

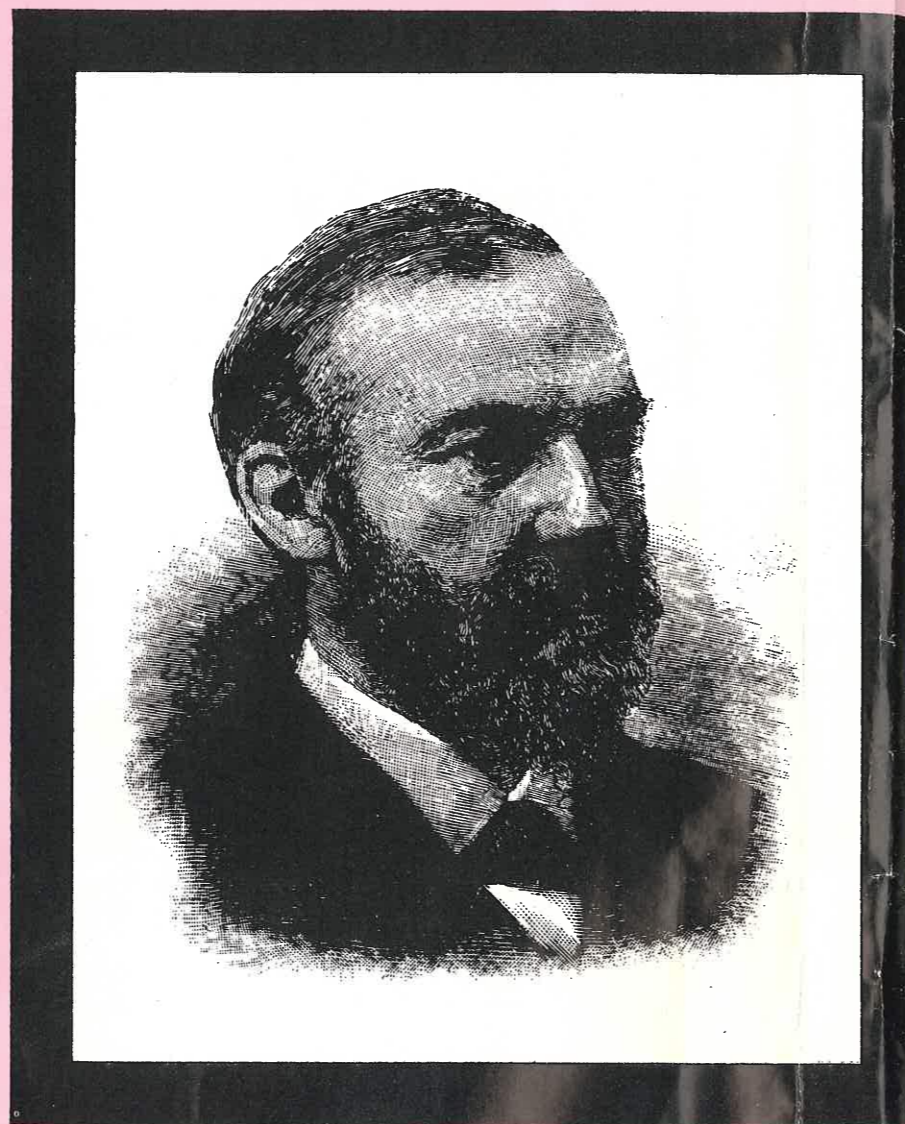
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Far from The Madding Crowd



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*Far
From The
Madding Crowd*

like the other novels of Thomas Hardy presents a turbulent life in which men and women are the playthings of an indifferent fate. By baring this life fully, Hardy focuses incisively on the permanent human condition. When he describes a scene, you see it; when his characters suffer, you feel their pain. While novel and the film reflect a nostalgia and feeling for the past, the passions and actions of the men and women who people this story are as timely and fresh as today.

