The Case For Casterbridge: Thomas Hardy As Placename Creator

Adrian Room

Abstract

In common with other nineteenth-century English novelists, Thomas Hardy substituted fictional placenames for true ones in his writing. However, he did not merely devise names at random, but imaginatively created new names that were almost all historically or geographically significant, as well as being toponymically authentic, incorporating established placename elements. He thus, for example, renamed Wareham as *Anglebury*, for its Anglo-Saxon associations, and Wantage as *Alfredston*, for its links with King Alfred. Some names, as these two, differ completely from their originals; others, more commonly, were based on their originals, such as Glaston for Glastonbury or *Port Bredy* for Bridport. The paper examines Hardy's literary placenames both individually and generally, and lists all known counterparts to existing true names.

*****

A common ingredient in the fictional writings of many nineteenth-century English novelists is the setting of a locale in a place with an invented name but with enough "identifiers" to enable the reader to recognize a real enough place. As a result of this device, both literary scholars and touristic entrepreneurs have devoted much time and ink to advertising the fact that the novelist's place "x" is "really" the true place "y," and that a study of the history and people of the actual place will provide a genuine insight into the action and story of the novel and the behavior of its characters. The resulting identity of fictional place with real place has thus been popularly promoted, so that today the average literate reader of fiction is aware that Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford* was "really" Knutsford, that George Eliot's *Middlemarch* was Coventry, that Anthony Trollope's *Barchester* was Salisbury (or Wells, or both), and that Thomas Hardy's *Casterbridge* was Dorchester.[1]

But although in most cases the respective novelists would freely admit that they did indeed base their action and characters on these places, either historically, geographically, or simply socially, they would equally wish their readers to bear constantly in mind that what they had

1

written was a work of *fiction*, not of fact. To that extent, *Cranford* cannot be said to be "really" Knutsford, since it is actually *Cranford*, and the same relationship obtains for other fictional places and their real-life topological equivalents.

However, what I am keen to examine here is not to what extent an actual place is or is not the topological equivalent of a fictional locale, but to what extent the fictional name is historically and linguistically appropriate for its true counterpart. And in particular, I wish to examine the placenames created by Thomas Hardy and compare them both with their supposed or traditionally recognized true equivalents and also with similar genuine placenames in the locale of his fiction, which is almost always entirely set in the south of England. As will be seen, Hardy's invented names are almost all entirely worthy or genuine-seeming creations, and in most instances are perfectly matched to their real counterparts, with the author not only employing standard placename elements for his literary names, but even incorporating valid historical references and allusions to the names of characters in his novels.

Before setting out blithely to base my examination on the very equation I have just been questioning (that fictional "x" is "really" factual "y"), however, I must obviously support my case with authoritative — and preferably authorial — backing. Fortunately, for this particular novelist, it can be provided, since we have it on the authority of his touring companion, Hermann Lea, that Hardy approved of and agreed with the identifications made. Thus, in his autobiographical notes for his *Thomas Hardy's Wessex*, first published in 1913, Lea writes:

> Although I had visited most of these [real] towns and villages and natural features, and had, moreover, a fairly wide selection of photographs covering the historical Wessex, there were still some places that demanded identification. Thus between 1910 and 1913, when the book was first published, my task necessitated many and frequent visits to [Hardy]. As the work proceeded, Hardy grew increasingly interested and I found him ever ready to help with suggestions. ... Sometimes he wrote me notes regarding the places; sometimes he gave me information during my visits ... ; and sometimes he came with me to look at certain somewhat obscure features to which he had referred in his writings, and which he himself was not too certain about. (1:11)

Hardy, thus, was perfectly ready to identify the true locales of his many fictitious names, and was happy for Lea to record these identifications in his book.

Having said that, it is necessary to add that not all the identities correspond perfectly from the point of view of toponymy, and that Hardy would locate one place nearer another than it actually was, or even transfer a complete area, with its created placenames, from one part of the country to another.

Despite such provisos and riders, it is generally agreed that if an identity of one real place with another fictional one is to be made, it will be (for the majority of places) as in Table 1.[2]

A merely cursory glance through these names will show that two of the major placenames associated with Hardy are not listed here, namely *Wessex* and *Egdon Heath*. This is simply because they are too extensive to have exact modern equivalents. Even so, we must consider them first, because of their intrinsic importance in the Hardy literary landscape. We shall then proceed to a more detailed consideration of the fictional names listed here and their true counterparts.

Hardy's own name is virtually synonymous with *Wessex*, and it was a name that he himself was keen to promote. In a letter to one of his publishers, he wrote:

> Could you, whenever advertising my books, use the words "Wessex novels" at the head of the list? I mean, instead of "By T. H.," "T. H.'s Wessex Novels" or something of that sort? I find that the name Wessex, wh. I was the first to use in fiction, is getting to be taken up everywhere: and it would be a pity for us to lose the right to it for want of asserting it. (Hawkins 7-8)

The use of the name by Hardy is distinctive enough for it to be granted its own entry in the *Supplement* to the *Oxford English Dictionary*:

> Wessex [OE *West Seaxe* West Saxons] 1. The name of a kingdom in south-west England in Anglo-Saxon times, used by Thomas Hardy as the name of the county in which his stories are set (corresponding approximately to Dorset, Somerset, Hampshire, and Wiltshire) and since used as a name for south-west England or this part of it. (4:1257)[4]

Hardy had given, in the preface to *FM*, an account of his revival of the historic name, which has its modern fellows still in the counties of Essex, Sussex, and Middlesex (the last officially abolished in 1974 but still used in popular speech and even postal addresses):

