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SPACES, ALLEYS, AND OTHER LACUNAE: EMMA HARDY'S LATE WRITINGS RESTORED

JON SINGLETON

Emma Hardy's writings have often been misrepresented by Hardy scholars as naïve, incoherent, or insane. Her case has not been helped by the fact that Thomas Hardy, along with his second wife Florence Dugdale, burned reams of Emma's papers in the months and years following her death. But the most blatant misrepresentation has been the actual corruption of the text of *Spaces* (1912), her last published work. Two full pages – the recto and verso of the same leaf – were left out when J. O. Bailey and J. Stevens Cox republished it in 1966, along with Emma's *Alleys* (1911), under the title *Poems and Religious Effusions*. All subsequent scholarship, from Michael Millgate's magisterial *Biography Revisited* on down, has relied upon this corrupted version to assess Emma's literary merits and even to diagnose her mental health.

The missing pages of *Spaces* (<33> and <34> below) appear in Emma's retelling of the fall of Satan. Her version of this story differs from those versions drawn from the Christian Bible, or presented by Milton – along with Shakespeare and Wordsworth, sources that Emma's late works use as reference points for her own theological and aesthetic stance. Emma's Satan is thrown out of heaven because of his obsession with equalling God's *creativity*. Satan promises God to go to 'Thy newly created world' where he will use humans to 'find out this great secret of Thy creative power. ... I will use that to destroy Thy beings – or make them my angels.' While God warns Satan that 'thou canst never know My full power [of creation], nor ever shalt thou or My created beings search it out', Satan vows to attain the next best thing, to twist God-given creativity into a force generating human suffering:

'Evil shall last as long as I can make it. I will strive with Thee for Thy creatures; they shall do all manner of evil – I will show them how to hurt and destroy *each other* and every creature Thou has made, with horrible cruelties, terrible to bear. Then shall they blame Thee for all their evil.'

This passage, on the penultimate page of Emma's last published work, ties together the writings that occupied her last two years of life: memories

of her fateful convergence with a young Thomas Hardy, speculations about demonic and angelic influence in human affairs, echoes of human domination seen in the natural world, and questions about the relation of pleasure and suffering to aesthetics, interpretation, religious faith and literary tradition.

Emma's late writings, as a group – *Spaces*, *Alleys*, and her memoir *Some Recollections* – are an organized and complex appeal to her husband, and an equally complex response to his work. In them she pleads with him to keep faith with her, his wife, as much as with the Christian God. She questions his work's practical effects on herself and on society. She suggests that his literary work has been entangled in economic, political, and sexual domination, and that, far from helping to ameliorate the world's evils, it has actually served unwittingly to increase (at least her own) suffering. Similarly, she attempts to reframe the history of their strained marriage, and to wrest back from him the authority to determine her own identity.

This argument may surprise anyone who has a passing familiarity with *Spaces*, *Alleys*, or *Some Recollections*. Hardy scholarship usually presents them as incoherent and juvenile. But while dismissive and fragmentary treatment has helped to obscure Emma's late writings, the nature of the texts themselves has made them easy to dismiss. On a first reading, they seem odd and disjointed. In a number of places they seem rough, even poorly crafted. But Emma's late writings are also laconic and inter-referential. They are a sort of puzzle left by Emma for a husband she seems to have believed unable or unwilling to hear her, hinting at what she had been unable or unwilling to say.

The missing pages are only one of a number of lacunae in Emma's late work. There is also the visual structure of *Spaces* and *Alleys* themselves: each chapter, each poem separated from the others by blank space. Each work is made up of independent, isolated pieces, prompting the reader to fill in the gaps of what is left unsaid or unsayable. The cryptic titles themselves likewise suggest blanks, emptiness. *Alleys*, for instance, refers to nothing within that text except, perhaps, the blank pages separating the poems – though it may point beyond the poem to an actual physical space at the Hardys' home at Max Gate, perhaps a sort of room of one's own for Emma, the 'alley of bending boughs / Where so often at dusk you used to be', described by Hardy in 'The Going' in his 'Poems of 1912–13.' The titles of Emma's final works were added very late in her compositional process: the title *Alleys* does not appear in any of the letters in which she

discussed the composition of that collection of poems, while the text of *Spaces* had been completed under the working title ‘The Acceptors’ two years before its publication.

