoes, excepting always the Canadian birch-bark pattern; evidently there was no boat for me'. *The Open Air*, p. 120.

¹⁸⁸ *After London*, p. 78.

'ancient canoes on the bed of the Clyde' found covered by 'alluvial mud'. He accounted that 'The longer of the two consists of a rough undressed tree, 23 feet in length, and 11 feet in mean girth, the inside being beautifully hollowed out. The lesser canoe measures 13 feet in length, 3 feet in width'.¹⁸⁹ An earlier article about the archaeological excavation of a canoe (1849) described it as a 'curious relic of olden time [...] constructed of a fine oak tree, hollowed out', and to measure 'above 11 feet long, by 27 inches broad' by 15 inches deep.¹⁹⁰ The compatibility of these measurements with Jefferies's in *After London* suggests that the factual basis for the book draws upon his experience and interest in archaeology. Jefferies's interest in the canoe may have been influenced by his experience of an excavation of a prehistoric canoe on the Wiltshire Downs. 'A King of Acres', about the management of a large estate, refers to 'a bark canoe' found in a drained marsh, which although taken to Thardover House to preserve, 'gradually fell to pieces'.¹⁹¹

In *After London* Felix's canoe is directly associated with the soil and surrounding natural phenomena:

Felix had found a fine black poplar, the largest and straightest and best grown of that sort for some distance round, and this he had selected for his canoe. Stones broke the current here into eddies, below which there were deep holes and gullies where alders hung over, and an ever-rustling aspen spread the shadow of its boughs across the water.

¹⁸⁹ Anon., 'Reports and Proceedings', *Geological Magazine*, January 1869, p. 37.

¹⁹⁰ Anon., *Edinburgh topographical, traditional and antiquarian magazine*, September–December 1848, pp. 168–69.

¹⁹¹ *The Hills and the Vale*, p. 86

The light-coloured mud, formed of disintegrated chalk, on the farther and shallower side was only partly hidden by flags and sedges, which like a richer and more alluvial earth.¹⁹²

Jefferies's reference to 'alluvial earth' directly associates the canoe with the mud of the stream, as per the archaeological context in which canoes were often discovered. The association between bark canoes and foreign adventure was firmly rooted in the cultural consciousness of the mid-nineteenth century,¹⁹³ and Jefferies's dedication of a chapter titled 'Canoe' to the crafting of Felix's vessel denotes the significance he invested in representing material culture.

¹⁹² *After London*, p. 77. References to the rustling leaves of an aspen occur in the following works, and may associate the formation of *After London* with the period 1879–1881: 'The black poplars are so much like the aspen as to be easily mistaken, especially as their leaves rustle in the same way. But the true aspen has a smooth bark, while that of the black poplar is scored or rough.' *Round About a Great Estate* (Teddington: Echo Library, 2009), p. 10.

'The pale young leaves of the aspen rustled faintly, not yet with their full sound; the sprays of the horse-chestnut, drooping with the late frosts, could not yet keep out the sunshine with their broad green' 'A Brook' [1880] *Nature Near London*, p. 56.

'In the cool recesses of the firs at the head of Fir-Tree Gulf a dove was cooing, and a great aspen rustled gently.' *Bevis*, pp. 35–36). The manuscript of *Bevis* was completed by 1881.

¹⁹³ See, for example, accounts of trips to Canada in 'A Trip Round Lake Superior', *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 30 March 1861, and 'On the Red River', *Manchester Times*, 2 September 1865, which both refer to 'bark canoe[s]'. The Indian birch bark canoe was also popular in Britain. In 1867 F. Poole, a member of the Thames Canoe Club, embarked on a voyage from Liverpool to Glasgow in 'his famous and beautiful Indian bark canoe'. Paddling alone, with only a 'single paddle [...] without canvas', he made what was described as 'the greatest canoe voyage which has ever taken place in Europe' ('A Voyage in a Canoe', *Dundee Courier & Argus*, 12 August 1867, np).

Part 4

Conclusion

7

Healing Approaches: Towards Modernism

Hardy and Jefferies experienced archaeology as a practical and imaginative exploration into the complexities of the relationship between the individual, living in the present, and the long history of human life on an ancient earth. Both authors' practical and firsthand experience of archaeology, in the landscapes known to them as children, imbued the earth with a magic and meaning that transcended ordinary time. As the 'finger-touches of the last geological change' gently shaped the contours of Egdon Heath, archaeology awakened the slumbering human past, endowing the present with new imaginative consequences.¹ Items from the periodical press and examples from Hardy's and Jefferies's works have suggested that the 'strange spell' of the past can touch the mind with a 'yet living hand'.² In an era of change, archaeology, perhaps more than other sciences, has potential to strengthen the position of the self in the world, connecting the individual psyche to the grand human past and the more nebulous cosmic future. These concluding analyses illustrate that the process of going back continued to be employed by each author towards the end of their life. Moreover, this form of personal archaeology was facilitated by the imaginative return to landscapes which had emotional significance.

The approach of the century's end altered the popularity and reception of both authors' works. Jefferies's death in 1887 precipitated a sudden and unusual demand for his books and early publications. The author's rising popularity led to new editions of his works, including *The Story of My Heart* (1883) which was reprinted sixteen times between 1891 and 1922, and a

¹ Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, p. 12.

² Hardy, *A Laodicean*, pp. 205–06.

Pocket Richard Jefferies (1905) that Hardy owned.³ A listing of new books in the London *Standard* in 1897 observes that ‘a few years ago there existed a positive craze’ for first editions of Thackeray, Dickens and Jefferies.⁴ Scott’s *Book Sales of 1895* documents first editions of Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* (1843) and Jefferies’s *The Story of My Heart* (1883) selling for 12 shillings each,⁵ with first editions of Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Silverado Squatters* (1883) and John Ruskin’s *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (1854) fetching the lesser sum of 7 shillings.⁶ A series of cloth and gilt books produced by the Readers Library included only ‘such books as have permanent value’ written by ‘authors of repute’, which in this instance included Leslie Stephen, Stopford Brooke, Richard Jefferies, Hilaire Belloc and W.H. Hudson.⁷ The 1890s gave rise to a number of successful Jefferies imitators writing in similar styles and language⁸ — a trend recognised in 1896 by the *Critic*, which stated that ‘there really seems to be no question that books of the Richard Jefferies school are more popular just now than they ever have been before’.⁹ Jefferies was anthologized, and appraised in magazines as both a children’s author and spiritual teacher,¹⁰ and in 1897 was compared to

³ Michael Millgate’s online reconstruction of Hardy’s library at the time of his death in 1928 lists *The Pocket Richard Jefferies* (1905), *Amaryllis at the Fair* (1904), and Jefferies’s *The Pageant of Summer* (1907), which was one of 100 special copies printed, numbered and signed. Information retrieved from <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/fisher/hardy/hardycataz.html> [accessed 06/08/2012].

⁴ ‘New Books’, *Standard*, 20 August 1897, p. 6.

⁵ Temple Scott, ed., *The Book Sales of 1895: A Record of the Most Important Books Sold at Auction and the Prices Realised* (London: P. Cockram, 1896), pp. 95, and 252.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁷ Edward Thomas, *Rose Acre Papers: Including Essays from “Horae solitariae”* (London: Duckworth, 1910), p. 192.

⁸ See Rebecca Welshman, ‘Jefferies Imitators’, *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 20 (2011), pp. 19-25. The article is reproduced in Appendix 9.

⁹ Anon., *Critic*, vol. 27 [no month] 1896, p. 304.

¹⁰ See, for example, Lilian Stevenson, *A Child’s Bookshelf: Suggestions on Children’s Reading, with an annotated list of books on heroism, service, patriotism, friendliness, joy and beauty* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1918), and Frank Channing Haddock, *Culture*

Wordsworth.¹¹ Having been personally known to Joseph Comyns Carr, Jefferies was included by the author in *Some Eminent Victorians: personal recollections in the world of art and letters* (1908). Jefferies's contribution to literature was formally recognised in 1892 at a ceremony for the unveiling of a marble bust of the author in Salisbury Cathedral, attended by the Bishop and Dean of Salisbury and the Archdeacon of Dorset, and by a fund created for his family. The committee formed to undertake the commission of the bust constituted Arthur Kinglake, Rider Haggard, MP Burdett-Coutts, Andrew Lang, and Charles Longman. Kinglake's earlier appeal for donations, and accounts of the unveiling itself, refer to Jefferies as 'the prose poet of the Wiltshire Downs'.¹² Jefferies's birthplace, Coate Farm, became a place of pilgrimage, and a Richard Jefferies Festival took place in the farmhouse garden in 1910.

As a consequence of his newfound reputation, Jefferies was included alongside Hardy in assessments of Victorian and Romantic literature. The Manchester Literary Club (1906) listed both authors together with Wordsworth, Gilbert White, Tennyson and Thoreau,¹³ and the *Selborne Magazine* credited both authors for immortalizing Wessex in a manner similar to Eliot and Clare:

of Courage: a Practical Companion Book for Unfoldment of Fearless Personality (London: Delton Publishing, 1910).

¹¹ Anon., *Literary World*, January–December 1897, cites an author in *Temple Bar* who 'has drawn an interesting parallel between Richard Jefferies and Wordsworth' (p. 30) and records that someone spent over £60 on a complete set of the first editions of Richard Jefferies (p. 483).

¹² Anon., 'The Richard Jefferies Memorial Unveiling at Salisbury', *Bristol Mercury*, 10 March 1892, np.

¹³ *Papers of the Manchester Literary Club*, 32, 1906, p. 197.

The beauties of Wessex are familiar to all readers of Thomas Hardy and Richard Jefferies. George Elliot has immortalised parts of Warwick and Derby. John Clare wrote lovingly of his native Hampshire: George Crabbe's Suffolk town of Aldborough is the constant theme of his poems: Cowper has eulogised the gentle scenery of the Great Ouse.¹⁴

It seems that readers also grouped the two authors together during this period. The World War I novelist and essayist, Wilfrid Ewart (1892–1922), was said to have adored 'Salisbury Plain, the Wiltshire Downs and all the scenery made familiar by his two favourite authors, Richard Jefferies and Thomas Hardy',¹⁵ and in America, an anonymous contributor to the *Otago Witness* (1894) declared that 'Jefferies reaches a degree of excellence worthy of Thomas Hardy'.¹⁶

Hardy's career as a poet coincided with the rise of Jefferies's works as he entered a changing literary world alongside his dead rival. Retrospective accounts have placed Hardy and Jefferies alongside early Modern authors, including Kipling, Gosse, Ingelow, and Henry James.¹⁷ Although Jefferies's *The Story of My Heart* found popularity during this time, his entrée into Modernism had already been made in *The Dewy Morn* (1884). Q. D. Leavis commented that 'in *The Dewy Morn*, he goes further than any Victorian

¹⁴ Anon., *Selborne Magazine and "Nature notes," the organ of the Selborne Society* (1903), p. 206.

¹⁵ Anon., 'Wilfrid Ewart and His Story', *Country Life*, 55 [no month] 1924, p. 773.

¹⁶ Anon., 'A Novel by Richard Jefferies', *Otago Witness*, 11 October 1894, p. 40.

¹⁷ *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), lists some contributors to *Longman's Magazine* from 1882–1905: 'P. Anstey, Mrs Craik, Austin Dobson, J. A. Froude, Edward Freeman, Sir Edmund Gosse, Thomas Hardy, W. D. Howells, Henry James, Richard Jefferies, Jean Ingelow, Rudyard Kipling, Andrew Lang, Lecky, James Payn, R.L. Stevenson' (p. 831).

novelist towards the modern novel'.¹⁸ For both authors, the later-nineteenth century encouraged retrospection of their personal pasts — a form of archaeology of mind. The act of recovering buried thoughts and feelings, and bringing them into the present through writing, promised emotional resolve. Both authors had rejected organised religion for the reasons that Edward Henage Dering, author of *Esoteric Buddhism* and *In the Light of the XXth Century*, outlined in his novel *Freville Chase* (1890):

I find it too complete for a world that is incomplete essentially, too perfect for a state of things in which perfection is unattainable, too uncompromising to be reconciled with the idea of human society, which, but for habitual compromise, would fall into chaos.¹⁹

The creative healing process, which involved revisiting old landscapes, both imaginatively and physically, and reliving past events, was an integral part of both authors' search for meaning in a world that felt 'incomplete'. Hardy's search for healing is most poignantly expressed in his 'Poems 1912–13', which document the restoration of his former relationship with his first wife, Emma.