> It was in the chapters of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, as they appeared month by month in a popular magazine, that I first ventured to adopt the word "Wessex" from the pages of early English history, and give it a fic-

4 Adrian Room

Table 1. Placenames and their counterparts in Hardy's fiction.[3]

Current True Name and Identity	Hardy's Name and Work(s) With Significant Reference
Affpuddle: village, Dorset	East Egdon: *FM*
Athelhampton: hamlet, Dorset	Athelhall: *FM*
Barnstaple: market town, Devon	Downstaple
Basingstoke: town, Hampshire	Stoke Barehills: *JO*
Beaminster: small town, Dorset	Emminster: *TD*
Bere Regis: village, Dorset	Kingsbere: *TD, TM*
Blackmoor Vale: stretch of country, Somerset/Dorset	Vale of the Little Dairies: *TD*
Blandford (Forum): town, Dorset	Shottsford (Forum): *WL, FMN, MC, WT*
Boscastle: village, Cornwall	Castle Boterel: *PB*
Bournemouth: large seaside resort, Dorset(formerly Hampshire)	Sandbourne: *TD, JP, HE*
Bridport: market town, Dorset	Port Bredy: *MC, WT*
Camelford: small town, Cornwall	Camelton: *PB*
Cerne Abbas: village, Dorset	Abbot's Cernel: *TD, WL*
Chesil Beach: shingle bank, Dorset	Pebble Bank: *TM, WB*
Combe Martin: village, Devon	Cliff Martin
Corfe Castle: village, Dorset	Corvesgate Castle: *HE*
Cumnor: village, Oxfordshire	Lumsdon: *JO*
Dorchester: county town, Dorset	Casterbridge: *TD, JO, LL, GN, FM, MC, UG, WT, DR, DN*
Dunster: village, Somerset	Markton: *LD*
Easton: village, Dorset	Eastern Village or East Quarriers: *WB*
East Stoke: village, Dorset	Holmstoke: *WT*
Evershot: village, Dorset	Evershead: *TD, GN, WT*
Exeter: city and county capital, Devon	Exonbury: *JO, LL, GN, TM*
Fawley: village, Berkshire	Marygreen: *JO*
Fortuneswell: town, Dorset	Street of Wells: *TM, WB*
Frampton: village, Dorset	Scrimpton: *LL*
[Frome Valley: stretch of country along Frome River, Dorset]	Vale of the Great Dairies: *TD*
Glastonbury: town, Somerset	Glaston: *WL*
Hazelbury Bryan: village, Dorset	Nuttlebury: *TD*
Hermitage: village, Dorset	Little Hintock: *WL*
Higher Bockhampton: hamlet, Dorset	Upper Mellstock:.*TD*
Ilchester: village, Somerset	Ivelchester: *WL*
Kingston: village, Dorset	Little Enckworth: *HE*
Launceston: town, Cornwall	St. Launce's : *PB*
Lesnewth: village, Devon	East Endelstow: *PB*
Letcombe Bassett: village, Oxfordshire (formerly Berkshire)	Cresscombe: *JO*
Lower Bockhampton: location, Dorset	Lower Mellstock: *MC, UG*
Lulworth Cove: circular bay, Dorset	Lulwind Cove or Lulstead Cove: *FM, WT, DR*
Lytchett Minster: village, Dorset	Flychett: *HE*
Maiden Newton: village, Dorset	Chalk Newton: *TD*
Marnhull: village, Dorset	Marlott: *TD*
Melbury Osmond: village, Dorset	Great Hintock or King's Hintock: *WL*
Newbury: town, Berkshire	Kennetbridge: *JO*
New Forest: area of heath and woodland, Hampshire	Great Forest: *WL, HE*

Okeford Fitzpaine: village, Dorset — Oakbury Fitzpiers: *WL*
Owermoigne: village, Dorset — Nether Moynton: *WT*
Oxford: city and county capital, Oxfordshire — Christminster: *JO*