Then there is Emma’s memoir *Some Recollections*, unpublished during her lifetime, but written in the winter of 1910 just after she had finalized the text of ‘The Acceptors’ and just before she published *Alleys*, right when she made a crucial turn in her goals for her own work. The title of *Some Recollections*, its elliptical narrative, and its surprising elision of any recollection of Emma’s married life with Thomas Hardy likewise emphasize what is left out as much as what is revealed. Indeed, the memoir snaps closed on the moment of their wedding. The absence of the memories that should follow leaves a roaring vacuum.

Finally, there are the lacunae in Emma’s body of work itself, left first of all by Florence and Thomas Hardy’s intentional destruction of most of the documents she left behind, and consequently by the absence of necessary evidence regarding the nature and number of texts that she did in fact complete. There are two especially important gaps here: first, a notebook or set of notebooks containing fierce recriminations against Hardy (inconsistently referred to in Hardy scholarship as ‘What I think of my husband’, the ‘black diaries’, or a destroyed second half of *Some Recollections*), and second, the manuscript of a novel called ‘The Inspirer’, mentioned in Florence’s letters as one Emma thought would cause a big sensation. If Emma’s late writings carry salvaged ideas and themes that this last work failed to get into print, as the surviving evidence suggests, then the ‘The Inspirer’ may have been of quite a different character – and its title may have been more darkly ironic – than has yet been recognized. In sum, despite the lacunae in Emma’s late writings, they prompt us to reevaluate a number of our assumptions about Emma and her relationship to Thomas Hardy’s work.

This article makes a double restoration, then. It restores the text of *Spaces* for the first time in forty-eight years. And it also restores a sense of Emma Hardy’s late writings as a coherent project – a counter-writing project – for perhaps the first time since Thomas Hardy read them in shock and remorse following her death over a century ago.

This republication of the corrected text of *Spaces* (written first, though published second) and *Alleys* replaces the corrupted text and the fallacious interpretive apparatus of the *Poems and Religious Effusions*

edition. Here they are reproduced for the first time with sensitivity to the rhetorical aspects of their original pagination and intertextual reference. This edition also preserves the original typography. Notes have been added to illuminate Emma's often complex references to outside texts, as well as for connections made by phrases repeated across her various late works. These are connections she seems to have expected could be caught by the kind of careful reader she predicts might come in 'Time', the first poem of *Alleys*, and in the opening lines of *Some Recollections*. That memoir belongs with *Spaces* and *Alleys* as the third piece of her interconnected late writings, and though its length prevents republication here, it is readily available in the 1961 edition by Evelyn Hardy and Robert Gittings.

The texts are presented here as originally published, without attempt at emendation. Page numbers from the original editions are noted in angled brackets, with the separate pagination systems of each original volume being preserved. Pages left blank in the original volumes are not reproduced (though in *Spaces* they were, and are here, included in the page count). Readers should remember that Emma left pages blank throughout both *Spaces* and *Alleys* so that each poem, and each section, starts in its own opening on a right-side page, with a blank page facing it on the left side. Like Emma's final choice of titles, *Spaces* and *Alleys*, the large amounts of white space in both volumes contribute to the themes of radical disjunction, marginalization, and silencing that permeate both works.