One of Jefferies's chief advocates after his death was the editor and esteemed literary figure, Edward Garnett. The *Bookman* recorded that Jefferies was one of Garnett's 'resuscitations', and that he focused particularly

¹⁸ Quoted in Brian Taylor, *Richard Jefferies* (Woodbridge, CT: Twayne Publishers, 1982), p. 80.

¹⁹ Edward Henage Dering, *Freville Chase* (London: Art and Book Company, 1890), p. 140.

on *The Story of My Heart*.²⁰ Garnett's enduring fidelity to Jefferies was recognised by the *Saturday Review* in 1916, which claimed that 'we have read so much about Nietzsche and Ibsen and Richard Jefferies that we are in a different position with regard to those authors than we were when Mr. Garnett wrote twenty years ago'.²¹ Garnett was instrumental in the publication of D.H. Lawrence's notorious *Sons and Lovers*, supported Edward Thomas, T. E. Lawrence and Robert Frost in the early stages of their careers, and edited the letters of Joseph Conrad. Garnett shared his passion for Jefferies with his father, Richard, who had worked at the British Museum as a librarian during Jefferies's lifetime, and who wrote the author's entry for the *National Dictionary of Biography*.²²

In 1888, writing for the *Universal Review*, Garnett proclaimed that 'among those who have told or sung to us of the life of the English homesteads and meadows, Richard Jefferies stands first'.²³ He highlighted Jefferies's ability to bring the natural world to life:

His place is unique, for he has broken fresh ground. He has grafted on one branch of our literature a new character, one that has something of poetry, of fiction, of natural history, but is not merely a combination of

²⁰ Anon., *Bookman*, September 1923–February 1924, vol. 58, p. 161.

²¹ Anon., 'Friday Nights', *Saturday Review*, 22 July 1922, p. 146.

²² Hardy and Jefferies were also connected at this time through Walter Besant – novelist, prominent man of letters, and chairman of the Incorporated Society of Authors. In the first biography of Jefferies titled *The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*, Besant wrote of Jefferies's work: 'we must have been blind all our lives; here were the most wonderful things going on under our very noses, but we saw them not' (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888, p. 167). Although Jefferies never knew Besant in person, Hardy's acquaintance with Besant is confirmed by a letter on 28 June 1889 in which Hardy casually addresses him as 'Besant' and discusses the seating arrangements for a dinner in London. *The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*, ed. by Michael Millgate and Keith Wilson, Volume 8, 1861–1927, Further Letters (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 16.

²³ Edward Garnett, 'Richard Jefferies', *Universal Review*, November 1888, p. 357.

all three; he has the art of giving us the country with its sights and sounds, and not an account of the country [...] filling the heart with the emotions that sun and wind and sea create [...] Many English writers have taken the country for their background, but few for their foreground, and these few have confined themselves to localities. Many have a keener eye for particulars, but none have his range [...] With Jefferies you lie in the long meadow grass on the shady side of the brook, and looking upwards you see the delicate green and jagged edges of the oak leaves against the blue sky, and you hear the whistle of the blackbird and the splash of falling water.²⁴

Garnett's generic reference to 'many' authors who do not have the 'range' or ability to evoke the spirit of the countryside would seem to be a thinly veiled criticism of Hardy and his locality of Wessex. This criticism was voiced anew six years later in a letter to Hardy which accompanied a new edition of Jefferies's *Amaryllis at the Fair*, for which Garnett had written an introduction. In his defence of the book, which in the past had been criticised for its lack of plot, Garnett suggests that the natural unfolding of events improves upon Hardy's over-structured novels, which do little to disguise the author's 'arranging and rearranging' of material.²⁵ In the book Garnett openly criticises Hardy for his shortcomings as a novelist:

²⁴ Ibid, pp. 357–60.

²⁵ Richard Little Purdy and Michael Millgate, eds., *Collected Letters*, editorial concerning letter, 16 November 1904, Vol. 3, 1902–1908, p. 148.

The strength of "Amaryllis at the Fair" is that its beauty springs naturally from the prosaic earthly facts of life it narrates, and that, in the natural atmosphere breathed by its people, the prose and the poetry of their life are one. In the respect of the artistic naturalness of its homely picture, the book is very superior to, say "The Mayor of Casterbridge," where we are conscious that the author has been at work arranging and rearranging his charming studies and impressions of the old-world people of Casterbridge into the pattern of an exciting plot. Now it is precisely in the artficed dramatic story of "The Mayor of Casterbridge" — and we cite this novel as characteristic, both in its strength and weakness, of its distinguished author, — that we are brought to feel that we have not been shown the characters of Casterbridge going their way in life naturally, but that they have been moved about, kaleidoscopically, to suit the exigencies of the plot, and that the more this is so the less significance for us have their thoughts and actions. Watching the quick whirling changes of Farfrae and Lucetta, Henchard and Newson in the matrimonial mazes of the story, and listening to the chorus of the rustics in the wings, we perceive indeed whence comes that atmosphere of stage crisis and stage effect which suddenly introduces a disillusioning sense of unreality, and mars the artistic unity of this charming picture, so truthful in other respects to English rural life. Plot is Mr. Hardy's weakness, and perfect indeed and convincing would have been his pictures, if he could have thrown his plots and his rustic choruses to the four winds. May we not be thankful, therefore, that Jefferies was no hand at elaborating a plot, and that in "Amaryllis

at the Fair,” the scenes, the descriptions, the conversations are spontaneous as life, and that Jefferies’ commentary on them is like Fielding’s commentary, a medium by which he lives with his characters.

In response to Garnett’s criticism, Hardy claimed to ‘have no opinion for or against’ the allegations, and of *Amaryllis at the Fair* he wrote:

I had not seen it before, though I recollected the title, I should probably never have read a line of it but for this presentation of yours [sic] It is a very thorough study, on a large scale, of a farmer & his family, & would have made a good first book of a novel as long as *Tom Jones* or *Clarissa*. I like it exceedingly.²⁶

Hardy’s assessment of *Amaryllis* underrepresents the scope of the novel. Through the heroine, Amaryllis, partly based on Jefferies himself, the novel explores how feelings of uncertainty about the future can be overcome through meaningful engagement with the natural world. Set at its author’s birthplace, Coate, the book details rural scenes and rustic characters which were familiar to Jefferies in his youth. In his notebooks, Jefferies writes that he aimed for the novel to be as real as possible. His characters were to be organic experiments, mooted in one note which reads, ‘Flowers grow as poppies in the corn without conscious plan and so do people’.²⁷ *Amaryllis* is

²⁶ *Collected Letters*, Vol. 3, 16 November 1904, p. 147.

²⁷ 9 August 1884, unpublished notebooks.

described as 'A beautiful girl, good, true, loving full of the tenderness and richness of heart', and Alere Flamma, the artist and musician from London as 'A man full of ideals and thoughts and nailed down to the commonplace'.²⁸

The metaphysical explorations of *The Story of My Heart* and *After London*, detailed in Chapters 5-6, culminate in the calm acceptance of reality in *Amaryllis at the Fair*. Amaryllis spends a summer in the gardens at Coate with Flamma and Amadis Iden, a distant relation whom she had known in childhood. Amadis, weak from illness, is likened to a dying tree:

The ghastly paleness of his face came upon her as a spectre in daylight. You could see at a glance what was wrong — the vital energy had been sapped; as a tree fades without a branch broken, or bark scored, fades and withers from the lack of the mysterious force which brings forth fresh leaves, so he drooped in his chair. The body — the tree — was there, but the life was not in it.²⁹

Amaryllis is shocked by this change. As children they had explored the fields and meadows together: 'a great girl, and a great boy, rowing on the water, walking over the hills, exploring the woods; Amadis shooting and fishing, and Amaryllis going with him'. There had been balance between them, a chemistry, which they now seek to regain. Helped by drinking strong ale brewed by Iden, called Goliath Ale — which Jefferies terms a 'liquor of sunshine, potable sunbeam' and 'coloured by the light' — Amadis gains strength. His recovery, which leads to their eventual reunion, occurs during

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Richard Jefferies, *Amaryllis at the Fair* (London: E. P. Dutton, 1906), p. 202.

the sunny month they spend in the gardens among the flowers, trees and wildlife. The same landmarks of the house and gardens, which Jefferies had mapped out ten years earlier in *Wild Life in a Southern County*, now become cornerstones of an environment where things grow and people heal; where ordinary time is transcended. Jefferies describes the summerhouse, near the mulberry tree:

to sit in it was like sitting in a shell, warm and comfortable, with a sea of meadow-grass, smooth and coloured, stretching in front, islanded about with oak, and elm, and ash [...] Flowers, and trees, and grass, seemed to spring up wherever Iden set down his foot: fruit and flowers fell from the air down upon him. It was his genius to make things grow — like sunshine and shower; a sort of Pan, a half-god of leaves and boughs, and reeds and streams, a sort of Nature in human shape, moving about and sowing Plenty and Beauty [...] And all this, summer-house and all, had dropped out of the pocket of Iden's ragged old coat. There was a magic power of healing in the influences of this place which Iden had created.³⁰

Jefferies uses his intimate knowledge of the garden environment to create a healing centre for the book. The manmade structures assume natural qualities — the summerhouse is described as a 'shell', and the garden 'a world of grass and leaf, humming like a hive'. Conversation flows, and the three enjoy an environment created half by man and half by nature. This idea, further

³⁰ Ibid., p. 201.

suggested by Iden as Pan, the god of shepherds, who is ‘Nature in human shape’, is an implicit reference to the celebrated pagan divinities of ancient societies. The flora, the ale, and the creatures attracted to the house all have the common origin, or source, of ‘Iden’s old coat pocket’, which he used to drop seeds from through a hole as he walked about. Jefferies’s repetition of the word ‘all’, and his use of a single sentence that stands alone from the narrative, emphasises the universality of his emergent ecological philosophy. But more than this, it suggests that the place had developed from being his childhood home, to become a centre from which ideas flow outwards — ideas which he hoped could benefit the wider world. Iden, who has calm control over the land he has created, might be understood as a metaphor for man’s potential to take more care over the environment and try to manage it to the advantage of all the creatures that inhabit it.

In the nineteenth century, before the Home Field at Coate was planted with trees, there was a clear view of Liddington Hill from the gardens. As discussed in part 2, the drafts of *The Story of My Heart* suggest the integral significance of the hill to the conceptual development of the book. Jefferies’s recollections of the site and his worship of the natural world — ‘on this hill I used to bury my face in the thyme and listen to the song of the lark’ — align him with the ritual activities of the prehistoric peoples who formerly inhabited it.³¹ At the time Jefferies completed the manuscript for *Amaryllis*, he had publicly recognised his terminal condition in ‘Time of Year’, first published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1887:

³¹ *The Old House at Coate*, p. 58.

never again shall I see a day of such glory of light, of air burning with light; the very ferns in the shade were bright with the glow, despite their soft green. A sad hour it was to me, yet I could see all its beauty; sad, too, to think it will never return.³²

The 'magic power of healing' could not help Jefferies as he entered his last few months in a battle against tuberculosis. Yet the long continuance of nature in settings which housed remnants of the human past — 'How many times has the morning star shone yonder in the East? All the mystery of the sun and of the stars centres around these lowly mounds'³³ — strengthened Jefferies's belief in the powerful presence of human life in the landscape and wider universe. His need to imaginatively return to the former landscape of his youth suggests the continual employment of the archaeological imagination in a more personalized form than in *After London* and *The Story of My Heart*.

Garnett's championing of Jefferies's last novel could have done little to discourage Hardy's uneasiness towards Jefferies. Although Hardy sought to distinguish himself from Jefferies — 'I should probably never have read a line of it' — both authors express anxiety at the approach of death, and both attempt, through their works, to recover and restore former conditions of their lives. The 1890s was a transitional time for Hardy. The very weaknesses which Garnett pointed out to him were those which had contributed to his decision to abandon novel-writing. In 1895, *Jude the Obscure* received harshly critical reviews for its treatment of sensitive subjects, with the

³² 'Time of Year', *Field and Hedgerow*, p. 119.

³³ 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', *Nature near London*, p. 240.