Pentridge: village, Dorset — Trantridge: *TD, LL*
Penzance: resort and port, Cornwall — Pen-Zephyr
Piddletrenthide: village, Dorset — Longpuddle: *LL, MC*
Poole (Harbour): port and town (and its harbor), Dorset — Havenpool: *LL, GN, HE*
Portland (Isle of): peninsula, Dorset — Isle of Slingers: *TM, WB*
Portland Bill: tip of Isle of Portland, Dorset — The Beal: *TM, WB*
Preston: location, Dorset — Creston: *DR*
Puddletown: village, Dorset — Weatherbury: *TD, FM, MC*
Reading: county town, Berkshire — Aldbrickham: *JO, LL*
Redruth: town, Cornwall — Redrutin
St. Juliot: location, Cornwall — (West) Endelstow: *PB*
Salisbury: cathedral city, Wiltshire — Melchester: *TD, JO, LL, GN, TM, TT, HE*
Salisbury Plain: large tract of chalkland, Wiltshire — Great Plain: *LL*
Shaftesbury: small town, Dorset — Shaston: *TD, JO*
Sherborne: town, Dorset — Sherton Abbas: *WL, GN, FM*
Shinfield: village, Berkshire — Gaymead: *JO, LL*
Sidmouth: coastal resort, Devon — Idmouth
Southsea: coastal resort (now part of Portsmouth), Hampshire — Solentsea: *LL*
Stinsford: village, Dorset — Mellstock: *TD, UG*
Sturminster Newton: small town, Dorset — Stourcastle: *TD, DN*
Sutton Poyntz: location, Dorset — Overcombe: *TM*
Swanage: coastal resort, Dorset — Knollsea: *HE*
Taunton: county capital, Somerset — Toneborough: *LL, LD*
Tincleton: village, Dorset — Stickleford: *LL*
Tiverton: market town, Devon — Tivworthy
Tolpuddle: village, Dorset — Tolchurch: *DR*
Torquay: town and resort, Devon — Tor-upon-Sea
Truro: cathedral city and county capital, Cornwall — Trufal
Upper Bockhampton (Higher Bockhampton): village, Dorset — Upper Mellstock: *UG*
Wantage: town, Oxfordshire (formerly Berkshire) — Alfredston: *JO*
Wareham: town, Dorset — Anglebury: *RN, DR, HE*
West Bay: bay to west of Isle of Portland, Dorset — Deadman's Bay: *WB*
West Coker: village, Somerset — Narrobourne: *LL*
Weyhill: village, Hampshire — Weydon Priors: *MC*
Weymouth: town, port, and resort, Dorset — Budmouth Regis: *LL, FM, UG, TM, WB, DR*
Wimborne Minster: town, Dorset — Warborne: *GN, TT*
Winchester: county town and cathedral city, Hampshire — Wintoncester: *TD, GN*
Windsor: town, Berkshire — Castle Royal
Winterborne Zelstone: village, Dorset — Little Welland: *TT*
Wool: village, Dorset — Wellbridge: *TD*
Yeovil: town, Somerset — Ivell: *GN*

titious significance as the existing name of the district once included in that extinct kingdom. The series of novels I projected being mainly of the kind called local, they seemed to require a territorial definition of some sort to lend unity to their scene. Finding that the area of a single county did not afford a canvas large enough for this purpose, and that there were objections to an invented one, I disinterred the old one. Since then the appellation which I had thought to reserve to the horizons and landscapes of a partly real, partly dream-country, has become more and more popular as a practical provincial definition; and the dream-country has, by degrees, solidified into a utilitarian region which people can go to, take a house in, and write to the papers from. (Hawkins 4)

This passage is interesting for the principles it states and the attitude to placename creation on the part of Hardy. He feels that a recognizable name is an asset for his fiction, that a "real" name is more satisfactory and more acceptable to his readers than an entirely fictitious one, and he appreciates that such a fictitious landscape can take on a "real" life of its own and blend in with the names of "real" places, whose names remain unchanged and unaltered. (The names of many well-known real places feature in Hardy's fiction, both outside his Wessex, such as London and towns in continental Europe, and within it, such as Portsmouth, Bath, and Stonehenge. Occasionally one even finds a sentence containing one fictional name and one real. In *Collected Poems* [1930], both Stinsford and its fictional counterpart *Mellstock* appear.)

The *OED*'s reference to Wessex as a "county" is perhaps misleading, and one to which Hardy could well have objected. One of the characteristics of his landscape is that he dispenses with county names, and instead uses partitional names based on "Wessex." Thus, in Hardy's geography, Somerset becomes *Outer Wessex*, Devon *Lower Wessex*, Hampshire *Upper Wessex*, Berkshire *North Wessex* (but with Oxford brought across the county boundary), Wiltshire *Mid Wessex*, and Dorset *South Wessex*. Cornwall is *Off Wessex*, showing that he saw it as lying outside his new Wessex, and giving it a special "insular" (or at least peninsular) character that the county proper still has today.

Lying centrally across Hardy's *South Wessex*, which as representing Dorset, his native county, must play a central and recurring role in his works, there is *Egdon Heath*. Geographically, this corresponds to several real heaths, and in modern terms is that expanse of heathland that stretches, still largely unbroken, from Dorchester (*Casterbridge*) eastwards to Bournemouth (*Sandbourne*). It appears that the inspiration for the name was the distinctive Eggardon Hill, actually lying west of Dor-

chester, where it is crowned by a Roman Camp. Hardy's own name for Eggardon Hill was simply *Eggar* (in *TD*). It is one of his typical creations, a genuine-seeming name with an authentic ring to it, and retaining the elements of the original.

Let us now make an examination and comparison of the fictional names and their true counterparts in the listing above.

As compared to their originals, Hardy's names fall into two broad types: those that differ entirely from their primaries, and those that differ only partly, with the substitution of a single element for another or simply the transposition of elements, or what amounts to this (such as *Port Bredy* for Bridport). Entirely different names, with not even a generic element such as *-ford* in common, are in the minority, and amount to the following: *Markton* for Dunster, *Marygreen* for Fawley, *Little Hintock* for Hermitage, *Little Enckworth* for Kingston, *Great Hintock* for Melbury Osmond (which true name is a Hardy-style one), *Kennetbridge* for Newbury, *Christminster* for Oxford, *Weatherbury* for Puddletown, *Aldbrickham* for Reading, *Endelstow* for St. Juliot, *Melchester* for Salisbury, *Gaymead* for Shinfield, *Mellstock* for Stinsford, *Overcombe* for Sutton Poyntz, *Knollsea* for Swanage, *Stickleford* for Tincleton, *Alfredston* for Wantage, *Anglebury* for Wareham, *Narrobourne* for West Coker, *Castle Royal* for Windsor, and *Little Welland* for Winterborne Zelstone.