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**BATHSHEBA
EVERDENE**
*a most non-conforming Victorian,
is played by JULIE CHRISTIE
the most modern of
our mod stars.*

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**SERGEANT
FRANK TROY**
*a lusty rogue and talented swordsman
is portrayed by
TERENCE STAMP.*

WILLIAM BOLDWOOD
*the gentleman farmer, driven to ruin by
Bathsheba's caprice, is brought to life
by PETER
FINCH.*



GABRIEL OAK
*who best personifies the
ruggedness of "Hardy people", is played
by ALAN
BATES.*



About Far From The Madding Crowd

by Bergen Evans

Thomas Hardy—who, Virginia Woolf said, made fiction an honorable calling—spent almost all of his long life (1840-1928) in Dorset, one of the remotest and most rustic parts of England. Throughout his formative years it was a region untouched by modernity, so that the England he knew intimately was closer in custom and tradition to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than to his own era.

Thus the pervasive influence of this earlier age, in a place where time had stood still, imbued Hardy with a deep sense of the continuity of life as part of nature. This profound awareness enabled him to observe the world with a quiet detachment unequalled in any other contemporary English writer.

FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD (1874) was the first of Hardy's great novels and remains one of his best. It has more of the splendor and freshness of life than its more somber successors. Despair had not yet overwhelmed him.

The title is drawn from Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":
Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

So the world we see in this delightful movie—with its quaint villages and picturesque market towns, its well-kept farms with their sheep and cattle—is a tranquil world of little change. In the feverish life of cities, as Hardy remarked, twenty years ago is a remote past; but "in Weatherbury three or four score years were included in the present" and "nothing less than a century set a mark on its face or tone." It is a narrow world. Each village is an entity and the market town, ten miles away, was

visited only on special occasions, while a city like Bath, fifty miles away, was as remote as Baghdad.

The social order was static. No man thought of rising above the station to which he assumed Providence had assigned him. Farmers had always been farmers and expected always to remain farmers. The old maltster's grandfather had been a maltster before him and he expected his grandson to be a maltster after him.

All of this is alien to modern life "with its sick hurry and divided aims," but the novel and the movie point up the virtue in the old social order. These humble lives had a security unknown to us today. Here in Wessex, as Hardy called this section of England, we see Western man for the last time as an integral part of nature, as much a growth of the soil as the wheat or the fungus that destroys the wheat.

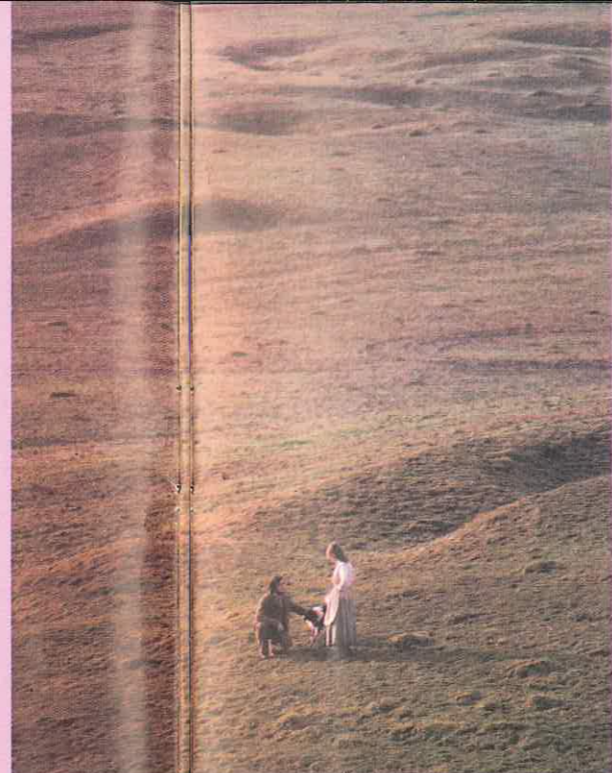
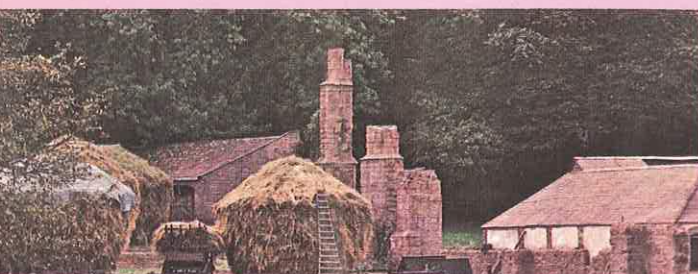
There are some wonderful scenes in the film—the lambing, the fire, the struggle to save the barley ricks, the sheep washing and shearing—all bathed and glorified in the light of poetic recollection. The shearing supper, with Bathsheba, the heroine, singing "The Banks of Allan Water" to the accompaniment of Gabriel Oak's flute, is a pastoral moment never to be forgotten, a moment full of sunny mirth and quiet beauty touched with melancholy.