Guardian labelling it 'a shameful nightmare, which one only wishes to forget as quickly and as completely as possible'.³⁴ Hardy experienced extreme 'bewilderment and distress' at the bad press and in a letter to William Archer confessed to feeling incapable of 'real excellence'.³⁵ *The Well Beloved* (1897) was the last of Hardy's serials to be published in book form. Having attempted an unsuccessful career as a poet during the period 1865–1867, Hardy turned to poetry once more. James Gibson notes that Hardy returned to the art as soon as he had a sustainable income from his novels, and that he wished to be remembered as a poet rather than novelist.³⁶ Ralph Pite claims that poetry offered Hardy 'a sense of release' that prose writing could not.³⁷ Moreover, poetry allowed Hardy to explore the subtle reaches of the imagination in a way that superseded the more rigid form of his prose. Through writing poetry Hardy achieved an archaeology of mind at once more succinct and probing; a healing process for the emotionally disruptive events in his life.

'Poems 1912–13', written during the year immediately preceding Emma's death, has been recognised as some of Hardy's most compelling verse. Harold Child termed them 'perhaps the pleasantest, the most musically and suggestively beautiful poems that Hardy ever wrote'.³⁸ In spring 1913 Hardy returned to the Cornish landscape where he had first met Emma, which *The Life of Thomas Hardy* describes as 'the scene of the fairest romance of

³⁴ Millgate, *A Biography Revisited*, pp. 340 and 362.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

³⁶ James Gibson, *Thomas Hardy: A Literary Life* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 27.

³⁷ Ralph Pite, *Thomas Hardy: The Guarded Life* (London: Picador, 2006), p. 358.

³⁸ Harold Child in Mallikarjun Patil, *Thomas Hardy the Poet: A Critical Study* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 1997), p. 53.

their lives'.³⁹ The romantic associations of Cornwall lie in its ancient history and largely unexplored archaeology. Known as the land of King Arthur, Tintagel is described as 'the centre of his kingdom', a place where 'the hard facts of history are clothed in the colours of old romance':

In that faraway corner of England where the granite cliffs of Cornwall hold out a stern resistance to the turbulent Atlantic the romantic land of King Arthur must be sought. It would be idle to search for its name on any ordnance map, for although there is occasional mention of the great King in connexion with his "beds," his "graves," and his "cups and saucers," his realm lies largely in the region of fancy. King Arthur's Country is geographically more vague than the ancient Kingdom of Wessex, which Hardy has brought out of the shadowy past: but it is there, and the King and his Knights of the Round Table too, for all who will reverently seek them, asking neither too of dates nor of historical facts.⁴⁰

The 'cups', 'plates' and 'graves' refer to marks in stones and rock basins in the area,⁴¹ and are testament to King Arthur's long association with Cornish places and landscape formations. These elements of myth and mystery, coupled with the 'meagre and imperfect' understanding of the 'memorials of departed ages', lent Cornwall a peculiar appeal for poets. As recorded in 1842

³⁹ Thomas Hardy and Florence Hardy, *The Life of Thomas Hardy* (London: Wordsworth Editions, 2007), p. 158.

⁴⁰ E. Havers Rutherford, 'The Romance of King Arthur's Country', *Quiver*, May 1926, p. 651.

⁴¹ John S. Stuart Glennie, *Arthurian Localities* [1809] (Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2003), p. 12.

by the *Cornwall Royal Gazette*, 'Tintagel, which awakens yet more romantic associations, has been more favoured by the poet than the antiquarian'.⁴²

Emma's presentation of her sketch of the gold necklace to the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club in the year of her death (1912), aged seventy-one, proves the importance of her Cornish associations. Millgate comments that this 'was the first time in many years' that she attended one of these meetings with Hardy, and that she 'rather pathetically exhibit[ed] a coloured illustration of an ancient gold collar that she had drawn in Cornwall before her marriage'.⁴³ However, her presentation of the object is worthy of further consideration for a number of reasons. That Emma had kept the drawing safely for more than 40 years is itself a point of interest. The lunette was one of Emma's last surviving links with Cornwall, and aside from her written stories, was one of few remaining keepsakes from her happier past. Her treasuring the item in later life is perhaps suggestive of her nostalgia for her youth and condition of well-being. To produce a drawing of such detail it is likely that Emma copied it in situ, which suggests that she may have seen the object when in the possession of Douglas Cook, editor of the *Saturday Review*. It is therefore more than possible that Hardy would have known about the gold torque or collar when they were courting, and that the object had personal significance for the couple. The Bronze Age associations in Hardy's work have been documented in Chapter 3,⁴⁴ and it is certainly significant that the recovery of a gold earring occurs in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* — the novel that

⁴² Anon., 'Cornwall Royal Institution', *Cornwall Royal Gazette, Falmouth Packet and Plymouth Journal*, 4 November 1842, np. The article cites Milton and Warton's 'Grave of King Arthur'.

⁴³ Millgate, *A Biography Revisited*, p. 444.

⁴⁴ See Chapter 3, and for further reading, Rebecca Welshman, 'Hardy and the Bronze Age', *Thomas Hardy Journal*, XXIV (2008), pp. 34-42.

depicts elements of Hardy and Emma's experiences in Cornwall. Emma's production of the drawing in 1912 at a meeting that they both attended may only suggest that the object was a continuation of their shared interest in antiquities. Alternatively, it may have reminded of Hardy the early years of their relationship and the emotional distance that had since grown between them.

Hardy's perception of Emma's unhappiness, and her nostalgia for her early life, would likely have contributed to the extreme guilt and sorrow that he experienced after her death only a few months later. 'Poems 1912–13' can be understood as an attempt to heal and imaginatively restore the former condition of their relationship. In a letter to Edward Clodd, Hardy wrote how 'one forgets all the recent years & differences, & the mind goes back to the early times when each was much to the other'.⁴⁵ As fragmented archaeological objects are pieced together and reconstructed, so Hardy attempts to go 'back' to when he and Emma were part of the same whole.

In letters written in Cornwall and soon after his return, Hardy reported that revisiting the Cornish landscape of their courtship was a painful and sad experience. To Florence Dugdale on Sunday 9 March 1913, he stated that:

the visit to this neighbourhood has been a very painful one to me, & I have said a dozen times I wish I had not come. What possessed me to do it! I went to St Juliot yesterday [...] Looking back it has seemed such a cruel thing altogether that events which began so auspiciously should

⁴⁵ Letter dated 13 December, in *Collected Letters*, vol. 4, 1909–1913, p. 239.

have turned out as they did. And now suppose that something shd happen to you, physically, as it did to her mentally!⁴⁶

To Clement Shorter he wrote: 'I have just come back from north Cornwall, where I have been wandering over the black cliffs of a coast I have not visited for 40 years — a revival of memories I had better have let sleep'.⁴⁷ And to Dorothy Allhusen: 'Went to the north coast of Cornwall lately — a wild place, full of sad memories for me'.⁴⁸ Hardy also visited the St. Juliot parish church, which as a junior architect he had been commissioned to restore. In a follow-up letter to the Reverend J. H. Dickinson (28 March 2013), which accompanied a photograph of the church before its restoration, Hardy again alluded to the emotional nature of the visit: 'Please thank Miss Dickinson for her kindness in showing me over the premises — though the experience was a sad one for me'.⁴⁹ Part of Hardy's sorrow stemmed from the recognition of his own role in Emma's psychological decline, which his behavior and intimacy with other women had contributed to. Emma 'turned in upon herself', became 'eccentric and in time bitter', and was remembered for her extreme dressing in older style fashions.⁵⁰ Her sourness about her marriage was revealed to Hardy after her death when he discovered her 'black diaries', containing 'harsh comments upon her husband's conduct, character, and genius', which he subsequently burned.⁵¹

⁴⁶ *Collected Letters*, p. 260.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Denys Kay-Robinson, *The First Mrs Thomas Hardy* (London: Macmillan, 1979), p. 118.

⁵¹ Millgate, *A Biography Revisited*, p. 449.

The symbolic importance of circular archaeological monuments and relics, documented as a theme of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* in chapter 3, is developed in 'Poems 1912–13'. From the early days of the couple's courtship, when they went on excursions together, the material landscape was deeply significant.⁵² Boscastle was a small, quiet village, with little more than its harbour and hotel to attract visitors. The primary attractions of the area would have been its archaeology, geology and history. The visiting of ancient monuments was a popular nineteenth-century pastime. North Cornwall District Council cites the area as a tourist attraction by the 1840s, and in 1854 harbour walks and excursions from Boscastle harbour were advertised in the newspapers.⁵³

Among other places, Hardy visited the waterfall St Nathan's Kieve, which he refers to as St Knighton's Kieve in 'The Queen of Cornwall', the Valency river valley, Boscastle, Tintagel — which has an Iron Age promontory fort, likely the domain of the Dumnonii tribe, and later built over by a medieval fortress — and the Penpethy slate quarries. 'St. Launce's Revisited', which recalls Launceston in the days of their courtship, begins with the command 'Slip back, Time!' and attempts to recover the sentiments that Hardy felt on his original visit:

Yet again I am nearing

⁵² Millgate, in *The Life of Thomas Hardy*, records that during Hardy's first visit in March the couple visited Tintagel and other places along the coast (p. 76). Hardy made several visits to Cornwall from 1871–72, and his meetings with Emma may have included excursions to sites in the area. However, no letters and only a few journal entries for this time have survived.

⁵³ North Cornwall District Council, 'Boscastle Conservation Area Appraisal' (Bodmin: North Cornwall District Council, 2007) <<http://www.ncdc.gov.uk>> [accessed 21 December 2012], p. 31.

Castle and keep, uprearing

Gray, as in my prime.⁵⁴

In contrast to the enduring castle walls, Hardy finds human life to have irrevocably changed: 'groom and jade/ Whom I found here, moulder'.

Recalling the trip he had made in 1870 to meet the Holder family, Hardy imagines:

If again

Towards the Atlantic sea there

I should speed, they'd be there

Surely now as then?⁵⁵

Although the geography and archaeology of the place remain the same, the human past, and its associated emotions — 'when hope and I were twin' — remains essentially irretrievable: 'why waste thought/ When I know them vanished/ Under earth; yea, banished/ ever into nought!'⁵⁶ It is significant that Launceston castle, which dominates the landscape and skyline, consists of a round tower within an unusual circular shell keep, situated on a raised, spherical green mound.⁵⁷ Although the 'gray walls' promisingly echo the years of Hardy's 'prime' by their very presence, the life of the town itself, characterised by people long since passed away, cannot. That the spot was a

⁵⁴ *Collected Poems*, pp. 335–36.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ See Appendix 10.

destination of the formerly happy lovers further implies imaginative association between the symbolic ring and the bond of human marriage that is eventually broken by the passing of time.

In 'Under the Waterfall', the action of plunging an arm into cold water recalls a scene in Cornwall when the couple lost a picnic tumbler amongst the rocks of a waterfall.⁵⁸ Although the sketch of the event places the loss in Valency valley, it is likely that Hardy's conception of the poem was also influenced by his visit to the much larger waterfall, St. Nathan's Kieve, named after its rock basin.⁵⁹ An account of archaeological discoveries in 1838, of human remains and silver coins, suggests that 'kieve' means 'any large vessel, from a puncheon to a cauldron'. The account also mentions 'a waterfall in Cornwall named St. Nathan's Kieve, probably after the basin into which it falls'.⁶⁰ The place is referred to by Arthur L. Salmon in his guide to Cornwall as 'a basin of rock',⁶¹ and by the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall: 'the celebrated Nathan's or Knighton's Kieve, which by our Cornish tourists has been described as awfully grand [...] [is] received into a natural rock-basin or kieve'.⁶² The popularity of the waterfall as a tourist destination and place of outstanding natural beauty was widely recognised. In America, an impassioned account of its features was included in the *Ladies Repository* for 1858:

⁵⁸ Emma remembers the event in her *Recollections*. The poem is also written from Emma's point of view.

⁵⁹ See Appendix 11 for Hardy's sketch of the event.

⁶⁰ Cited from John Evelyn, *Silva*, in Anna Eliza Bray, *Traditions, legends, superstitions, and sketches of Devonshire: on the borders of the Tamar and the Tavy, illustrative of its manners, customs, history, antiquities, scenery, and natural history, in a series of letters to Robert Southey, Esq.*, Volume 1 (London: John Murray, 1838), p. 104.

⁶¹ Arthur L. Salmon, *The Cornwall Coast* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1910), p. 347.