From this it will be seen that Hardy was not afraid to rename major towns and cities (of the twenty-one names cited here, a third were as important in Hardy's day as they are now[5]), but that the degree of disguise does not depend on the importance of the places in his works. *Melchester* (Salisbury) features in many, but although *Casterbridge* (Dorchester) understandably (in view of its location) features in many more, it retains its basic "castle" element, since *Caster-* = -chester.

When Hardy's new names are considered, they should be examined both for their authenticity as placename creations and for their appropriateness for the redesignated locale. It will be seen that in nearly every instance, they fulfill admirably the demands of both criteria. Let us take the second first.

Markton clearly suggests "market town" and Dunster to this day retains its octagonal wooden structure called the Yarn Market in witness of its market. *Marygreen*, however, bears a literary and an autobiographical allusion, since Fawley (its true identity) is the surname of the novel's central character (the Jude of the title), while *Mary* represents the name

of Mary Head, Hardy's maternal grandmother, who came from Fawley. At the same time the topographical reference is also present, and Fawley still has its attractive village green.

Kennetbridge takes its name from the Kennet River, which flows through Newbury, and *Christminster* is a name with a clear allusion to Christ Church, one of Oxford's leading colleges, whose chapel is actually the cathedral ("minster") of the city.

Weatherbury is a more subtle reference. The name is that of the old earthwork known as Weatherby Castle, just over three miles from Puddletown.[6] *Aldbrickham*, Hardy's name for Reading, appears to have a name referring both to the antiquity of the town and its brickworks, while *Endelstow*, as the Cornish St. Juliot, near Camelford, undoubtedly arose as a blend of nearby St. Endellion and Davidstow. (Hardy's name would mean "St. Endelient's Church," just as Davidstow means "St. David's Church." St. Endelient is the saint to whom the church of St. Endellion is dedicated.)

Melchester, as Salisbury, necessarily owes the general form of its name to its literary ancestor, Trollope's *Barchester,* while its first element, *Mel-*, is an embodiment of both Hardy's fictional *Mellstock* (Stinsford) and the genuine Dorset villages of Melbury Bubb and Melbury Osmond (the latter identified, at least in part, with Hardy's *Great Hintock*).

The latter half of the name *Gaymead* is at least synonymous with its counterpart in the real Shinfield, while *Overcombe*, or Sutton Poyntz, is a small village (near Preston, Hardy's *Creston*) that is more elevated than places such as Weymouth (*Budmouth Regis*) lying on the coast below it.

In *Knollsea* we have a reference to the topographical features of Swanage, which is located below a knoll, or hill (perhaps Hardy had Ballard Down in mind), by the sea. In Hardy's day it was a mere village, and the modern resort will have blurred some of its original character.

Stickleford represents tiny Tincleton. The link here may be simply a poetic or even onomatopoeic one, a suggestion of a small stream that could contain "sticklebacks." Tincleton has such a stream, which flows into the nearby Frome River. Wantage, as *Alfredston*, has a clearly historic name, referring to the famous King Alfred, who was born there and whose statue is prominent there. The fact that Alfred was king of Wessex gives added significance to Hardy's name.

In calling the ancient town of Wareham *Anglebury*, Hardy was certainly implying a reference to the Anglo-Saxons, for the town is famous

for its massive Anglo-Saxon earthworks, known locally as "The Walls" (Rossiter 138). Moreover, the element *-bury* is perfectly appropriate in this name to refer to the earthworks, representing as it does Old English *byrig*, dative of *burg* 'fort.' (An actual example of such an occurrence can be found in the name of Hertingfordbury, near Hertford, where the name means "Anglo-Saxon fortification of the people of Hertford.") Hardy may well have been familiar with the fact that *burg*, too, is frequently found with this particular sense in Old English literary and historical texts (Smith 59).

Cresscombe not only retains the original *-combe* of Letcombe Bassett but has a name that refers to the watercress beds for which the village is as well known today as it was in Hardy's time.

Narrobourne as a name suggests "narrow stream," which could doubtless suit the one at West Coker, as in admittedly dozens of other English villages. *Castle Royal*, for Windsor, is a self-descriptive name that will hardly require spelling out to any tourist or visitor to England, although *Little Welland* seems more a generally descriptive name to apply to a village with a supply of running water, the "bourne" of Winterborne Zelstone.

I have omitted *Little Hintock* and *Great Hintock* in this section of the literary tour, as both Hardy's villages are really an amalgam of several true ones, and perhaps were originally intended to blend Hermitage and Melbury Osmond with Hillfield, Middlemarsh, and Minterne. (Lea identifies *Great Hintock* as the last of these.) The source of *Little Enckworth*, as the village of Kingston, is probably not in a village name at all but in that of the nearby country house of Encombe.

Apart from these specific local references, the fictional names stand up well as placenames in their own right, both in form, composition, and meaning, without one necessarily involving the other. Thus *Markton* resembles the Avon (formerly Somerset) village of Marksbury in form, although for the latter place the first element does not denote "market" but is an Old English personal name, as so often. Similar true comparisons can be found for the other places mentioned so far: there is a Marystow in Devon to marry up with *Marygreen*, several villages named Hinton to suggest *Hintock*, and many places comprising a river name and *-bridge* (e. g., Weybridge, Axbridge, Exebridge, all in the south of England) to enable *Kennetbridge* to conform. *Casterbridge* also conforms, although not quite like this, as we shall see.

Christminster may seem an over-obvious literary invention, but the name has an affinity with the genuine Christchurch, and it is possible that the latter Dorset (formerly Hampshire) town may have at least subconsciously suggested Oxford's fictional form to Hardy. Placenames ending *-minster*, too, are not uncommon in the south of England to denote an old parish church or (originally) a monastery. Examples are Charminster, Axminster, Exminster, Sturminster Newton, and Wimborne Minster, the last two places being respectively Hardy's *Stourcastle* and *Warborne*.