In *Spaces*, the blank pages separating the four major sections from each other help to emphasize the radical shifts in perspective accomplished throughout this short, strange text: from heaven to hell; from history to eternity; from Emma's own embodied point of view, exhausted by life or struggling for oxygen, to the bodies of the damned infested with fiery, torturous micro-organisms, to the perspective of Satan in his bitterest moment of rage and despair. In *Alleys*, too, each poem appears in its own opening, centered on the right-side page facing an unnumbered blank page on the left. Each poem thus would have been encountered as a solitary entity, both separated from and coupled together with the rest of the free-standing poems in a measured, rhythmic alternation of text with silent white spaces. This design helps to put all of the poems in the sequence on an equal footing, as it were – the very short alongside the longer ones – as a systematic progression through time, space, and perspective. The collection has a concentric structure, beginning and

ending with the widest perspectives of time and space, focusing in the center on small lives lived in a small space. The central poems thus present universal dynamics in microcosm, eternal conflicts played out within a single lifetime, and a lifetime's conflicts played out within the seasonal progression of a single year. The white spaces of the original edition mediate these shifts from the eternal and cosmic in toward the temporal, the seasonal, the minute perspectives of human and animal and even vegetable life, only to move back out again across continents and centuries to the global and eternal.

Readers should pay attention to the rhetorical appeals Emma's late writings make to Thomas Hardy, her all-but-estranged husband. Even though they do not address him directly, these works are preoccupied with all the main tension-points of the Hardys' strained marriage, collapsed working relationship, and ultimately divergent worldviews. When Emma wrote *Spaces, Some Recollections*, and the final poems collected in *Alleys*, she and Thomas had been married for forty years. His writing career had been the source first of bonding and later of sharp conflict between them. Emma poured emotional and practical support into his writing from the beginning of their courtship through the first decades of their marriage, only to feel that his later works increasingly disparaged their marriage, and herself in particular. Hardy's pessimistic bent and his increasingly godless philosophy added tension, no doubt. But the greatest strain may have been Hardy's habit of publishing fictionalized versions of his own marital woes (real or imagined), portraying bitter husbands and aging, ugly, frigid, nagging, and manipulative wives in volume after volume of fiction and poetry – all at a time when Thomas was flooded by younger female admirers, while Emma was approaching her sixties, and then her seventies, and feeling increasingly marginalized by her husband's celebrity.

As Hardy scholars know, the marriage soured in the 1890s following the publication of *The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved* (the final line of which is the narrator's acid laugh 'Ho! – ho! – ho!' at the middle-aged protagonist's fate, shackled for life to an ugly old woman) and then of *Jude the Obscure*. Less well known is the role played by his subsequent *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1901) and *Time's Laughingstocks* (1909) – the latter especially hurtful to Emma, and especially ill-timed. Within months of its publication, Hardy learned that he would be awarded the Order of Merit. It is in this context that Emma wrote one of her angriest surviving letters, one passage of which has been too often used to give a

distorted view of Emma's personality in general: 'My husband's books have not the same kind of interest for me, as for others,' she wrote to her friend Lady Hoare on 24 April 1910:

I knew every word of the *first* Edition – in MS. sitting by his side – etc etc. So long ago, & so much endured since – in this town in which I have been *unhappy*, that they are bound to be different to me! ... I am ensconcing myself in the Study in *his* big chair foraging – he keeps me *out* usually – as *never* formerly – ah well! I have my private opinion of men in general & of him in particular – grand brains – much 'power' – but too often, lacking in judgment of ordinary matters – opposed to *unselfishness* – as regards *themselves!* – utterly useless & dangerous as magistrates! & such offices – & to be put up with until a new order of the universe *arrives* (IT WILL).

The cruel convergence of her husband's glorification and her own (as she saw it) public humiliation seems to have prompted Emma to make a great push, from the summer to the winter of 1910, to publish a number of her own creative works. This was Emma's 'great campaign', so dubbed by Florence Dugdale, her collaborator and perhaps her betrayer in that effort, already her husband's confidante and soon to replace Emma as his wife. Though Emma and Florence discussed a number of Emma's finished and in-progress works, including 'The Inspirer', 'The Maid on the Shore', 'Carry's Quest', 'Sandfriand's Cakes', 'The Millionaire', and 'A Ballad of a Boy', none seem to have been successfully published except for *Spaces* and *Alleys* – and these not with Florence's help, apparently, but through the efforts of Emma herself in the following two years.¹