⁶² *Transactions of the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall* (Penzance: T. Vigurs, 1832), p. 186.

foaming streams from dark and cavernous inlets within the rocky sides of a most romantic ravine. There are few persons, I believe, who have visited this part of the Cornwall coast, who have not been also attracted to this beautiful spot; and the general impression produced in their minds has been that of impassioned delight.⁶³

The Victorian tumbler shown in Appendix 12 dates from 1873, the time of Hardy and Emma's courtship, and shows one style of the time to have been a small spherical vessel, designed to fit into the palm. Pots, jugs and drinking vessels were some of the most common archaeological discoveries, and were often reconstructed for the purposes of museum display or for drawings in books and journals. The lost 'chalice' may thus symbolise the happier era of their early relationship, or even the condition of purity or virginity. Through the ordinary domestic scene the enigmatic 'fugitive day' is 'fetched back':

The basin seems the pool, and its edge
The hard smooth face of the brook-side ledge,
And the leafy pattern of china-ware
The hanging plants that were bathing there.⁶⁴

The porcelain 'basin or bowl awakens a sense of that time' through its similar shape and function to the natural rock basin. That the glass becomes

⁶³ Rev. J. T. Barr, 'The Silent Tower', *Ladies Repository*, January 1858, p. 12.

⁶⁴ 'Under the Waterfall', *Collected Poems*, p. 316.

'opalised' symbolises the weathering process of life which irrevocably alters their former relationship. The object, which remains hidden despite repeated attempts to recover it, suggests the essential impossibility of returning to a former condition of things. Yet the tactile experience of cold water, so many years afterwards, also suggests the continuing inclination to search for the thing that is lost — a surviving germ of the original impulse of feeling.

In ways that novel-writing was unable to, poetry allowed Hardy to engage in a form of personal archaeology. 'Poems 1912–13' explores ways in which the enduring qualities of the natural environment — stone, slate, hills, valleys, streams — evoke memories of earlier 'prime' moments. As the waterfall recalls to Emma 'the only prime/ And real love-rhyme',⁶⁵ so does the ancient road, bordered by fossilized rocks, in 'At Castle Boterel'⁶⁶ — 'had there ever been a moment of such quality in that hill's story'⁶⁷ — and the dark stratification of 'Beeny Cliff' where 'life unrolled us its very best'.⁶⁸ The former condition of happiness and completeness is visible in the landscape in the circular forms of archaeological sites and objects in the St. Juliot area. It is possible that Hardy and Emma may have visited the multiple enclosure Iron Age hillfort, 'Tregear Rounds', at Pendoggett. This impressive monument lies six miles from Penpethy and its vast three concentric rings, each of 410 metres diameter, are visible on satellite photographs. The fort is easily accessible and visible from the road, and is clearly marked on historic maps

⁶⁵ 'Under the Waterfall', *Collected Poems*, p. 315.

⁶⁶ Appendix 13 suggests that Boscastle might be the setting for Hardy's poem 'Her Haunting Ground'.

⁶⁷ 'At Castle Boterel', *Collected Poems*, p. 331.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

as 'Castle Dameliock'.⁶⁹ Like Tintagel, the fort is supposedly linked to King Arthur as the site defended by Gorlois, tribal chief of Cornwall. Further associations and points of interest in the St. Juliot area include features associated with the Knights of the Round Table, the circular shell keep of Restormel Castle, the remains of a concentric earthwork on Willapark Point which was replaced by an early Victorian watchtower, and, of course, the circular lunette known to Emma.

'The Sundial on a Wet Day', written about the monument at St. Juliot rectory, also focuses on a circular object of stone. Historic maps show the former sundial as a point of antiquarian interest,⁷⁰ and Kay-Robinson and McBride note that 'it stood a little way out from the south-east angle of the house'.⁷¹ When Hardy built Max Gate, he planned to install a sundial on the eastern turret, but it was not until the year of his death that it was constructed.⁷² In a letter to Garnett in 1901, Hardy wrote, 'I like dials so much that I may get a horizontal one also'.⁷³ 'The Sundial on a Wet Day', written from the perspective of the sundial, was penned during one of Hardy's visits to St. Juliot after Emma's death. Unlike the kieve which could hold water and was brimful of symbolism for the formerly happy couple, the flat surface of the dial can only 'drip, drip' in the rain:

Falling like handfuls of winnowed grain

⁶⁹ See Appendix 14.

⁷⁰ The monument is acknowledged as a point of historic interest on maps in 1884. See Appendix 15.

⁷¹ Denise Kay-Robinson and Simon McBride, *The Landscape of Thomas Hardy* (Exeter: Webb and Bower, 1984), p. 212.

⁷² *The Life*, p. 178.

⁷³ Letter to Edward Garnett, 9 September 1901, *Collected Letters: 1893-1901*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 299.

Which, tear-like, down
My gnomon drain
And dim their numerals
With their stain, —
Till I feel useless,
And wrought in vain!

Hardy's personification of the dial articulates the weathering process of grief. The uselessness of the monument in the rain — its temporary inability to fulfil its purpose — symbolises the widower's inertia and despair. That the grain is 'winnowed' — separated from the chaff in its prime condition — and flung in 'handfuls' upon the stone dial, suggests missed opportunities and wasted potential. For a sundial that told the time of year, as well as the time of day, the unseasonal incongruity of harvested grain falling during a springtime or autumn visit would be a logical metaphor. Moreover, the sundial's stone pedestal and surrounding paved area are hostile to the germination of the grains, implying that Hardy's relationship with Emma cannot grow or change now that she is dead. Although the ornamentation of the St. Juliot sundial is no longer known, it is more than likely that it bore a message or symbol. Cornish churches were often endowed with historic dials, to inspire or provoke thought, such as the church of St. Columb Minor where a sundial over the porch bears the motto *Sic transit gloria Mundi* ("Thus passes the glory of the world"), and the sundial motto on the church of St. John the Baptist at

Morwenstow, which reads 'Life is like a Shadow'.⁷⁴ When Hardy's sundial was eventually mounted on the wall of Max Gate after his death, it was accompanied by a Latin inscription that translates as 'What of the Night?'

'In the Garden' describes Hardy and his sister watching the sun rise beside a sundial. Hardy imagines back to when she was alive: the dial 'throw[s] a shade to where/ Time travelled at that minute'.⁷⁵ He notes with irony that:

Little saw we in it,
But this much I know,
Of lookers on that shade,
Her towards whom it made
Soonest had to go⁷⁶

In 'The Shadow on the Stone', Hardy develops the idea of the gnomon on the dial as an indicator of change⁷⁷ by combining his knowledge of a 'Druid stone' — a prehistoric sarsen boulder found in the garden — with his memories of Emma.⁷⁸ It is recorded that Hardy once found Emma, just behind the stone, burning his love-letters to her, which would have further associated the spot

⁷⁴ Mrs. Alfred Gatty, *The Book of Sundials*, ed. by H. K. F. Eden and Eleanor Lloyd (London: George Bell & Sons, 1900), 4th edition, p. 316.

⁷⁵ Frank Pinion notes the sundial to have been at Talbothays, where Mary died on 24 November 1915. *A Commentary on the Poems of Thomas Hardy* (London: Macmillan, 1976), p. 514.

⁷⁶ 'In the Garden', *Collected Poems*, p. 499.

⁷⁷ 'Gnomon' means 'indicator'.

⁷⁸ Millgate notes in *The Life* that the boulder, at least two thousand years old, was found buried in the garden and moved to its position according to Hardy's wishes (p. 245).

with the unhappy years of their relationship.⁷⁹ Hardy is tempted to believe that the sun falling through moving tree branches conjures the shape of Emma's head and shoulders on the stone:

I went by the Druid stone
That broods in the garden white and lone,
And I stopped and looked at the shifting shadows
That at some moments fall thereon
From the tree hard by with rhythmic swing,
And they shaped in my imagining
To the shade that a well-known head and shoulders
Threw there when she was gardening.⁸⁰

That the 'shade' thrown by Emma recalls the 'shade' of the gnomon in 'In the Garden' (1915) may relate to Hardy's completion of both poems within the same year, and may partially explain their being placed in sequence in *Collected Poems*.⁸¹ The idea of a 'shadow' that 'fall[s]' at 'some moments' on a large ancient stone was the working mechanism of prehistoric sundials, which consisted of a nodule of stone fixed into a larger base. The poem's title, 'The Shadow on the Stone', hints towards the significance Hardy placed on the object and its unusually persuasive interplay with the natural environment. The shape of a traditional gnomon, as suggested by the photograph in

⁷⁹ Harold Orel, 'Hardy and the Developing Science of Archaeology', *Thomas Hardy Annual*, 4 (1986), 19–44 (p. 38).

⁸⁰ 'The Shadow on the Stone', *Collected Poems*, p. 498.

⁸¹ 'The Shadow on the Stone' had a three-year genesis from 1913–1916.

Appendix 16, at certain times of day casts an almost triangular shadow with a slim top and wider base — not dissimilar to the outline head and shoulders of a kneeling person. Indeed, it has been suggested that the earliest sundials were shadows cast by natural phenomena or people:

The relationship between time and his own shadow would not have gone unnoticed by primitive man. So perhaps man himself was the first sundial. Likewise the direction and length of the shadows of different objects — trees, rocks, or buildings — would have been associated with the passage of time, both the time of day and the time of year.⁸²

These sentiments were similarly expressed in 1919 by Harry C. Brearely in a discussion about prehistoric man:

No timepieces were available, but that great timepiece of nature, the sun, by which we still test the accuracy of our clocks and watches, and a shadow falling upon a certain stone, served the need of this primitive cave-dweller in making and keeping an appointment.

The sun has been, from the earliest days, the master of Time.⁸³

Hardy's employment of the stone in the poem connects the movement of the sun with the lingering presence of the human past that mysteriously and silently 'broods' alone. The permanence of the real object, which has endured

⁸² Christopher St. J.H. Daniel, *Sundials* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008), p. 6.

⁸³ Harry C. Brearely, *Time Telling Through the Ages* (New York: Doubleday, 1919), p. 17.

since prehistoric times, and its momentary fusion with Emma's imagined shadow in one of her most frequented spots, encourages him to believe that her spirit might be there:

I thought her behind my back,
Yea, her I long had learned to lack,
And I said: "I am sure you are standing behind me
Though how do you get into this old track?" [...]
I would not turn my head to discover
That there was nothing in my belief.⁸⁴

As the stone's former function and surrounding stones have been lost, so Emma's vague presence in the garden remains essentially intangible.⁸⁵ Emma's frequent occupation of certain spots in the garden is lamented by Hardy in a letter to Florence Henniker shortly after Emma's death:

In spite of the differences between us [...] my life is intensely sad to me now without her. The saddest moments of all are when I go into the garden and to that long straight walk [...] where she used to walk every evening just before dusk [...] & at times when I almost expect to see

⁸⁴ *Collected Poems*, p. 498.

⁸⁵ Contemporary archaeology has found that the stone originally formed part of a Neolithic henge, which may have been aligned with the sun. The wider ceremonial importance of the site, which is situated less than a quarter of a mile from Conquer Barrow, has also been confirmed by Wessex Archaeology.

her as usual coming in from the flower-beds with a little trowel in her hand.⁸⁶

As if he might check the time, Hardy 'stop[s] and look[s]' — suggesting that Emma's shadow on the stone is as familiar to him as the shade of a gnomon on a dial. That Emma's existence in his life has become as reliable to Hardy as the passage of time denotes his inability to adjust to her absence. The gesture of stopping to look — in a way that a clock confirms an approximated sense of time — confirms Emma as almost present and not quite gone.

Thus, as one glance can confirm the position of a shadow on a dial, Hardy is reluctant to look back in case the shadow has moved. As he walks away, his decision not to look back secures the comforting possibility of the 'shape which, somehow, there may be':

So I went on softly from the glade,
And left her behind me throwing her shade,
As she were indeed an apparition —
My head unturned lest my dream should fade.⁸⁷

Emma herself becomes an instrument — or indicator — of former times, allowing Hardy to momentarily displace the hold of the present and 'keep down grief'.⁸⁸ The moving shadow on a dial was a commonly-used metaphor. Other poets had been similarly drawn to the ancient permanence of sundials,

⁸⁶ Letter to Florence Henniker in Millgate, *Biography Revisited*, p. 449.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Collected Poems*, p. 498.

including Reverend William Bowles.⁸⁹ ‘Sun Dial, in the Churchyard of Bremhill’ by Bowles evokes images of the ‘shade’ and ‘shadow’ cast by the monument, and imagines the former lives of those buried there:

So passes, silent o’er the dead, thy shade
Brief Time; and hour by hour, and day by day,
The pleasing pictures of the present fade,
And like a summer vapour steal away.