Endelstow, as the fictional St. Juliot, has the element *-stow,* meaning "place," and in particular "holy place," "church," that is found regularly in Cornish placenames and in the West Country generally. Davidstow has already been cited as one Cornish example. Others in this county are Padstow, Michaelstow, and Jacobstow, referring respectively to the churches of Sts. Petrock, Michael, and James, and all located, incidentally, in the northeast of the county, where St. Juliot (*Endelstow*) also is.

What justification does Hardy have for substituting a *-chester* element for a *-bury*, as he has done (and as Trollope did before him) for Salisbury? Placenames with *-chester* almost always denote a place that was formerly a Roman station. (Old English *ceaster* comes directly from Latin *castra* 'camp.') For Salisbury this is perfectly appropriate, because the present city developed (although at a mile or so from the original site) from a cathedral built on a Roman settlement (called by the Romans *Sorviodunum*) that was itself raised on the ancient hill fort now known as Old Sarum. Less specialized is the element *-bury*, meaning anything from "fort" to merely "town," "borough," and it is thus quite in order for both *Weatherbury* (where it was locally adapted, as mentioned) and *Anglebury*, in the latter case replacing the almost equally common element *-ham*. (Wareham's name actually means "place by a weir.")[7]

In *Mellstock, Overcombe, Stickleford, Alfredston*, and *Narrobourne* one finds the common south of England elements *-stock, -combe, -ford, -ton,* and *-bourne*, meaning mostly "place," "valley," "ford," "settlement," and "stream" respectively. All these natural or manmade features can be found in dozens of villages in this part of the country, as indeed elsewhere. The first element in *Mellstock* has been already treated, and *Over-* is found regularly enough to denote a place above some other, or one on a bank. One need only mention Over Compton (Dorset) and Overleigh (Somerset). However, there is a real Overcombe in Dorset that may have been the direct inspiration for Hardy's renamed Sutton Poyntz.

Today it is a small village some two miles northeast of Weymouth (his *Budmouth Regis*), and thus so close to Sutton Poyntz that it virtually figures fictionally in its own right.

Stickleford strongly resembles the West Country villages of Sticklepath, one in Somerset and the other in Devon, while *Narrobourne* is a more contrived name, because its first element (at any rate in the sense "narrow") is not found in other local names, although further north, in Staffordshire, there is a river gorge named Narrowdale. The combination of the first element with *-bourne*, as Hardy has devised for West Coker, is thus perfectly acceptable.

Alfredston is a more interesting name, and one needs to search carefully to find an equivalent that contains a king's name in this way. But certainly there are plenty of names whose first element is that of a local ruler or leader, even though in most cases he or she still has not been identified. (Some such personal names are those of local saints.) In many cases, too, a placename of the *Alfredston* type usually consists of the personal name of an estate-holder, and moreover dates from rather later than King Alfred's time (ninth century). It is possible that Hardy's selection of this particular name was influenced by that of the Sussex village of Alfriston. This means "Ælfric's settlement," with the personal name similar in form to that of the Old English form of Alfred, which was *Ælfred*.

Castle Royal has its precedents in such genuine placenames as Castle Combe (Wiltshire) and Castletown (Dorset), while the second half of the name can be found elsewhere in, for example, Tollard Royal (Wiltshire) and Farnham Royal (Buckinghamshire), both of which denote a royal connection. But more appositely, Windsor Castle is frequently referred to as "The Royal Castle," and in transposing the elements of this title Hardy was able to create an appropriate and authentic-looking name for the town itself.[8]

Of *Little Welland* need only be said that it aptly reflects similar names with the element *well-*, meaning "well," "spring," "stream" (such as Weldon, Welford, Welham, and Welland itself, scattered round the country), while Welland is also a river name in its own right, just as Winterbourne is a common stream name.

In examining the remaining renamings in the list above, it can be seen that Hardy resorted to various devices in order to achieve the desired transformation. He thus substituted one element for another (Camelford to *Camelton*), altered the first element (Frampton to *Scrimpton*), reversed the elements (Bridport to *Port Bredy*), simul-

taneously reversed and substituted (Bournemouth to *Sandbourne*), shortened a name (Glastonbury to *Glaston*), lengthened it (Winchester to *Wintoncester*), or, somewhat curiously and idiosyncratically, deleted an initial letter (Sidmouth to *Idmouth*, Beaminster to *Emminster*).

Hardy was, too, aware of the historic names of places, of their early recorded forms. Bere Regis, for instance, was recorded in the thirteenth century as "Kingsbere," an exact equivalent of his *Kingsbere*, while Glastonbury was "Glastonia" (seventh century), Ilchester was "Givelcestre" (eleventh century), and Winchester was "Wintanceaster" (eighth century). Ilchester is on the Yeo River, whose earlier name was "Gifle." This lies behind Hardy's names of *Ivelchester* for Ilchester and *Ivell* for Yeovil, which is on the same river. Similarly, the name of Shaftesbury has long appeared on roadsigns and milestones in its older, shorter form of *Shaston*,[9] and the episcopal abbreviated signatures corresponding to Exeter and Winchester are respectively "Exon" and "Winton" (for Latin *Exoniensis* 'of Exeter' and *Wintoniensis* 'of Winchester'). These are reflected in Hardy's *Exonbury* and *Wintoncester*. In renaming Wool as *Wellbridge*, Hardy was likewise able to reveal the true origin of the name, which is not in modern "wool" but in Old English *wella* 'well,' 'spring.'