It was in this context that Emma finished the text of *Spaces*, at that stage titled 'The Acceptors,' and that she first conceived the plan for *Alleys*.² The first draft of 'The Acceptors' was already written by August 1910, for Florence seems to have taken it with her from Max Gate after her visit there from July 26 to August 2 – the same visit during which Emma vented her frustration, and the two women agreed to work together for the mutual advancement of their writing careers. That initial manuscript probably consisted of the first two and a half sections of *Spaces* (everything before the Judgment Day conclusion of 'The New Element of Fire'). Florence wrote on August 18 that she had finished typing 'Acceptors', after which Emma attempted to place it with one or more publishers: her September 20 letter to the publisher John Lane, offering what seems to be this piece, has survived. Lane seems not to have

responded, for on September 30 Emma wrote again stating her intention to take the piece elsewhere. But by this time she had added the Judgment Day passages to ‘The New Element of Fire’ section as well as the final ‘Retrospect’, if the latter had not already been present in the initial draft. This newly revised version she sent to C. W. Moule, a friend of the Hardys and a fellow at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, for editorial advice.³ Among various editorial corrections, Moule recommended that Emma remove an extended description of the physical torture caused by fiery hell-worms burrowing their way forever through the bodies of the damned. ‘[B]acillae . . . must be bacilli; (but I wd. urge you to omit the whole passage about those horrible little creatures; – it surely is not needed!).’ Emma did in fact tone down the description of the hell worms to the version now found on <24>, but the attentive reader will still be able to catch the way this passage and many others in *Spaces* and *Alleys* might make thinly-veiled rhetorical appeals to Thomas Hardy. They coax, complain, threaten, and plead by turns.

Readers of these late texts should also attend to Emma’s frequent (if usually oblique) intertextual references, which reveal that these otherwise ‘scrappy’ writings make a coherent argument within a larger theological and aesthetic conversation. The Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth constitute for Emma a chain of religious and literary tradition. She uses them as landmarks to flesh out an entire worldview. In this model, human relationships and artistic production play out a cosmic conflict between good and evil. According to Emma, the writers she references both support this worldview and participate artistically in this conflict. So she wrestles with them, even as she draws on their authority. Emma’s references to Shakespeare and Milton are somewhat less interesting in this regard than is her deep engagement with the Bible and with Wordsworth. She shows extensive Bible knowledge, yet she uses scripture creatively, even agonistically, challenging traditional Christian interpretations and offering strikingly original readings: for example, she systematically reformulates gendered language where it appears in the original scriptures, and she presents an idiosyncratic and self-ironizing interpretation of Matthew 24, traditionally seen as the most puzzling chapter in the gospels.

Emma engages with Wordsworth just as creatively. Only once does she directly cite Wordsworth’s poetry: the sixth poem of *Alleys*, ‘The Trumpet Call’, quotes and pays homage to his poem ‘I wandered lonely as a cloud.’ However, Wordsworth’s idea of the soul pre-existing with

God in 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality' provides the framework for her unorthodox reading of the Bible in *Spaces*, and the same poem's concepts of aging, perception, and mental closure provide the structure and method of *Some Recollections*. And all three of her late texts, taken together, grapple with Wordsworth's ideas about pleasure, memory, and art laid out in his Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* – that is, they grapple with the specific passages of the Preface that Thomas Hardy annotated in the Hardys' own family copy of *Lyrical Ballads* (now in the Dorset County Museum archive), passages with which his annotations argue, and from which his own artistic project builds on and diverges from Wordsworth's.⁴ Hardy disagreed with Wordsworth's conclusions about the extent to which pain could be an effective 'pleasure' offered by the best literature, about the poem's primary responsibility to produce pleasure, and the poet's responsibility to remove what is painful from the passions and to speak to the existing emotional tastes of common men. This problem of suffering – how it is to be represented in art and how art ameliorates or contributes to lived suffering – preoccupies Emma as well.