And have not they, who here forgotten lie,
(Say hoary chronicler of ages past),
Once marked thy shadow with a delighted eye,
Nor thought it fled; — how certain and how fast?⁹⁰

The line endings — ‘shade’ and ‘fade’ — used by Hardy and Bowles similarly featured in the work of earlier poets, such as Lady Flora Elizabeth Rawdon Hastings:

As o’er the dial flits the rapid shade,
So speed the hours of Life’s eventful day;
As from the plate thou seest the shadows fade
So wasted Time fleets tracelessly away.⁹¹

⁸⁹ In light of his interest in the gentry, it is possible that Hardy would have known of Bowles, who came from an ancestral family in Wiltshire (North Wessex).

⁹⁰ William Lisle Bowles, ‘Sun-Dial, in the Church Yard’, in *The Poetical Works of William Lisle Bowles*, ed. by George Gillfillan (London: James Nesbit and Co., 1855), p. 223. Bowles (1762–1850), was the vicar of Bremhill, Wiltshire, and canon of Salisbury.

It is notable that the same poetess wrote 'Street of the Tombs at Pompeii', and that Bowles too combined archaeological subject matter with natural beauty in his poems about Roman Silchester, Glastonbury and Wells Cathedrals, English castles, and Egyptian tombs.⁹² While it is not known whether Hardy read the work of Bowles or Hastings, it is likely that he was familiar with Thomas Moore's 'Love and the Sundial', which he could have read in his copy of Moore's *Poetical Works*.⁹³

For both authors, the garden environment becomes a holding ground within which to work through complex memories and associations. Hardy's concentration on objects in his poetry articulates John Hines's affirmation, presented at the beginning of the thesis, that the 'conjunction' of literature and archaeology can 'shed particular light on what things meant in the past'. These concluding analyses also confirm Hines's supposition that:

The material context can be argued to be genuinely fundamental to linguistic and thus literary semantics, while the literature can reveal

⁹¹ Lady Flora Elizabeth Rawdon Hastings, 'Inscription for a Sundial', *Poems* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1841), p. 71.

⁹² Bowles was a practicing archaeologist who attended major excavations. He is recorded as being present at the opening of a barrow on the Wiltshire Downs with Sir Richard Colt Hoare. A sudden change in the weather caused the party to shelter inside the tumulus, whereupon Bowles recited a poem about its prehistoric occupants (Richard J. King, 'The Folklore of Barrows', *Once a Week*, 23 June 1866, p. 693). Like these authors, Jefferies also used a sundial as a connective image in his depiction of the lovers, Felise and Barnard, in *The Dewy Morn* (1884), where an 'ancient sundial' bears the motto '*Nihil nisi umbra* — Nothing without shadow; no, not even love':

Of old time the shadow of the gnomon glided over marble; sometimes they built great structures to show the passage of the shadow more distinctly — observatories of shadow. Not only on this round horizontal disk of greenish metal, not only on those ancient marble slabs, but over the whole earth the shadow advances, for the earth is the gnomon of light. *The Dewy Morn* (Oxon: Petton Books, 2009), pp. 220–21.

⁹³ 'Thomas Hardy's Library' lists Thomas Moore, *The Poetical Works . . . With a Life of the Author* (London: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge, 1864). <<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/fisher/hardy/hardycataz.html>> [accessed 25 November 2012].

much about the value and meanings of objects. The material world does not only impinge on the meaning of literature in the form of what is referred to, however; it also constitutes a context in which literature is performed.⁹⁴

This new context affords opportunity to re-read Hardy's and Jefferies's works and gain deeper insight into the thought-processes involved in each author's negotiation of the past. Moreover, these studies suggest that monuments and objects play an active role in shaping the literary imagination.

The beginning of this thesis promised that the combined study of literature and archaeology 'produce[d] creative chances'. The selection of Hardy and Jefferies as representative of the late-nineteenth-century engagement with the human past in natural settings has been justified by the significant discoveries made. By applying an archaeological method to analyses of the texts, whereby each word is read as a sign or symbol to guide the process of understanding, it has been possible to identify new locations in both authors' works and previously undocumented letters and articles. This approach has opened up several possibilities for future research. Due to limitations of space it has not been possible to analyse a broad spectrum of Hardy's poetry, and there remains scope for further research concerning the identification of Hardy's landmarks in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Research might take the form of a book-length study concerning archaeology as an aid to understanding the emotional complexities of Hardy's mindscape. For Jefferies too, archaeology is a connective presence between his early and later

⁹⁴ Hines, p. 35.

careers. Chapters 5 and 6 have shown numerous ways in which Jefferies employed archaeological thought and terminology in the creative process of his spiritual search. Further research in this area might include a critique of the entirety of Jefferies's oeuvre from 1866 to 1887. The approaches adopted for this thesis may also be successfully employed in re-reading other late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century authors whose work is grounded in rural landscapes. Andrew Radford has considered Mary Butts and John Cowper-Powys in conjunction with Hardy and Jefferies. Other authors for prospective study could, for example, include Arthur Machen, Mary Webb, and Rudyard Kipling. The scope may even be extended to a chronological study — to include Romantic literature written at the time of early antiquarianism through to the era of systematic archaeology and the emergence of Modern literature. Renfrew's concept of 'an archaeology of mind' also remains to be explored further. This could develop into a study that considers the relation between early twentieth-century psychology and archaeology, and how such approaches can be usefully employed in reading literature and landscape.

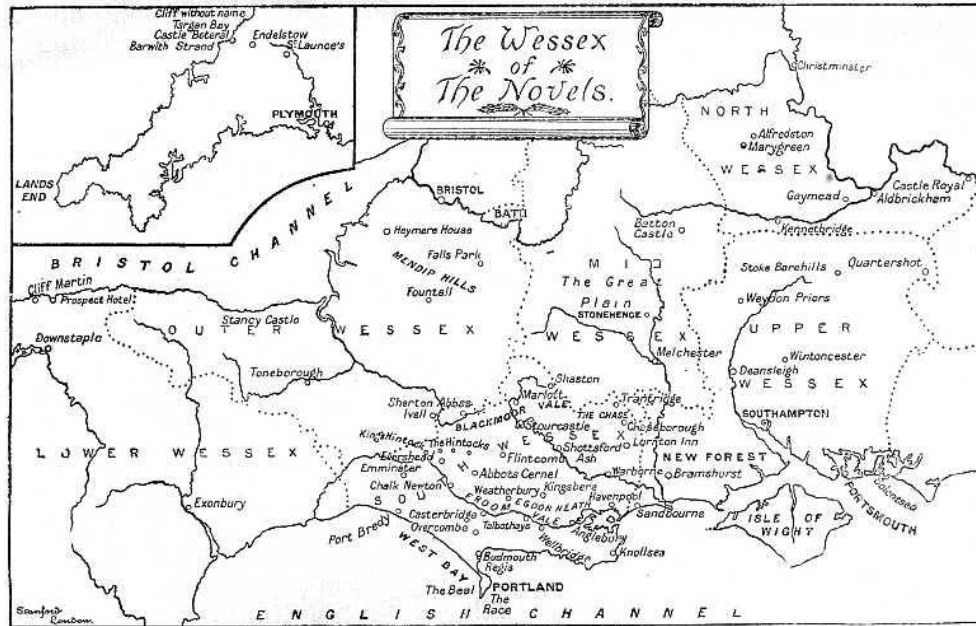
Hardy's and Jefferies's firsthand experience of archaeology in landscapes that were visibly defined by the human past contributed to the creative process of authorship. That answers to some of the big questions concerning the origins of human life and the human place in the world lay concealed in the depths of their native Wessex contributed to each author's process of self-discovery. Writing about ancient and beautiful landscapes, and the place of characters within them, thus became part of a larger attempt to resolve inner emotional conflicts. Close reading has identified that specific phrases and words, used to depict thoughts and feelings in certain

landscapes, connect the later lives of the authors with their earlier years. Tracing these connections can help readers to more fully understand the complex relations between inner and outer worlds, and between the present and the past.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Hardy's Map of Wessex



Source: Thomas Hardy, *The Trumpet-Major*

<<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/h/hardy/thomas/trumpet-major/complete.html>>

[accessed 21 December 2012] preface.

Appendix 2

The following article appeared in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 20 (2011), pp. 13–16:

Jefferies and Astronomy

Rebecca Welshman

In April 2011 I found two previously unknown letters by Jefferies, dated 1870 and 1871, in the *Astronomical Register*, a national magazine devoted to the study of astronomy. The magazine had an active correspondence section and sought to encourage amateur astronomers. A letter by the renowned astronomer William Frederick Denning in the *Observatory* in 1922 — one of the most prestigious astronomical journals — describes Denning's own discovery of one of Jefferies's letters while leafing through old copies of the *Astronomical Register*. Denning discovered four comets between 1881 and 1894, and was known to encourage amateur astronomers. He was the Director of the British Astronomical Association's Comet Section, and later became Director of the Meteor section. His discovery of Jefferies's interest in astronomy prompted him to reproduce Jefferies's letter along with some further research into the position and flight of the meteor:

Richard Jefferies' Meteor

In looking through some old astronomical books I met with an interesting description of a Fireball by the late Richard Jefferies, the well-known writer on natural history subjects. The letter appears in the

Astronomical Register for 1871 March, page 65, and refers to an observation made on 1871 Feb. 3, 9.10 P.M. The reference to the meteor is as follows:-

A Brilliant Meteor

Sir, -

Yesterday evening (Feb.13, 1871), about ten minutes past nine, while walking along a road, I was suddenly startled by a flash of pale-coloured violet light, so intense and vivid that the trees, hedges, a wall, and the very ruts in the road were distinctly visible for half a mile in front. Thinking it was lightning, I expected that the next moment I should be plunged in darkness, and to my surprise the light continued and grew even more vivid.

It cast my shadow in front; and in wonder, half expecting to see a sun, I turned, and as I turned could see fields and hedges on my right for nearly a mile, and a wood at the end as plainly as in daylight. Then, looking up, I saw a meteor darting towards the west. It disappeared almost the moment I saw it, but the trail remained for nearly two minutes. It was at first nearly straight, but gradually curled up at the ends, grew broader in the middle, and finally seemed to become so diffused in the atmosphere as to disappear. It appeared to be about two degrees to the west of the lower part of Orion.

I have seen almost all astronomical and meteorological phenomena, but never observed so intense a light emitted by a meteor. It somewhat resembled the effect produced by the coloured rockets at

the Crystal Palace *fetes*. I fancied I heard a hissing noise whilst the light continued, but this I consider a delusion, having frequently believed I heard crackling sounds during an aurora, which sound science disbelieves. I put the phenomena down to what I may, perhaps, call homology of the senses, for I notice, if I touch brass and see it, I feel a disagreeable taste in my mouth. Why not, then, upon seeing particular kinds of light, should I not hear, or fancy I hear, sounds? — people sometimes imagine their names are called when no one speaks, as if there were memory of the ear. Now a quick flashing light carries the idea of crackling; the quick passage of a body that of hissing, as a bullet — thus, may not the senses be excited one by the other?

RICHARD JEFFERIES.

Coate, Swindon, Wilts.

The fireball was also seen from Rugby, Exeter, Torquay, Portsmouth, Callington (Cornwall), and other places, and I also observed it from Bristol [...] the meteor was quite as bright as a full moon, and left a luminous streak distinctly visible to the eye for ten minutes.

Some details of the meteor are published in the B.A. report for 1871, page 33, where it is stated that that Mr. W. H. Wood had approximately determined the real path, and placed the radiant near a Hydrae, the height of the object was from 55 miles to 35 miles, and it traversed a path of about 80 miles over the English Channel.

These were only approximate observations from insufficient data. I would prefer to put the radiant at 198+19 on the E.N.E horizon, and to give the meteor a much longer flight nearly parallel with the earth's surface, and directed from E.N.E to W.S.W. The radiant supposed to be near a Hydrae is disproved by an observation from Portsmouth, where the observer, Mr. James Blake, describes the meteor as first seen in N.E. and disappearing in the S.W.