The cast is brilliantly chosen. Terence Stamp, with his fierce, handsome intensity is the very man for the glittering, sensuous,



superficial Sergeant Troy who, with his scarlet coat and the fascinating menace of his saber exercises—and the even more fascinating menace of his reputation as a seducer of women—sweeps the heroine off her feet into a sudden and disastrous marriage. Peter Finch portrays the substantial gentleman farmer, William Boldwood, whose gravity masks a passionate and unstable nature that is driven to tragic ruin by a giddy and irresponsible prank. Alan Bates plays Gabriel Oak, the gentle, manly

shepherd who is forced by a trick of fate to be a servant to the woman he loves and whom he ultimately wins as a wife. Oak is almost the only one of Hardy's heroes who successfully dominates one of his emotional, capricious, dangerous heroines. And emotional and capricious Bathsheba Everdene certainly is. And headstrong and selfish and cruelly thoughtless, too. Yet,



half girl, half woman, confused in her budding emotions, alternately imperious and abject, commanding and entreating, a level-headed manager and a feather-brained madcap, she is one of the most bewitching women in all literature. And who more suitable to portray her than Julie Christie?

Perhaps the happiest piece of casting in the movie is that of the main character—nature. And since her role cannot be “played” but can only be, the director took his human cast to the great unhuman protagonist and shot his scenes on the very spot in which Hardy had conceived of them as taking place.

It would be difficult to find a more beautiful place than these great hills rising massively above the sea and enfolding in their lower slopes and valleys the old gray-stone villages. Infrequently used as a movie locale, the setting itself is enough to give this film added distinction.

But this countryside is in no way dragged in merely as a picturesque backdrop. The landscape is lovely but it is also brooding and slightly sinister. Hardy's nature—which Dorset expresses so effectively—is not beneficent. It is not malignant. It is simply indifferent. Life has no meaning to it and human life is just one more form of life. Gabriel's sheep are killed because they act like sheep. The young dog that drives them to their death does so because he acts like a young dog. And Gabriel endures his loss because he must, as a tree endures a stroke of lightning. Sergeant Troy is what he is. Boldwood has no control over the passions that destroy him. And Bathsheba, the stormy young beauty who recklessly inflames every man within her orbit, she, too, is a part of nature, driven more than driving, and swept to her own ruin in the torrent of natural impulse as surely and helplessly as the others.

It was a fine stroke of directing to employ so many of the local people as extras. Their strong, quiet faces not only add to the

realism but lend conviction to their function as a chorus to the passionate drama that unfolds before us.

The chief characters are rustics, but they are not clods. They are, indeed, people of powerful yet sensitive emotions. They are too strong to fit into the common scheme of things but not strong enough, or fortunate enough to escape the inevitability of their doom. Bathsheba gives herself in love in disregard of public opinion, but she gives herself to an unworthy man. Boldwood is noble and unselfish, but he becomes deranged. Gabriel is capable and devoted, but he is helpless, and the happy ending in which he finally gains Bathsheba is the result of an accident that destroys the lives of two other men.