But she poses her own quite different challenge to Wordsworth's aesthetics. Wordsworth suggests that an experience of pleasure (as of daffodils, for instance) becomes a structure of memory that lays the groundwork for taking pleasure in future experience: the daffodil itself is like a prophet predicting future pleasure, since its pleasure re-experienced as memory provides future nourishment for the soul. Emma's poem 'The Trumpet Call' points out that the flower is only a flower, and that the Wordsworthian reading of its significance is arbitrary and potentially misleading. Many of her other poems in *Alleys* further explore how pleasurable experiences mislead: how a spring day, or a sunny morning after rain, foretell not pleasure but agony. Emma shows remembered pleasures that embitter and poison, until they must kill the rememberer or else themselves be obliterated – themes likewise picked up by *Spaces* and *Some Recollections*.

In other words, Emma engages Wordsworth's philosophies as a way of responding to her husband's works. It is the distortion, the corruption, of Wordsworth's aesthetics that Emma attacks, not Wordsworth himself: the 'post-Wordsworthian' approach that Thomas Hardy pioneered, in which the human mind is alienated from nature and from sympathy with other humans. She assumes that Wordsworth stands with Milton and Shakespeare in an unbroken line of English literary tradition, of poetic masters aligned with a biblical worldview and Christian morality.⁵

By contrast, she sees her husband's art as distorting the tradition and rejecting God, and consequently, as having fallen unknowingly under a more sinister influence.

Last, readers should note that the strangest passages of Emma's late writings, those most often referenced to show her extreme eccentricity, are actually in conversation with other writers and texts. Perhaps this fact does not make the strangest of them any less bizarre. But one must at least be fair to Emma and recognize that she is building creatively on discourses whose other participants take them seriously.

Into this category fall Emma's several references to 'electrical currents' as a medium of spiritual communication and influence, which appears in both *Spaces* and *Alleys*. As strange as these seem, they participate in an ongoing, early twentieth-century attempt by a number of writers and thinkers to synthesize spiritual and scientific-materialist views of the world. Thomas Hardy's notebooks repeatedly demonstrate his interest in these conversations, even if he was frequently skeptical of their conclusions: for instance, he took notes on a London lecture trying to reconcile the 'Nebular Hypothesis' with the creation account of Genesis, and he recorded religious responses to scientific findings as avidly as he collected instances of folk superstition.

Perhaps Emma and Thomas discussed such ideas. But whether or not they talked about them together, they both seem to have been independently aware of such conversations in print. In the same year Emma published *Alleys*, Maria M. King, a spiritualist and medium, published her 'revelations' about the spiritual dynamics of the physical universe, *The New Astronomy and Laws of Nature, the Physical and Spiritual Universe: Their Forms, Laws, and Phenomena*. In one chapter of this book, entitled 'Electric Currents', King claims that a global electrical system provided the 'Spirit' or life-force of the world and all its inhabitants: 'It is the action of positive with negative electric force that produces every action, every motion, every manifestation in the Universe. This negative current is the Spiritual current and posits the interior force of all organizations. ... inseparable forever in all Worlds, all beings, all organizations, from the Universe to man, from man to God' (p. 99). King maps the flow of spirits into the world through mineral veins near the north pole, and the departure of the spirits of the dead through the south pole. Emma's attempts to reconcile angelic and demonic influence, or the efficacy of prayer, with a materialist account of the electrical impulses of the brain seem tame by comparison.