W. F. DENNING.

Unknown to Denning, there was an earlier letter by Jefferies in the *Astronomical Register*, dated April 1870, which described his experience of seeing spots on the sun:

SPOTS ON THE SUN

Sir, — I was standing in the garden about a quarter past 6 on Sunday evening (April 3), when I chanced to look at the sunset, and immediately saw a large black spot on the sun's disc. It reminded me at once of a sun spot, but I had never heard of spots being visible to the naked eye, and I endeavoured to ascertain by observation the nature of the spot I could see. I watched it for full half-an-hour, during which time several small clouds drifted across the sun's disc from north to south apparently, and in their passage dimmed the spot and once completely obscured it; but they had no sooner passed over the than the spot was again plainly visible, — a black spot on the red disc of the

sun. The sun was now sinking fast, but the spot sank with it, which circumstance seemed conclusive in my mind as to its being a sun spot. At length the spot was obscured by the thick mist into which the sun sank [...] Subsequently I obtained a telescope, which set the question at rest at once, by revealing a large spot and several smaller ones. Not remembering any parallel instance of seeing a sun spot with the naked eye, I venture to communicate my observation, and to append a rough diagram of the apparent position of the spot when I first saw it on Sunday.

I remain, yours respectfully,

Coate, near Swindon,

RICHARD JEFFRIES,⁹⁵

April 6, 1870. *Editor, Wilts and Gloucester Standard.*⁹⁶

[At the beginning of the month of April, spots on the sun were visible easily without optical assistance. Our correspondent's diagram represents the spot on the upper part of the sun's disc to the left hand — ED.]

This letter describes, quite factually, Jefferies's experience of the sun spots. However, a later piece of work, taken from manuscript, retells the same experience in a very different way. This piece was printed in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal* as 'Sun Spots'. In this later account, Jefferies

⁹⁵ The signature is incorrectly printed as 'Jeffries'.

⁹⁶ Jefferies signs himself 'Editor of the Wiltshire and Gloucester Standard'. While it is known that Jefferies was chief reporter for the paper, it seems that his role may at one time have been Editor.

distinguishes between the 'youthful times' when he first saw the sun-spot, which with the aid of the letter to the *Astronomical Register* we can now date to 1870, when he was 21, and his more mature outlook, which had lost some of the earlier vibrancy and mystery:

There was a great sun-spot at that time and every afternoon as the sun sank I used to sit facing the west under the russet apple tree waiting till the thin vapour on the horizon absorbed the glow of light so that I could see it. The great black speck with a smaller one near it became distinct upon the broad red disk, and I watched it till the sun went down [...] To me it was a wonderful and never-wearying spectacle, evening after evening as I watched it under the low boughs of the russet apple, the great fiery disk slowly dropping beyond the brook and the meadow, beyond the elms on the rise, beyond the distant hills. The green leaves over and the grass under the quiet rush of the brook, the evening song of the birds, the hushing hum of the bees at the hives set just there, I forgot all but these and the sun — by the spot I could touch out almost to it.

Yet then I thought little of it, I did not value it, it was only one of the things I should see — hundreds more wonderful as life went on. It has not been so. I have never seen anything more wonderful than the things I saw then; never felt or thought like I used to in those youthful

times. Nothing then was of any value; now if I could only get back those moments they would be to me more precious than gold.⁹⁷

Appendix 3

The Thames Tunnel in 1843



Source: Anon., 'The Company's Medallion of Sir Isambert Brunel, Supported by One of the Tunnel Excavators', *Illustrated London News*, 1 April 1843, p. 226

Appendix 4

The Ooser, found in the home of the Cave family in Melbury Osmond

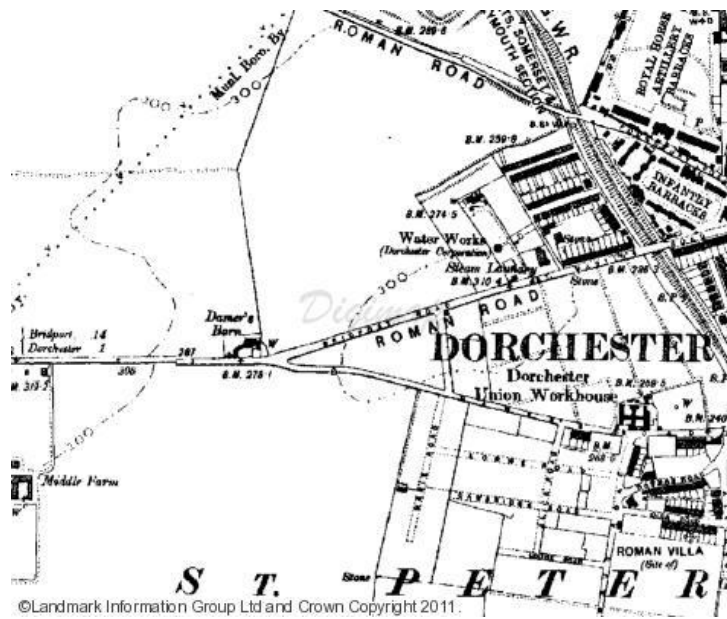


'the Dorset "Ooser", taken from what is possibly the only example now in existence'.

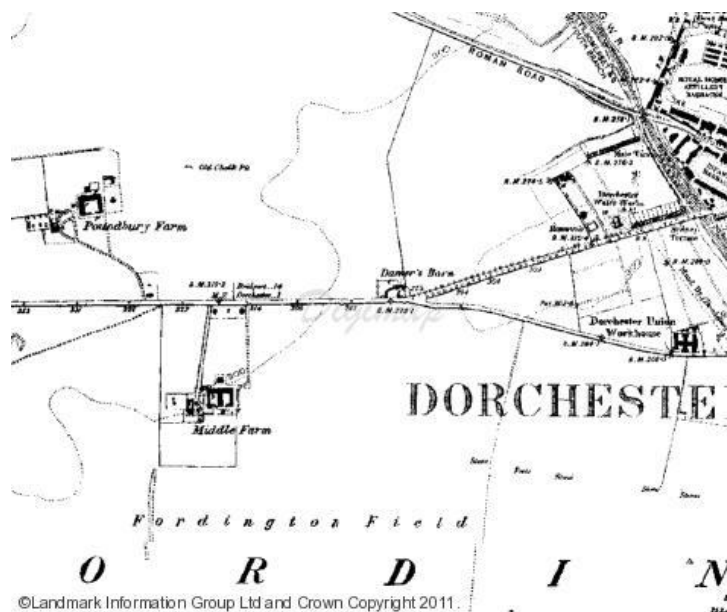
Charles Herbert Mayo, *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, vol. ii (1891), p. 289.

⁹⁷ Richard Jefferies Society Journal, 6 (1997), p. 13. The sunspot experience is also recounted in a short poem, which Looker printed in *Chronicles of the Hedges* under the title 'Recapitulation.'

Appendix 5



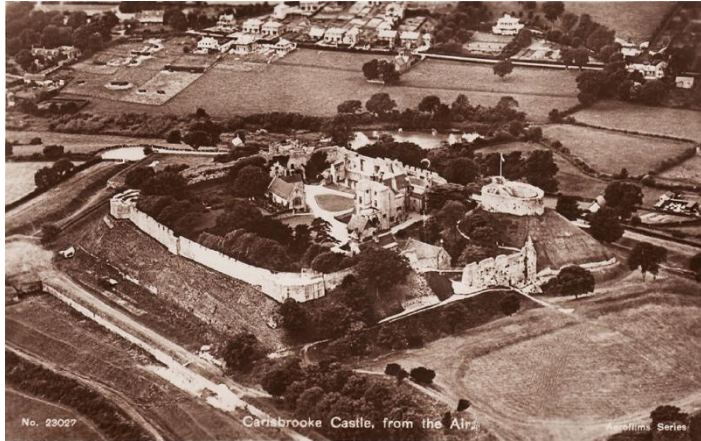
Damer's Barn in the 1900s. © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited (2013). All rights reserved. (1900)
<<http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/ancientroam/mapper>> [accessed 21 December 2012]



Damer's Barn in the 1890s. This version shows one of the tree-lined avenues which leads into the town centre. Source: © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited (2013). All rights reserved. (1890)
<<http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/ancientroam/mapper>> [accessed 21 December 2012]

Appendix 6

Images of Carisbrooke Castle



Source:

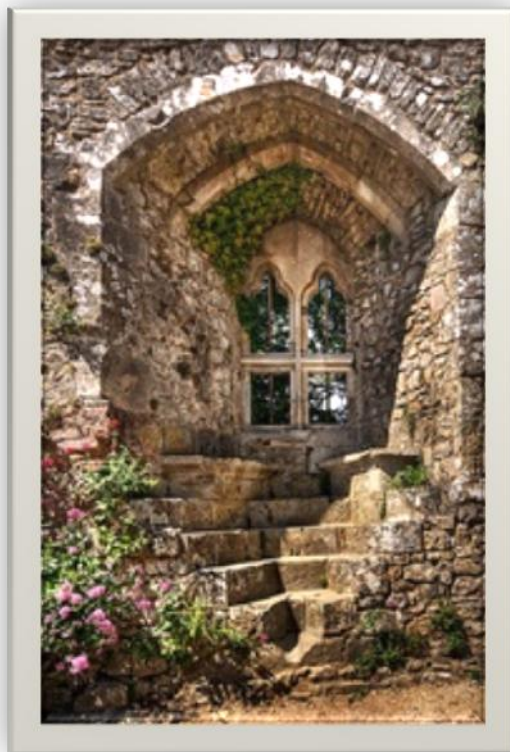
<http://www.carisbrooke.shalfleet.net/images_carisbrooke_view/carisbrooke_castle_aerial.jpg> [accessed 18 October 2012]



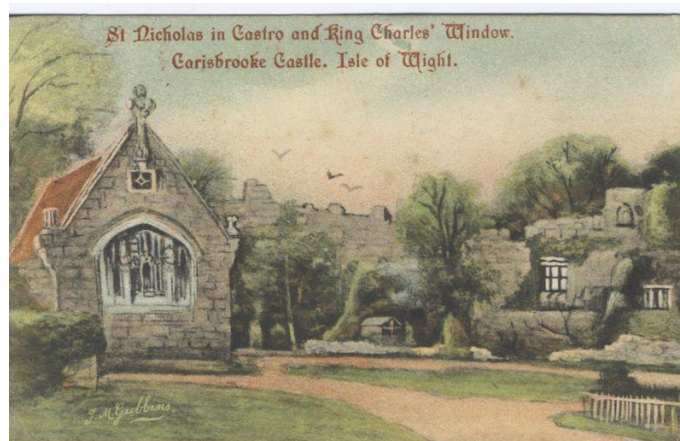
Source: <http://www.christophersomerville.co.uk/?p=258>. [accessed 18 October 2012]



Source: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/travel/2009/apr/05/parks-gardens-britain-wrest-greenway-boveridge>> [accessed 18 October 2012]



Countess Isabella's Window, Carisbrooke Castle. Source:
<http://s0.geograph.org.uk/geophotos/03/11/75/3117522_9a81ec99.jpg>
[accessed 20 January 2013]



St Nicholas in Castro — a postcard of Carisbrooke Castle sent in 1905 to Miss Wilkinson, Balham. Source: Isle of Wight Family History Society <http://www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/pho_car.htm> [accessed 15 October 2012]

Appendix 7

Table showing names of greyhounds and racehorses in the 1870s and 1880s which correspond with the names of Jefferies's fictional characters. The names of the book in which these characters appear are given in brackets.