Another river name besides Yeo ("Gifle") can be seen in Hardy's *Toneborough* for Taunton, as this town lies on the Tone River. Similarly, Sturminster Newton (Hardy's *Stourcastle*) is on the Stour River. (He doubtless did not rename it as Stourbridge since such a town already exists, albeit further north.) In redesignating Launceston as *St. Launce's*, also, Hardy shows himself to have been aware of the traditional explanation of the name origin (now usually discredited) in "Lan Stephen," i.e., "St. Stephen's Church." (St. Stephen is still the name of a district of Launceston.)

In calling Truro *Trufal*, Hardy seems to have combined the first element of this name with that of the nearby Fal River, into which the Truro River flows. But in renaming Hazelbury Bryan as *Nuttlebury*, Hardy seems to have simply opted for the rural association of "hazelnut"! Despite this, "nut" exists as a valid element in genuine placenames, such as Nutford (Dorset), Nutley (Hampshire), and Nutwell (Dorset), where it means what it says.

Basingstoke becomes Hardy's *Stoke Barehills*, with a purely descriptive name. Hardy himself described the place as having grown up "amid the open chalk-soiled cornlands." But when Blandford Forum turns into Hardy's *Shottsford Forum*, the altered first element of the name was possibly based on that of the Stour River, on which the town

stands, perhaps under the influence of such placenames as Shotover, Shottermill, or Shottesbrook. In the last-named, the element means "trout" (Old English *sceota*), and, equally, Hardy may have been aware of this, so that his created name means effectively "Troutsford." Credence for this is supported by the fact that the Stour River is indeed noted for its trout fishing, and Blandford hotels and restaurants serve the fish in specially prepared dishes even today.[10]

Casterbridge, Hardy's Dorchester, features in many of his novels and stories, and plays a particularly important part in *MC* (where it even appears centrally in the title). The second element of the true name has become the first, in adapted form, of the fictional, while the *-bridge* is a comprehensive reference to one or more of the actual bridges over the Frome River in the town (where Hardy himself wrote the novel). As a placename *per se, Casterbridge* accords well with the common Casterton, although it must be added that "Caster" is a form of the element found chiefly in northern counties (the best-known Castertons are in Leicestershire and Cumbria.)

Weymouth is so named because it lies at the mouth of the Wey River. In renaming it as *Budmouth*, therefore, Hardy was implying that the river was called the **Bud*, although no river of this name features in his writings. Where did he get the name? Although perhaps influenced by the hill of Bincombe Down, lying to the north of Weymouth, and itself featuring in his works (as *Overcombe Down*), Hardy seems to have taken the first element from other seaside resorts containing it, such as Bude in Cornwall or Budleigh Salterton in Devon. The first of these is itself a river name.

Hardy's interest in the past history of a place is more than once spelled out in his actual writings, and in describing the Isle of Portland (in *WB*) he says that it was the "ancient Vindilia Island of Roman times and before that the home of the Slingers." This lies behind his name of *Isle of Slingers* for the peninsula, and it is good to know that, after Hardy's death, excavations at Maiden Castle revealed hundreds of pebbles gathered on Chesil Beach (his *Pebble Bank*) to be used as sling stones (*Country of* Well-Beloved).

Two more or less self-explanatory names feature in the river valleys designated by Hardy respectively as the *Vale of the Great Dairies* (that of the Frome River) and the *Vale of the Little Dairies* (that of the Stour, although the stretch of countryside here is actually known as the Blackmoor Vale). These two valleys play a central role in *TD*, with Tess,

for example, working at the dairy called by Hardy *Talbothays*. The names may look over-literary or simplistic, but they have their genuine counterpart in the name of The Vale of the White Horse, that of Ock River, in Oxfordshire (formerly in Berkshire).

Throughout all these renamings, it will be noticed that in general Hardy preferred "meaningful" names and elements, so that *down, brick, gay, knoll, narro[w], Angle,* and *well* replace "opaque" elements. He similarly elects a more appropriate meaning than one that can be seen in an existing name, so that *Christminster* has the academic and religious associations that the "ox ford" of Oxford certainly lacks.

All in all, and while allowing for literary license, we can see that in renaming his locales, Hardy used both creative flair and linguistic (and toponymical) knowledge in equal proportions to devise suitable and memorable names for the settings of his novels and stories, and for the fictional yet "real" landscapes in which his characters lived their lives and won and lost their loves and fortunes.

<div align="right">Petersfield, Hampshire, England</div>

Notes

1. For a general consideration of this topic, see Nicolaisen, "Recognition and Identity." Since writing this article, my attention has been drawn to Professor Nicolaisen's own article on the subject, "Place-names of Wessex." There is necessarily some overlap between our papers, but I venture to think that I have been bolder in my speculations regarding the origins of some of Hardy's names. I have also, of course, had access to more recent literature on the subject.

2. The listing is a composite selection of real names and Hardy's equivalents taken from (a) Lea, (b) Hawkins, (c) Daiches and Flower (158-71), (d) Kay-Robinson, and (e) the fifteen tour pamphlets published by the Thomas Hardy Society, Dorchester. Each of these pamphlets, with a map of the relevant area, is entitled *The Country of [Name of Work]*. They are available from the Publications Manager of the Thomas Hardy Society: Derek C. Mills, Charity House, Cranborne, Wimborne, Dorset, England BH21 5PU.