Knowing the broader discussion Emma is engaging also helps make sense of the odd last poem of *Alleys*, 'Our Emperor King', dated by Emma November 1911. The obvious occasion of the poem's composition is the coronation of George V, held in London on 22 June of that year, and celebrated in India on 12 December. Some readers have taken Emma's apparent muddling of the monarch's proper title, King-Emperor, as a sign of her intellectual vapidty. Yet Emma's reversal of the title is pointedly rhetorical. In November 1911, when George V had already left England for India in preparation of the upcoming imperial celebration, the women's suffrage movement boiled over in London. On 21 November the Women's Social and Political Union staged a mass demonstration in the king's absence. Armed with hammers and overnight bags packed for a stay in prison, they swarmed the streets surrounding Parliament, smashing the windows of government offices.⁶ Emma's surviving letters so show that she was closely following the progress of the suffrage movement.⁷ 'God Save Our Emperor King' is probably best read with the unenfranchised, imprisoned London suffragettes in mind as a sort of doubly-repressed background context. The poem highlights the clashing perspectives of the people of India, whom Emma represents as willingly submitting to their subservient role in an empire that claims to offer 'fellowship and faithful bands', and the people of England, who are preoccupied with their own 'shires' under 'our temperate sky' and seem neither to hear nor care about the voices of India. Through this dialogical conflict, the poem makes the 'Our' of the title and the antiphonic hymn to the unification of 'Britain's victorious men' ring hollow: India is the lesser partner in this imperial relationship, profitable but slighted – while women (signified only by the 'Nov., 1911' date) are both silenced and rendered invisible. Emma's reversal of 'King-Emperor' as 'Emperor King' emphasizes the reciprocal responsibility of the monarch to the out-of-sight millions upon whose existence his wealth and power are built. Emma may have felt that her marriage expressed parallel structures of exploitation and neglect. Elsewhere in *Alleys* the male and female thrush, and the onion and rose, explore different nuances of what she saw as her own personal immolation on the altar of Hardy's public celebrity, rendered in geopolitical terms here in 'God Save Our Emperor King.'

Emma's most ridiculed passage, though, is her bizarre description in *Spaces* of the Judgment Day occurring 'at 4 o'clock a.m. according to western time – and dark night of Eastern time or about that hour, varying at distances.' This notorious line must be read in light of the Judgment

Day passage as a whole. The passage is Emma's extrapolation of the end-times prophecy of Matthew 24. A number of that chapter's elements (such as the darkening of the sun and moon, the sounding of the trumpet, and the 'sign of the Son of man' appearing in the sky) are literalized in Emma's retelling. As in her 'electric currents' passages, she again pictures the materiality of spiritual phenomena with unique, memorable images: the resurrected dead rising from the depths of oceans turned phosphorescent with new life; a power surge that incinerates humanity with its own overloaded technology; a cross-shaped portal into heaven appearing in the atmosphere, seen obliquely from various points on the earth's surface; a century-long 'trumpet blast' that crescendos from silence to a thought-inhibiting roar, causing society and even humans' grasp of temporality to fall apart. These last two are probably key to deciphering the difficult line, whose complexity requires quoting it in full:

And then will occur the general darkening of the sun, moon, and stars by blackest clouds, as at the Crucifixion, and the power of that awful Trumpet accelerated till the final blast, when suddenly a spot of light will appear in the East at 4 o'clock a.m. according to western time – and dark night of Eastern time or about that hour, varying at distances, the hot sunshine there gone completely, leaving however the weariness and dreariness of the afternoon heat of hot latitudes. <26>

Perhaps Emma's punctuation is slightly muddled here, as indeed punctuation and spelling occasionally are throughout all three of her late works. A better reading might put a second dash in place of the comma after 'hour': it is probably the perceived appearance of the window into heaven that is 'varying at distances', not the clock-hour of the appearance. Given her several other negotiations with Matthew 24, there can be no doubt that in this line she responds to Matthew 24:36, the culmination of the text she has been so thoroughly reworking: 'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.' It is possible, of course, that Emma cites the '4 o'clock' hour as proof of some special divine revelation that would authorize the afterlife visions of *Spaces* as a set. However, it is much more plausible that Emma is explicating Matthew 24:36: together with earlier lines in the same passage which describe Divine actions being 'slow, lengthy, culminating from an almost unnoticeable beginning', and about the utterly darkened sky and the thought-arresting roar of the 'trumpet

blast', her point might be the arbitrariness of *any* attempt to identify the hour of Christ's appearing in such a cataclysmic situation. The notorious '4 o'clock' passage is probably a sly wink to the reader, an acknowledgment that Emma knows that she is writing mere representations of what she believes to be spiritual realities. The underlying truths are her point: that struggle between God and Satan played out in human lives, and the suffering brought on by the inevitably diabolical 'creativity' of non-acceptors, *will* be brought, sooner or later, to a decisive end.