Year of Breeding	Greyhound	Racehorse
1858	Bevis Marks (<i>Bevis</i> , 1882)	
1862	The Dewy Morn (1884)	
1863		Augustus (<i>Greene Ferne Farm</i> , 1879)
1865		Formosa (<i>Bevis</i> , 1882)
1867	Geoffrey (<i>Greene Ferne Farm</i> , 1879)	
1868	Valentine (<i>Greene Ferne Farm</i> , 1879)	
1867-1874	7 dogs named 'Formosa' (<i>Bevis</i> , 1882)	
1869	Augustus (<i>Greene Ferne Farm</i> , 1879)	
1872	Carlotta (<i>Restless Human Hearts</i> , 1875)	
1872		Aquila (<i>After London</i> , 1885)
1873		Julius Caesar (<i>Story of My Heart</i> , 1883)
1873	Georgiana (<i>Restless Human Hearts</i> , 1875)	
1873	Carlotta (<i>Restless Human Hearts</i>)	
1873	Aaron (<i>Round About a Great Estate</i> , 1880)	
1874	Cicely (<i>Round About a Great Estate</i> , 1880)	
1874	Felix (<i>GFF</i> and <i>After London</i> , 1885)	
1875	Hodge (<i>Hodge and His Masters</i>)	
1875	Aurora (<i>After London</i> , 1885)	
1876	Felix (<i>GFF</i> and <i>After London</i> , 1885)	Sir Bevys (<i>Wood Magic</i> , 1881)
1878		Amaryllis (<i>Amaryllis at the Fair</i> , 1887)
1879	Hilary (<i>Round About a Great Estate</i> , 1880)	
1879	Rosa (<i>The Dewy Morn</i> , 1884)	
1879	The Dewy Morn (1884)	
1881	Julius Caesar (<i>Story of My Heart</i> , 1883)	
1884	Amaryllis (<i>Amaryllis at the Fair</i> , 1887)	

Appendix 8

to be seen from the following headings:—

The Primeval Occupation : Speech.	Narcotic Arts and Superstitions.
The Primeval Transition : Instinct.	Primitive Architecture : Megalithic.
The Promethean Instinct : Fire.	The Ceramic Art : Pottery.
The Maritime Instinct : The Canoe.	The Intellectual Instinct : Letters.
The Technological Instinct : Tools.	Ante-Columbian Traces : Coloniza-
The Metallurgic Instinct : Copper.	tion.
The Metallurgic Arts : Alloys.	The American Cranial Type.
The Architectural Instinct : Earth-	Artificial Cranial Distortion.
works.	The Red Blood of the West.
The Hereafter : Sepulchral Mounds.	The Intrusive Races.
Propitiation : Sacrificial Mounds.	Ethnographic Hypotheses : Migra-
Commemoration : Symbolic Mounds.	tion.
Progress : Native Civilization.	Guesses at the Age of Man.
The Artistic Instinct : Imitation.	

Appendix 9

This article appeared in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 20 (2011), pp. 19-25

Bibliographical Discoveries: Jefferies Imitators

Rebecca Welshman

The Jefferies Canon currently includes many essays with little evidence of Jefferies's authorship other than similarities in style and subject with other confirmed works. Several of these pieces were reprinted as Jefferies's works by Samuel Looker in the 1940s in *Field and Farm* and *Chronicles of the Hedges*. George Miller and Hugoe Matthews were the first to question these attributions in the *Bibliographical Study* in 1993, and since then W. J. Keith has written a revised *Canon* of articles attributed to Jefferies (1995) citing evidence for and against Jefferies's authorship of each piece (74 in total).

Chronicles of the Hedges includes fragments of manuscript which Looker transcribed, as well as articles which appeared in the *St James's Gazette* and the *Livestock Journal*. After researching these articles I can confirm that several of them are not by Jefferies, but belong to another naturalist writing in a very similar style on similar subjects, called John Watson. Based in Kendal, and known during the late 1880s and 1890s as a writer on rural subjects, particularly birds, Watson wrote a series titled 'The Birds of Yorkshire' for the *Leeds Mercury* in 1884 and a series titled 'Country Life' in the *Manchester Times* under the pseudonym "Ranger". After Jefferies's death, Watson published yearly titles on rural subjects in the style of *The Gamekeeper at Home* and *The Amateur Poacher*. Although his style is similar to that of Jefferies, it lacks his depth and poignancy. Watson appears to have begun publishing in the style of Jefferies in 1884 and developed a more individual style over the next 10 years, when he contributed to the *Cornhill*, *National Review*, *Macmillan's* and the *Nineteenth Century*.

After Jefferies's death in 1887, Watson was recognised as his successor. A reviewer of Watson's *Nature and Woodcraft* in the *Academy* writes of Watson that 'some portion of the mantle of Jefferies has fallen upon his shoulders'. The reviewer recognises that Watson 'does not possess, indeed, that eye for minuteness in describing nature which belonged to his master', but notes that, 'boundless enthusiasm for the lower animals, a happy knack of observing minor traits, and literary skill in describing them are marked characteristics of both authors.'⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Anon., *Academy*, 21 June 1890, p. 423.

Of items attributed to Jefferies — some of which have already been highlighted as being unsupported by full documentary evidence by Hugoe Matthews in the *Index* (2008) — the following are by Watson. These include:

‘Nightingales’, *St. James’s Gazette*, 10 April 1886, *Chronicles of the Hedges*, p. 88

‘Conforming to Environment’, *St. James’s Gazette*, 24 June 1886

‘The Protection of Nature’, *Field and Farm*, p. 68

‘Bird Notes in June’, *Field and Farm*, p. 69

‘The Ditch and the Pool’, *Chronicles of the Hedges*, pp. 148–9

‘Notes A-Field’, *St. James’s Gazette*, 28 July 1885

‘In Summer Fields’, *St. James’s Gazette*, 7 June 1886, *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 11, (2002), pp. 3–4

‘The Gamekeeper’s Larder’, *St. James’s Gazette*, and *Manchester Guardian*, July 1886, and in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 7 (1998), pp. 4–6. A cutting of this article from the paper was found in the late 1990s, pasted into an early copy of Jefferies’s *The Gamekeeper at Home*, and was attributed to Jefferies on the basis of style and subject matter.

Sections of these articles appear in John Watson’s collected periodical contributions to the *Leeds Mercury*, *Manchester Times*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, and *St. James’s Gazette*, and were collected in *Sylvan Folk* (1889), *Confessions of a Poacher* (1890), *Poachers and Poaching* (1891), *Woodlanders and Field Folk*, *Nature and Woodcraft*, and other yearly titles. The similarities more readily came to light because Watson reused sections of his work in his various publications. A review of *Poachers and Poaching* in August 1891 in *Murray’s Magazine* notes that the author frequently repeated himself:

Mr. Watson is a close observer of nature, and we are glad that he has preserved the results of some of his observations in the present volume, instead of leaving them to go the unhonoured way of the majority of magazine articles. But it might be as well, perhaps, so to revise these reprinted papers as to prevent the recurrence of passages almost precisely the same, as, for instance, on pages 29 and 189, and again on pages 7 and 270. Mr Watson has evidently made a close study of the habits and methods of poachers, and his work would form an excellent "Gamekeeper's Manual." Yet its title scarcely does it justice, for it is instinct with the love of the fields and woods, and all true lovers of nature will be grateful to him for letting them share in his pleasures.

'Nightingales' (*St. James's Gazette* and *Chronicles of the Hedges*, ed. by Samuel J. Looker)

A section of 'Nightingales', which appears in the *St. James's Gazette* on 19 April 1886, and in *Chronicles of the Hedges* (pp. 81-91), occurs with some paragraphs omitted in a column titled 'Birds and Beasts' in the *Newcastle Courant* in 1892. In the first paragraph the text is reproduced, beginning with 'In "the good old days of birdcatching" it was child's play to snare them' and ending with 'for the most part are imports from Germany.' The section about Dr. Johnson is abridged, and is followed by the full reproduction of the

paragraph beginning 'Sir John Sinclair tried to overcome', concluding with 'the young birds all flew away, and they never returned'.⁹⁹

The article is unsigned but it is obviously rehashed from its original appearance in the *St. James's Gazette* six years before. It is noted to be 'specially contributed', from an anonymous contemporary newspaper. The author could be Watson, who by this time had established a name for himself as an author on natural history, particularly birds. However, Watson's authorship of this piece cannot be confirmed as I have not yet found the text in his collected work. The section in *CH* under the same title, Looker dates as 1886. Looker does not say that this is from manuscript, which suggests that the piece was taken directly from the *St. James's Gazette*.

'Conforming to Environment' (*St. James's Gazette*), 'The Protection of Nature' (*Field and Farm*), and 'Bird Notes in June' (*Field and Farm*)

Phrases in 'Conforming to Environment' appear a few days earlier than its appearance in the *St. James's Gazette* on 24 June 1886 in a piece by Watson (19 June 1886) in the *Leeds Mercury* in the 'Birds of Yorkshire' series (signed 'John Watson'), and again even earlier that year in the 'Country Life' series in the *Manchester Times* on 2 January 1886, which is unsigned.¹⁰⁰ The whole of 'Conforming to Environment' appears as 'Protective Colouring in Birds' in *Chambers's Journal* on 19 July 1898. Various sentences from these articles

⁹⁹ *Newcastle Weekly Courant*, 2 April, 1892.

¹⁰⁰ Large sections of the 'Country Life' series appear in Watson's collections, identifying him as the author.

occur in Watson's *Poachers and Poaching*. The article in *Chambers's* also contains paragraphs about the purple emperor butterfly, geraniums, and the protective colouring of birds which make up 'The Protection of Nature' in *Field and Farm*. The two pieces are identical: the article in *Chambers's* follows the argument of 'The Protection of Nature', but expands upon each point to make a fuller article (2 columns in total). 'Bird Notes in June', also in *Field and Farm* (pp. 68–9) is a mixture of replicated sentences and scenes from Watson's other work, including 'In Summer Fields', 'Conforming to Environment' and 'Notes A-Field' — in particular the chaffinch whose nest is 'almost impossible to detect' because of its resemblance to the trunk against which it is placed (an observation also repeated in 'The Protection of Nature').

Although Jefferies makes occasional references to the work of Charles Darwin, he did not embrace the theory of evolution: he believed that it was an over-simplification of the idea of life and that it left too much unexplained. 'Conforming to Environment' clearly endorses the view that birds and insects assume protective camouflage and adapt to their environment — a theme which ran throughout the work of John Watson.

'The Ditch and the Pool' (CH) and 'Notes-A-Field' (SJG)

The text of 'The Ditch and the Pool' appears in the *St. James's Gazette* as part of another (uncollected) Looker attribution titled 'Notes A-Field'. The latter

piece is later included in entirety, under the same title ('Notes A-Field'), in Watson's *Sylvan Folk* (1889). The text of 'The Ditch and the Pool' appears in entirety as part of a longer article titled 'A Mountain Tarn' in the 'Country Life' series in the *Manchester Times* 17 April 1886, by Watson.

'The Gamekeeper's Larder', *Manchester Guardian* and *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, 7 (1998), pp. 4–6

This item appeared in several newspapers, including the *Manchester Guardian*, 5 July 1886, p. 8, the *Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, 13 July 1886, p. 2, and the *Penny Illustrated Paper*, 10 July 1886, p. 30. The reprint in the *Aberdeen Weekly* notes the source to be the *St. James's Gazette*. In the *Canon*, W. J. Keith expresses doubts about several of the items under discussion, but not 'The Gamekeeper's Larder'.¹⁰¹ Parts of 'The Gamekeeper's Larder' are reprinted in an article in the *Hampshire Telegraph* on 19 November 1887, p. 12 (two months after Jefferies' death), titled 'Winged Poachers'. The article is said to be contributed by 'a natural history correspondent of the *St. James's Gazette*', and reproduces scenes of a keeper shooting a hawk: 'there was a puff of white smoke and a cloud of feathers and then the marauder dropped with a dead thud to the sward.' The section from 'The Gamekeeper's Larder' about the call of a kestrel sounding like 'kee kee keelie' and the image of the bird on a 'silken thread' is also used in an article called 'Bird and Beast Poachers' in the *Cornhill Magazine* in

¹⁰¹ W. J. Keith, *The Jefferies Canon: Notes on Essays Attributed to Richard Jefferies without Full Documentary Evidence* (Oxon: Petton Books, 1995), p. 37.

1891. 'The Gamekeeper's Larder' matches parts of the text and the sentiment of 'Nature's Poachers', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 September 1886, pp. 4–5, which is Jefferies-esque in style, but which later occurs in full in Watson's *A Year in the Fields* (1888). 'Nature's Poachers' is a companion piece to 'Nature's Night Sounds', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 8 October 1886, pp. 4–5, which contains phrases such as 'my old angler friend calls this bird the fisherman's nightingale' (see 'Notes A-Field), and 'gaunt heron' which frequently appear in Watson's work. 'The Gamekeeper's Larder' contains rather unimaginative phrases which are not characteristically Jefferies, such as 'little falcon', 'audacious magpies', 'pleasant cry', and 'wondrously adapted feet'. Watson wrote about the adaptation of animals and birds to their environment and frequently alludes to the notion of the survival of the fittest. The author repeats 'audacious pies', even though the article is short; something that Jefferies took great care to avoid. The slaughter of the kestrel by the keeper seems incongruous with Jefferies's other work at this time and would seem to recall the time of *The Gamekeeper at Home*, *Wildlife in a Southern County*, and *The Amateur Poacher*. It is also worth noting that in his description of a kestrel in 'Nature Near Brighton' (1883) in the *Standard*, Jefferies does not particularly admire the hovering of the bird (as does the author of 'The Gamekeeper's Larder'), but is more interested in its flight. Jefferies writes: 'the power of hovering is not as great as that of soaring', which is echoed in the last sentence of 'The Hovering of the Kestrel' in which he writes that 'hovering is very interesting; but not nearly so mysterious as at least one other power possessed by birds'.¹⁰² By 1886 his admiration of beauty and form, and his desire to work

¹⁰² 'The Hovering of the Kestrel', *Life of the Fields*, p. 180.

out the mechanics of life itself, seem to have eclipsed his appetite for detailing the practical.