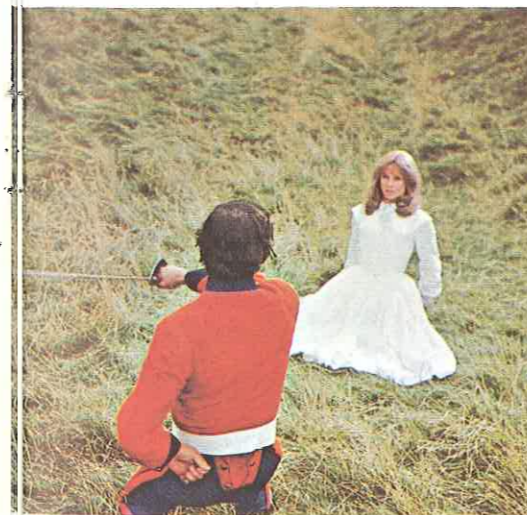
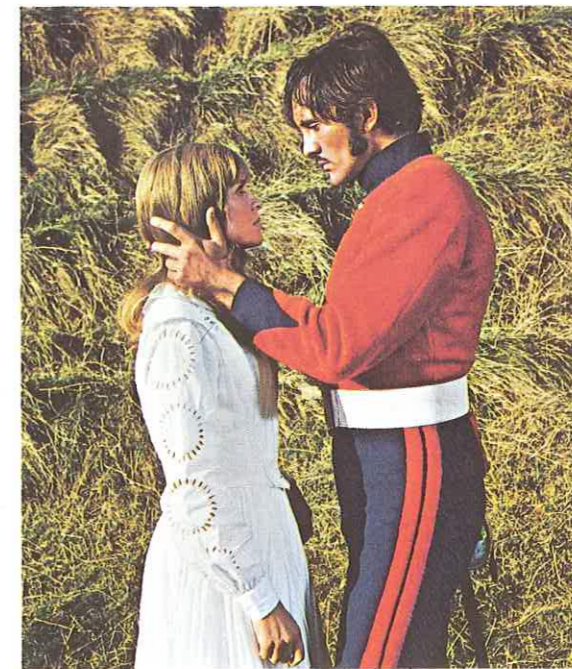