Emma's campaign seems to have collapsed at the end of 1910. Though on 10 October Florence had told Emma that 'I have left your other manuscripts with my own publisher, & he may be able to advise ... But I hope he will publish them all,' in November Florence only reported rebuffs to all of her agency on Emma's behalf. And though Emma's half of the correspondence is gone, Florence's letters of 1 December and 11 December suggest that Emma had written her repeatedly about her inability to receive a response from the publishers regarding the manuscripts that Florence claimed to have submitted on her behalf. By Christmas day, 1910, Emma's focus seems to have shifted entirely to the writing of her memoir. She finished writing *Some Recollections* on 4 January 1911; she published *Alleys* in the following December, and *Spaces* four months after that. Her collaboration with Florence seems to have borne no other fruit than these. And given the dense interconnections between these three, and given their elliptical character, it is possible to see Emma's late work as picking up the pieces of her 'great campaign'. By the end of 1912, she was dead.

Florence's letters testify that Thomas Hardy spent the weeks following Emma's death reading and rereading her 'voluminous diaries', including 'bitter denunciations, beginning about 1891 & and continuing until within a day or two of her death'.⁸ But while these 'black diaries' certainly shocked Hardy into re-evaluating his attitude toward his dead wife, it was *Spaces*, *Some Recollections*, and *Alleys* that may have done the most to shift his emotional stance towards her. It is these that for a time prompted Hardy's reversal, so shocking to Florence, to praise rather than castigate her 'strict Evangelical views – her religious tendencies' as 'Chief among [her] virtues'.⁹ It is these, not the 'black diaries', to which Hardy responded in his 'Poems of 1912–1913', the poetry of mourning he published in his next volume, *Satires of Circumstance*. Gittings has noted a number of connections between Hardy's poems and Emma's memoir. To this list should be added 'The Going' and 'After a Journey,' in which

Hardy responds to Emma's late writings as a set. In 'The Going,' he laments her sudden absence – not only the loss of her physical presence, but also the sickening void left by memories falling into oblivion, which cause him to

... think for a breath it is you I see
At the end of the alley of bending boughs
Where so often at dusk you used to be;
Till in darkening dankness
The yawning blankness
Of the perspective sickens me!

Hardy goes on later in the same poem, in lines that echo the memory-obliteration theme of *Spaces* and *Some Recollections* and the weather-prediction tropes of *Alleys*:

Why, then, latterly did we not speak,
Did we not think of those days long dead,
And ere your vanishing strive to seek
That time's renewal? We might have said,
'In this bright spring weather
We'll visit together
Those places that once we visited.'

In 'After a Journey,' Hardy reflects on what he has gathered at the end of his agonized reading of Emma's papers and his guilt-ridden return to the countryside where they met:

What have you now found to say of our past –
Scanned across the dark spaces wherein I have lacked you?
Summer gave us sweets, but autumn wrought division?
Things were not lastly as firstly well
With us twain, you tell?
But all's closed now, despite Time's derision.
I see what you are doing: you are leading me on
To the spots we knew when we haunted here together,
... When you were all aglow,
And not the thin ghost that I now frailly follow!

Hardy's 'Poems of 1912–13' are often criticized for constructing a dream girl that effaces the real Emma. Phillip Mallett argues that Hardy is fully conscious and even self-critical of this erasure.¹⁰ Emma's late writings, restored and properly understood as an interrelated set, lend weight to this view. It seems to have been Emma herself that suggested the erasure of her married life with Thomas Hardy. She also suggested the erasure of the version of herself that she had become through long years of

supportive collaboration and then icy cohabitation. They had coauthored their misery; and while she now blamed him for much of her suffering, it was she who now imagined a revised version of herself, unmarked by his influence – an Emma for whom ‘pain, sorrow, dullness, weakness, fatigue, regret, remorse, spite, cruelty, hatred, persecution, all’ would be ‘forgotten for ever, – ay, even a recollection, causing sadness about those who rejected’ would be ‘for ever banished from our remembrance – obliterated.’¹¹ The texts she left behind might transform his feelings for her. But she was going where she would forget him utterly, and she was glad.

