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Tess Since 'Forty-One

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Mr. Zabriskie was invited to come and visit the college and see for himself what company his books are now keeping. This invitation he was never able to accept, but we are happy to think that his interest in fine books is still alive on Mayflower Hill and that he has helped to make it flourish.

TESS SINCE 'FORTY-ONE

TOMAS HARDY’S famous novel, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, was first published in 1891. Fifty years later, the Colby College Library placed on exhibition fifty editions of the novel, together with other illustrative material, and published a descriptive catalogue entitled *The Jubilee of Tess*, listing all the editions of the famous work which had been published during the half-century.

This catalogue was equipped with pictures, most of them from photographs taken in the Hardy Country by the editor of this quarterly. Although no statement was made in the descriptive catalogue of 1941 as to the origin of these pictures, the fact is that they represented—to the photographer-and-editor, if to no one else—the failure of his scheme for an illustrated edition of the novel. He had begun his exploration of the scenes of the novel a dozen years before the semicentennial date, and had continued this exploration during subsequent visits to England. After three summers had been spent in this manner, the would-be illustrator of *Tess* was equipped with pictures of almost every spot mentioned by Hardy. The photographs were shortly thereafter submitted to Hardy’s New
York publisher, but he hardly wasted a glance upon them before rejecting the proposal of an illustrated edition of the novel. Like the "mighty merchant" in Emily Dickinson's poem who exclaimed about Brazil, the publisher

... twirled a button
Without a glance my way,
"But, madam, is there nothing else
That I can show to-day?"

As a result of the New York veto the pictures lay untouched at Colby until the anniversary date arrived, and then they were used as illustrations in *The Jubilee of Tess*. (Copies? Sorry! The booklet has been long out of print. That was more than a dozen years ago.)

On the very last day of the year 1953, there turned up at the door of the Colby Library an illustrated edition of *Tess*,—not from Hardy's New York publisher, but from London, from the publishing house of Macmillan & Company, Hardy's publishers in London since 1902. This new edition of the novel carries fifteen illustrations from photographs by Clive Holland. In looking at it the editor of this quarterly beheld, with startling exactness and even, at times, with identical choices, the very work he had proposed to the New York publisher more than twenty years ago. It many cases Clive Holland's photographs are better than those in the Colby catalogue, especially in the case of those few pictures which present interior scenes; but the editor flatters himself and his old camera by thinking that in some cases the Colby view is better than that presented in this most recent of all editions of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

The arrival of this latest publication has served to invite a re-examination of the *Tess* shelf in the Colby Hardy Collection, with a view to noting its growth or expansion since the publication of the *Jubilee Catalogue*. It is clear that interest in *Tess* continues, not only in England and America, but in other lands as well. The record since the date of the fiftieth anniversary reads as follows:
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1942: New York, a fragment of Tess reprinted in Harper's Bazaar for October, in commemoration of the fact that Tess had been serialized in that periodical when the novel made its first appearance in America.
1950: Toronto, Canada: dramatic version by Hardy, with an introduction by Marguerite Roberts; Toronto University Press.

The novel is now sixty-three years old, and bids fair to have further life ahead of it.

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