3. The description of the true locale in the first column is closely based on that given in the modern work, *Bartholomew Gazetteer of Places in Britain*. Many of Hardy's equivalent villages are still villages today, although some of the seaside resorts will have grown into proper towns. In the *Gazetteer's* usage, "city" implies a large and usually ancient town with a cathedral; "market town" means a historic town of local importance, with a weekly or twice-weekly market; "village" implies a stable community with a population from a couple of hundred up to around 1,000 or even more (but not enough to rank as a town); and "location" denotes a small populated region, ranging from just a few houses to a small village. The counties are the modern ones, post the 1974 reorganization of local boundaries. This had only a small effect on the boundaries of this part of England, especially in Dorset. The titles of Hardy's works in which the fictional equivalents significantly feature are listed in abbreviated form in the order in which they occur in Lea's work. (Placenames without fictional titles are ones found chiefly in short stories or poems, not major novels.) The coding is as follows (here in chronological order, with publication date): *DR = Desperate Remedies* (1871); *UG = Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872); *PB =*

A Pair of Blue Eyes (1873); *FM = Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874); *HE = The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876); *RN = The Return of the Native* (1878); *TM = The Trumpet Major* (1880); *LD = A Laodicean* (1881); *TT = Two on a Tower* (1882); *MC = The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886); *WL = The Woodlanders* (1887); *WT = Wessex Tales* (1888); *TD = Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891); *GN = A Group of Noble Dames* (1891); *WB = The Well-Beloved* (1892); *LL = Life's Little Ironies* (1894); *JO = Jude the Obscure* (1896); *DN = The Dynasts* (1904-08). The names of individual buildings renamed by Hardy, such as dwelling houses, churches, farms, and inns, are not included in the above listing and are not treated in this article, except incidentally. For the convenience of readers interested in relating the true name to the fictional name, I have supplied an alphabetical cross-reference. See Appendix.

4. I am indebted to the Copyright Department of the Oxford University Press for permission to reproduce this definition.

5. A valuable contemporary guide to the status (and name spellings) of the locales in Hardy's *Wessex* is the six-volume *Cassell's Gazetteer*.

6. "To Hardy readers it may be of interest to mention that the ancient camp 3 1/2 m. NE of Puddletown . . . which is now called *Weatherby Castle* on the maps, appears on the earliest O[rdnance] S[urvey] map of 1811 as Weatherbury Castle. 'Weatherbury' is Hardy's name for Puddletown." (Fägersten 175)

7. These and other placename elements and interpretations are from Ekwall. See also Mills.

8. In 1922 the town of Windsor was officially designated as the Royal Borough of New Windsor, thus actually acquiring the descriptive half of Hardy's name.

9. There is an illustration of a milestone with the wording "II Miles from SHASTON 1766" to accompany the Shaftesbury entry in the *Illustrated Road Book* (facing 445).

10. The Old Crown Hotel, which Hardy could have known, is located right by the river and serves fresh trout from its waters in the summer, as does the much more recent (opened 1985) high-class restaurant La Belle Alliance.

Works Cited

Bartholomew Gazetteer of Places in Britain. Edinburgh: John Bartholomew and Son, 1986.

Cassell's Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland. 6 vols. London: Cassell & Co., 1893-1898.

The Country of Desperate Remedies. Tour Pamphlet 13. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1977.

The Country of Far from the Madding Crowd. Tour Pamphlet 6. 3rd ed. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1977.

The Country of The Hand of Ethelberta. Tour Pamphlet 11. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1976.

The Country of Hardy's "Mellstock" Poems. Tour Pamphlet 14. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1980.

The Country of Jude the Obscure. Tour Pamphlet 10. 2nd ed. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1979.

The Country of The Mayor of Casterbridge. Tour Pamphlet 7. 2nd ed. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1984.

The Country of A Pair of Blue Eyes. Tour Pamphlet 9. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1975.

The Country of The Return of the Native. Tour Pamphlet 4. 4th ed. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1983.

The Country of Tess of the d'Urbervilles. Tour No. 1. Tour Pamphlet
2. 5th ed. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1982.

The Country of Tess of the d'Urbervilles. Tour No. 2. Tour Pamphlet
3. 3rd ed. Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1982.

The Country of The Trumpet Major. Tour Pamphlet 8. Dorchester:
Thomas Hardy Society, 1974.

The Country of Two on a Tower. Tour Pamphlet 15. Dorchester:
Thomas Hardy Society, 1982.

The Country of Under the Greenwood Tree. Tour Pamphlet 5. 4th ed.
Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1978.

The Country of The Well-Beloved. Tour Pamphlet 12. Dorchester:
Thomas Hardy Society, 1976.

The Country of The Woodlanders. Tour Pamphlet 1. 4th ed. Dor-
chester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1978.

Daiches, David, and John Flower, *Literary Landscapes of the British Isles*.
Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981.

Ekwall, Eilert. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*.
4th ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960.

Fägersten, Anton. *The Place Names of Dorset*. Uppsala, Sweden:
Uppsala University, 1933. Rpt. East Ardsley: EP Publishing, 1978.

Hawkins, Desmond. *Hardy's Landscape*. London: Macmillan,1983.

Illustrated Road Book of England and Wales, 3rd post-war ed. London:
The Automobile Association, 1963.

Kay-Robinson, Denys. *The Landscape of Thomas Hardy*. Exeter: Webb
& Bower, 1984

Lea, Hermann. *The Hardy Guides*. Ed. and introd. Gregory Stevens
Cox. 2 vols. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986. Rpt. of
Thomas Hardy's Wessex. 1913.