After writing up this argument in support of Watson's authorship of the article I found the entirety of 'The Gamekeeper's Larder' in Watson's *Nature and Woodcraft*, with one sentence omitted, under the title 'The Gamekeeper's Golgotha'. The discovery also confirms Watson as the author of several further pieces in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which closely resemble Jefferies in style and sentiment.

One problem with these discoveries is that what Looker calls transcriptions from Jefferies' manuscripts in *Field and Farm*, appear in Watson's work. These include 'The Protection of Nature' and 'Bird Notes in June', which Looker claims in a footnote were 'quickly written pencil notes [...] most difficult to read.' It is possible that Looker might have been sold some of Watson's manuscript and mistaken it for Jefferies — he does mention that it is in pencil and is illegible — or that Jefferies wrote out some passages of Watson's from the *St. James's Gazette* in 1885/6 and Looker transcribed them, which seems unlikely. It also seems unlikely that Watson could have copied Jefferies because many of the similarities I have found between the suspicious items attributed to Jefferies and the work of Watson, including key phrases, are first published by Watson in his serials in the *Leeds Mercury and Manchester Times* between 1884–1886, before they appeared in the *St. James's Gazette*, and are reused in other articles and books over a long period of time, well after Jefferies's death. In the 'Country Life' series in the *Manchester Times*, Watson acknowledges his debt to Jefferies as his precursor. He footnotes scenes which he says resemble similar events in

Jefferies's country books, but he describes them as events which he also experienced and claims that he uses his own words.

One of Looker's ambitions was to get people reading Jefferies again, and he sought to produce as much 'new' Jefferies work as possible. As this would have been quite a solitary task, it is possible to see how mistakes could have been made. However, having been to the British Library and found the majority of the manuscripts of the short extracts in *Field and Farm* and *Chronicles of the Hedges*, which are clearly identifiable as Jefferies, the two manuscripts for the texts in *Field and Farm*, which are Watson's, have not yet come to light.

I am concerned that the mistakenly attributed items have been republished as Jefferies, not only by Looker in the 1940s but also in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal*, as recently as 2002. This means that people have been unwittingly quoting passages which are not by Jefferies — eg: Brian Morris, *Richard Jefferies and the Ecological Vision*, published in 2006, which cites 'The Gamekeeper's Larder'. In terms of scholarship it is worrying to think that Jefferies is being misquoted and, equally, that the lesser-known work of John Watson is not being acknowledged.

As part of my ongoing investigation I have identified textual similarities between several other unproven Jefferies attributions and the work of other writers at the time, as well as with anonymous articles published after Jefferies's death. For example, several of the papers on partridges which appear in Looker's lists of attributions bear strong textual resemblances to articles by Thomas Edward Kebbel, who wrote under the name 'T. E. Kebbel' or 'T. E. K'. Kebbel was born in 1827 and lived until 1917. A journalist and

author, and close friend of Disraeli, Keibel published a book titled *The Agricultural Labourer* in November 1870, which constituted papers published in the *Cornhill* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and predated Jefferies's letters to the *Times* on the same subject. Keibel also published widely on country subjects in periodicals which Jefferies contributed to, and there are strong similarities between Keibel's work and articles which appear in the *St. James's Gazette*.

The number of articles on rural subjects in the *St. James's Gazette* which are unsigned suggests that the editor, Frederick Greenwood, who was a friend of Jefferies, was encouraging submissions from authors such as Watson and Keibel, in a similar style and on similar subjects as Jefferies, and leaving them unsigned. As this new vein of popular writing emerged, perhaps initially, but not exclusively, popularised by Jefferies in his serials in the *Standard* and the *Pall Mall Gazette* from 1878–1880, it seemed to become common practice to leave items ambiguously unsigned. However, in Jefferies's case, many of his articles written after 1882 were signed, which makes the unsigned attributions after this date more problematic.

In his later years, and particularly after his death, it came to national attention that there had been a sudden rise in the number of Jefferies imitators. A reviewer of *By Roadside and River* by H. Mead Briggs, states that 'Richard Jefferies has had of late many imitators. For some years past the public has been liberally supplied with a class of book of which "By Roadside and River" is an example'.¹⁰³ The following year, in a review of another countryside book in the *Standard*, the author traces the emergence of the natural history trend: 'To whosoever lot it shall fall to write the history of

¹⁰³ Anon., 'Roadside and River', *Knowledge*, 1 March 1898, np.

English literature in the nineteenth century, one of the distinctive features in it which he will be called upon to notice is the development of the taste for natural history characteristic of the last thirty years.’ The article goes on to trace the emergence of the trend to the time of the lyric poets and Washington Irving, through to Isaak Walton and Gilbert White — the only well-known writers of the genre in the mid nineteenth century — to Walter Scott, Frank Buckland, and to Jefferies. ‘Gradually,’ says the author, ‘a school has been formed, and works in which picturesque accounts of shooting and fishing are combined with histories of local flora and fauna now issue from the Press in considerable numbers every year.’¹⁰⁴

The process of identifying the authorship of items attributed to Jefferies continues as more books and periodicals are digitalised. The discovery of Watson’s authorship of pieces which have been reprinted as Jefferies, and the number of other imitators, illustrates the competitive nature of the market that Jefferies helped to create. Yet perhaps more importantly it shows the impact Jefferies had on his reading public, for his imitators were, foremost, admirers, seeking to enjoy and express the wonders of the natural world in a way that they had learned from Jefferies.

Appendix 10

¹⁰⁴ Anon., ‘The Birds of Devon’, *Standard*, 24 October 1892, p. 6.



Launceston Castle. Source: English Heritage Website <<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/launceston-castle/>> [accessed 18 November 2012]

Appendix 11

Hardy's sketch of Emma by the waterfall in the Valency Valley.



Source: <http://www.segr-music.net/songdetails.cfm?song_id=16> [accessed 20 January 2013]

Appendix 12



Victorian silver tumbler by Arthur Sibley, 1873. 2.25 inches diameter. Source:

<<http://www.henrywillis.co.uk/antique-english-silver-dealer/2012/victorian-tumbler-cup-325/>> [accessed 12 October 2012]

Appendix 13

The Setting of 'Her Haunting Ground'

In light of the historical and archaeological associations of Hardy's time in Cornwall, 'Her Haunting-Ground' — about a place where Emma 'flourished sorrow-free' — seems to allude to Bottreaux Castle. Hardy's fictional name for Boscastle — 'Castle Boterel' — is an adaptation of the Norman name 'Castel Boterel', and the Cornish 'Kastell Boterel'. A motte and bailey castle, with a circular shell keep, was built there for the Norman Boterel family sometime between 1154 and 1189. Writing about *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, Hardy's only novel set in Cornwall, C.A. Windle Bertram writes that:

the scene of the story is laid near Boscastle in Cornwall, the Castle Boterel of the book, a place which owes its name to the fact that it was once the seat of the Norman family of De Bottreaux, whose castle is now represented only by one grassy mound.¹⁰⁵

The 'chiefest sanctuary' — a place where Emma's true 'life-parts most were played' — seems to recall the castle hill and mound. Although the remains of the castle walls had disappeared by the nineteenth century, the village of Boscastle had grown up around the hill, and thus it formed a central point of reference for the inhabitants. Hardy writes that 'her dust is far away', which suggests that he penned the poem after or during a return to Boscastle after her death. The second stanza of the poem reads:

¹⁰⁵ C. A. Windle Bertram, *The Wessex of Thomas Hardy* (London: John Lane, 1902), p. 280.
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Her voice explored this atmosphere,
Her foot impressed this turf around,
Her shadow swept this slope and mound,
Her fingers fondled blossoms here;
And so, I ask, why, why should she
Haunt elsewhere, by a slighted tomb,
When here she flourished sorrow-free,
And, save for others, knew no gloom?¹⁰⁶

The 'slighted tomb' likely recalls Emma's resting place at Stinsford, Dorset, alongside other members of the Hardy family, and the acrimony between Emma and Hardy's mother and sisters, which despite over 25 years of marriage, was never resolved. 'Atmosphere' denotes height and a mood distinct from the ground below, and 'turf' and 'slope and mound' are compatible with the grassy site that constitutes the subterranean remains of the castle and its visible grounds. Moreover, 'mound' is an archaeological term frequently used to describe the earthen mass upon which archaeological monuments were situated. Due to an absence of visible remains, the Boscastle site was often referred to as a 'mound' in archaeological and journalistic accounts. Maclauchlan, for example, wrote in 1849 that 'about half the entrenched mound at the end of the promontory still remains, from which it seems probable that there was an outwork extending down the slope towards

¹⁰⁶ *Complete Poems* p. 770.

the mill'.¹⁰⁷ The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* wrote of the monument that 'only the mound survives'. The same article noted the castle to be situated in the parish of Forrabury, which also houses the 'chief part of the town'.¹⁰⁸ This green and secluded mound, enclosed by two steep valleys and overlooking the river, may well have been Emma's 'chiefest sanctuary' — known to her from 1868–1874 when she lived at St. Juliot – and to Hardy, whose observation 'of her whose form we used to know' implies his familiarity with the spot. The emotional experience of returning to Boscastle seems to have encouraged Hardy to work through his feelings associated with that time. The castle hill may have recalled to him the 'mound' of Emma's grave, from which in 'My Spirit Will Not Haunt the Mound', she 'travel[s] memory-possessed,/To where my tremulous being found/ Life largest, best.'¹⁰⁹ The same poem refers to paths or 'ways', which 'I and another used to know/ in backward days', which further suggests Hardy's and Emma's shared knowledge of the Cornish landscape. 'Her Haunting-Ground' thus seems to express an element of guilt — Hardy's recognition that by marrying Emma, and moving to Dorset, he ultimately removed her from the happiest scenes of her life.

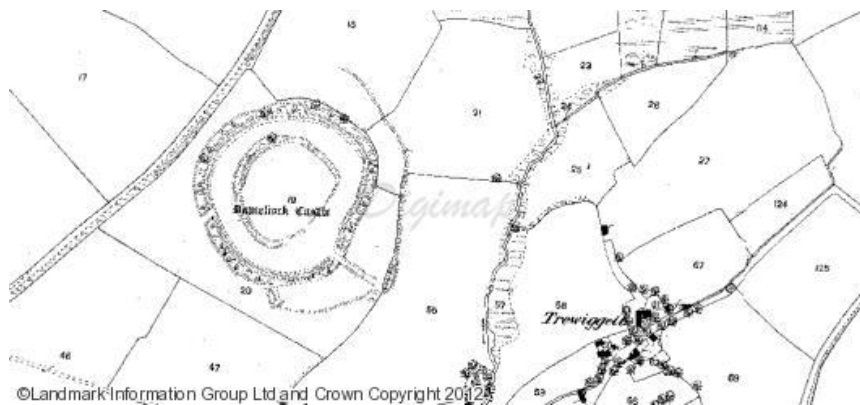
Appendix 14

¹⁰⁷ H. MacLaughlan, 'Notes on Restormel Castle', RRIC, Vol 32. 19 (1849), cited in 'Bottreaux Castle', Heritage Gateway, <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCO126&resourceID=1020> [accessed 15 November 2012].

¹⁰⁸ Anon., *Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser*, 29 January 1858, p. 6. It might also be significant that the castle is situated on Dunn Road. One derivative of the name Dunn is the Gaelic *Donn*, meaning 'brown-haired' or 'chieftain'.

¹⁰⁹ *Collected Poems*, p. 299.

Dameliok Castle, Cornwall (now known as Tregear Rounds)



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Appendix 15

The Old Rectory at St. Juliot, Cornwall, home of the Gifford family, where Hardy stayed in 1870. The antique black lettering used to mark the sundial identifies it as an ancient monument.



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Appendix 16

The shadow cast by the gnomon resembles the head and shoulders of a kneeling figure:



'Horizontal Garden Sundial' <<http://www.yardenvy.com/pages/Positioning-a-Sundial.htm>> [accessed 23 December 2012]

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