NOTES

¹ For ‘The Inspirer,’ see FED to ELH, 30 Sept. 1910 and 4 Oct. 1910 in *Letters of Emma and Florence Hardy*, ed. Michael Millgate (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). For ‘The Maid on the Shore,’ see FED to ELH, 18 Aug. 1910 and 30 Sept. 1910 (*LEFH*). For ‘The Acceptors,’ see FED to ELH, 18 Aug. 1910, 30 Sept. 1910, 4 Oct. 1910, 11 Nov. 1910 (*LEFH*). For ‘A Ballad of a Boy,’ see FED to ELH, 1 Dec. 1910 (*LEFH*). For ‘Carry’s Quest,’ ‘Sandfriand’s Cakes,’ and ‘The Millionaire,’ see FED to ELH, 27 Oct. 1910 (Dorset County Museum).

² Florence suggested the idea for a separate volume of poetry to Emma in her letter of 11 November 1910.

³ It is Moule’s reply that proves ‘The Acceptors’ and *Spaces* are in fact identical. Moule begins the letter by acknowledging receipt of her ‘composition in four parts’, and his critique mentions details from each of the four sections of the final *Spaces* text. A letter from Florence to Emma on the following day, 4 October 1910, identifies the text sent to Moule as ‘The Acceptors’: ‘I have no other copy of ‘The Acceptors’. I remember – quite clearly – that I only did three. One was sent to a publisher – that was the first, & uncorrected. Then I sent you one which you corrected, & then I did another – the one you have now. An earlier copy would be of no use since you have added that last part about ‘The Trumpet Call.’ It is that copy – the one you sent your friend at Cambridge – that ought to be retyped for the publisher.’ A footnote in *Letters of Emma and Florence Hardy* (p. 64) erroneously identifies this ‘friend at Cambridge’ as Alfred Pretor – another friend with whom Emma did discuss her writing on other occasions.

None of Florence’s typed copies of ‘The Acceptors’ manuscript seem to have survived. The typed manuscript of *Spaces* in the University of Ohio University archives is, from clear internal evidence, a copy of the published version of *Spaces*, probably made in the years before the 1966 *Poems and Religious Effusions* made it more accessible. The two pages left out of that edition, however, are present in the manuscript at University of Ohio.

⁴ For an excellent analysis of Hardy’s ‘post-Wordsworthian’ poetics, see Dennis Taylor, ‘Hardy and Wordsworth’, *Thomas Hardy Journal* 4.1 (1988), pp. 54–68.

⁵ In seeing Wordsworth as a leader in both poetics and Christianity, Emma lines up with the views of many late Victorian Christians writing around the time Hardy published his inflammatory *Tess* and *Jude*. For a sampling of late nineteenth-century Christian Wordsworthian discourse, see Edward Dowden, [Review of *Wordsworthiana*], *The Academy* 883 (6 April 1889), pp. 229–30, and Elizabeth Wordsworth, [Review of *William Wordsworth*], *Dublin Review* 26.2 (October 1891), p. 480. Such readings held Wordsworth a poet of ‘living faith’ (Dowden, p. 230) whose work explicated Christian theology and could revitalize the church.

⁶ Andrew Rosen, *Rise Up, Women!: The Militant Campaign of the Women’s Social and Political Union 1903–1914* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), pp. 151–155. Rosen notes that ‘after November 1911 ... the strongest legacy of almost two years of truce and attempted conciliation was the growth of the belief that politicians’ promises were not to be trusted; ... the WSPU was now in the incipient stage of what was to become a most Manichean outlook’ (p. 155).

⁷ See ELH to the London Society of Women’s Suffrage, 18 May 1911, 9 March 1912, and 14 March 1912 (*LEFH*).

⁸ FEH to Edward Clodd, 16 January 1913 (*Letters of Emma and Florence Hardy*).

⁹ FEH to Edward Clodd, 30 January 1913 (*LEFH*).

¹⁰ Phillip Mallett, “‘You were she’”: Hardy, Emma and “Poems of 1912–13”’, *Thomas Hardy Journal*, vol xx, No. 3, pp. 54–75

¹¹ *Spaces* <8>.

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