Mills, A. D. *The Place-Names of Dorset*, Part 1. 2 vols. English Place-
Name Society, Vols. 52 and 53. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977
and 1980.

Nicolaisen, W. F. H. "Recognition and Identity: Place Names as Keys
and Disguises in the Regional Novel." *Onomastica* 53 (1978): 1-9.

___. "The Place-names of Wessex." *Literary Onomastics Studies*. 2
(1975): 58-82. Rpt. in *Names in Literature: Essays from* Literary
Onomastics Studies. Ed. Grace Alvarez-Altman and Frederick M.
Burelbach. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987. 35-
45.

Oxford English Dictionary, A Supplement. 4 vols. Oxford: Clarendon
Press, 1972-1986.

Rossiter, Stuart, ed. *Blue Guide to England*. 9th ed. London: Ernest
Benn, 1980.

Smith, A. H. *English Place-Name Elements*, Part 1.English Place-Name
Society, Vol. 25. 1923. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970.

APPENDIX

Alphabetical Cross-Reference: Fictional Names to True Names

Fictional Name —True Name

Abbot's Cernel — Cerne Abbas
Aldbrickham — Reading
Alfredston — Wantage
Anglebury — Wareham
Athelhall — Athelhampton

The Beal — Portland Bill
Budmouth Regis — Weymouth

Camelton — Camelford
Casterbridge — Dorchester
Castle Boterel — Boscastle
Castle Royal — Windsor
Chalk Newton — Maiden Newton
Christminster — Oxford
Cliff Martin — Combe Martin
Corvesgate Caste — Corfe Castle
Cresscombe — Letcombe Bassett
Creston — Preston

Deadman's Bay — West Bay
Downstaple — Barnstaple

East Egdon — Affpuddle
East Endelstow — Lesnewth
Eastern Village — Easton
East Quarriers — Easton
Emminster — Beaminster
Everstead — Evershot
Exonbury — Exeter

Flychett —Lytchett Minster

Gaymead — Shinfield
Glaston — Glastonbury
Great Forest — New Forest
Great Hintock — Melbury Osmond
Great Plain — Salisbury Plain

Havenpool — Poole (Harbour)
Holmstoke — East Stoke

Idmouth — Sidmouth
Isle of Slingers — Portland (Isle of)
Ivelchester — Ilchester
Ivell — Yeovil

Kennetbridge — Newbury
Kingsbere — Bere Regis
King's Hintock — Melbury Osmond
Knollsea — Swanage

Little Enckworth — Kingston
Little Hintock — Hermitage
Little Welland — Winterborne Zelstone

Fictional Name - True Name

Longpuddle — Piddletrenthide
Lower Mellstock — Lower Bockhampton
Lulstead Cove — Lulworth Cove
Lulwind Cove — Lulworth Cove
Lumsdon —Cumnor

Markton —Dunster
Marlott — Marnhull
Marygreen — Fawley
Melchester — Salisbury
Mellstock — Stinsford

Narrobourne — West Coker
Nether Moynton — Owermoigne
Nuttlebury — Hazelbury Bryan

Oakbury Fitzpiers — Okeford Fitzpaine
Overcombe — Sutton Poyntz

Pebble Bank — Chesil Beach
Pen-Zephyr — Penzance
Port Bredy — Bridport
Redrutin — Redruth

St. Launce's — Launceston
Sandbourne — Bournemouth
Scrimpton — Frampton
Shaston — Shaftesbury
Sherton Abbas — Sherborne
Shottsford (Forum) — Blandford (Forum)
Solentsea — Southsea
Stickleford — Tincleton
Stoke Barehills — Basingstoke
Stourcastle — Sturminster Newton
Street of Wells — Fortuneswell

Tivworthy — Tiverton
Tolchurch — Tolpuddle
Toneborough — Taunton
Tor-upon-Sea —-Torquay
Trantridge — Pentridge
Trufal — Truro

Upper Mellstock — Upper Bockhampton or
                      Higher Bockhampton

Vale of the Great Dairies — [Frome Valley]
Vale of the Little Dairies — Blackmoor Vale

Warborne — Wimborne Minster
Weatherbury — Puddletown
Wellbridge — Wool
West Endelstow — St. Juliot
Weydon Priors — Weyhill
Wintoncester — Winchester

ANS at MLA

The American Name Society will hold two sessions at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association in Washington, DC, December 27-30, 1989.

One session, chaired by Grace Alvarez-Altman, will focus on Literary Onomastics and will include papers by Joel L. Brattin, "Giving Names and Taking Names Away in *The Red Badge of Courage*"; Zacharias P. Thundy, "The Name of the Rose"; Grant Smith, "Art and Names in Shakespeare's *Tempest*"; and Claire A. Culleton, "Names, Identities, and Eternal Incognitoes: The Burden of Patriarchal Onomasty in Women's Expatriate Writing."

The other session, chaired by Wayne H. Finke, will feature Names in Literature and Folklore, with papers by Leonard R.N. Ashley, "'Marked Days' in Norwegian Life and Folk Etymology"; Randy Prus, "Ishmael's Spirit Spout: Mythology and Geography in *Moby-Dick*"; Thomas J. Gasque, "An Onomastic Odyssey in Europe"; and Roland Dickison, "Black Bart, Who the Man, Whence the Name?"

In addition, the American Name Society will hold special sessions, a business meeting, and a banquet. Watch for announcements of times and places.