



# Far From The Madding Crowd: Extended Annotated Edition

*Thomas Hardy*



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This is the extended annotated edition including a rare biographical essay on the life and works of the author.

"Far from the Madding Crowd" has is inferior only to "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." It combines all the charm of "Under the Greenwood Tree" with more than the power and interest of "Desperate Remedies." It is the first work to prove that Mr. Hardy possesses the power of creating characters that live. Farmer Oak, the faithful, modest, sensible hero, is a character that no one can forget, a nobler, a longer lived character, perhaps, than even Adam Bede. Joseph Poorgrass, Mr. Hardy's masterpiece in the way of peasant characters, is a personage whom Fielding would not have disdained to create—Fielding who in the creation of characters is the Zeus of English novelists. Bathsheba Everdene, the heroine—Mr. Hardy disdains to give his heroines common names thereby linking himself to the romancers—Farmer Boldwood, Sergeant Troy, the maltster, are all excellent in their way, although inferior to the two first mentioned. But with his advance in characterization, Mr. Hardy does not fall behind, nay rather, he advances in his other qualities. Never has the life of the farm and the sheepfold been more truthfully or more charmingly described; never has the homely picturesqueness of the English peasant received so attractive a setting. The humor that welled up in "Under the Greenwood Tree," flows here in a full stream, witness Joseph Poorgrass drunk in the public house testifying to the evils of the affliction known as " a multiplying eye"—an affliction which had a way of always coming on when he had been in a public house a little while, as he meekly confessed to Shepherd Oak. In style, too, Mr. Hardy has improved. He has become more practised in his use of that noble instrument, the prose of his native tongue.



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