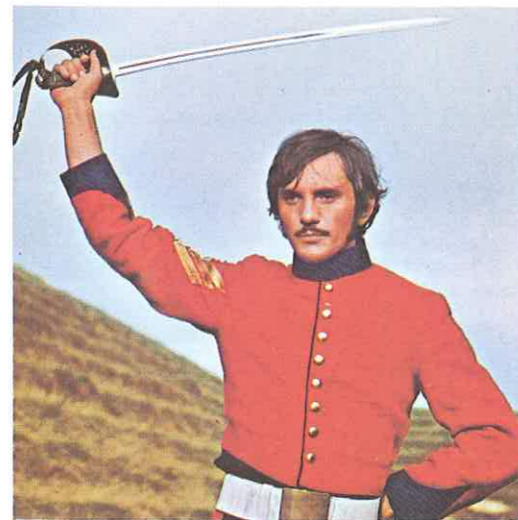
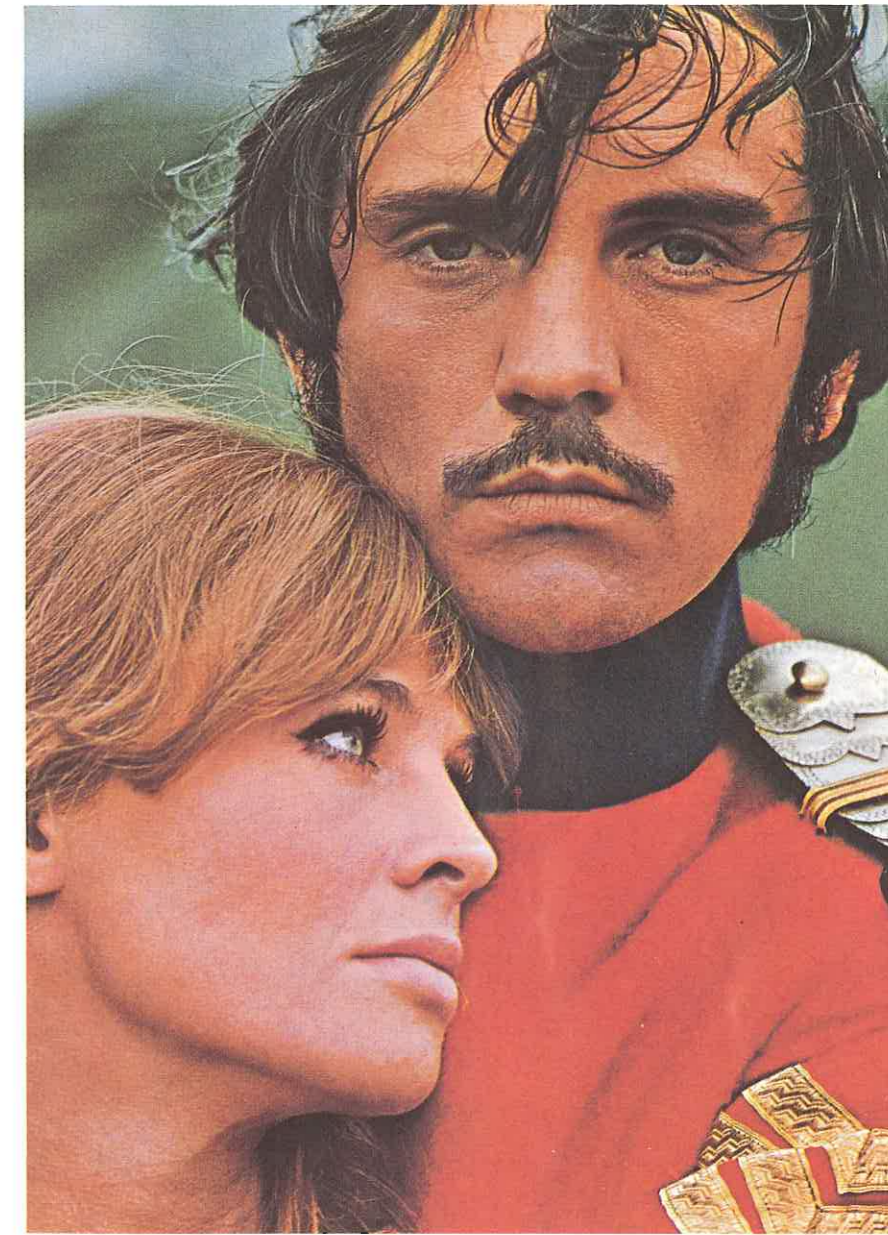
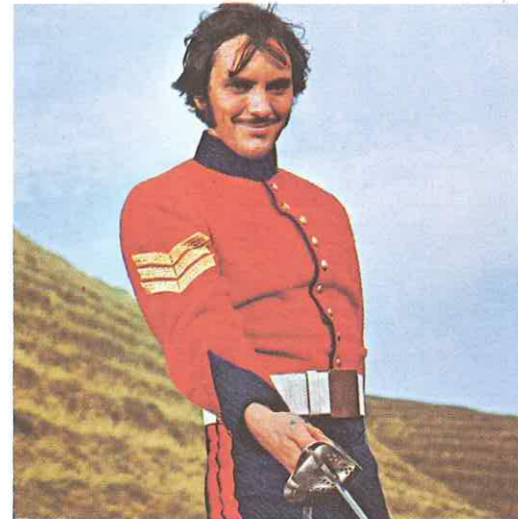
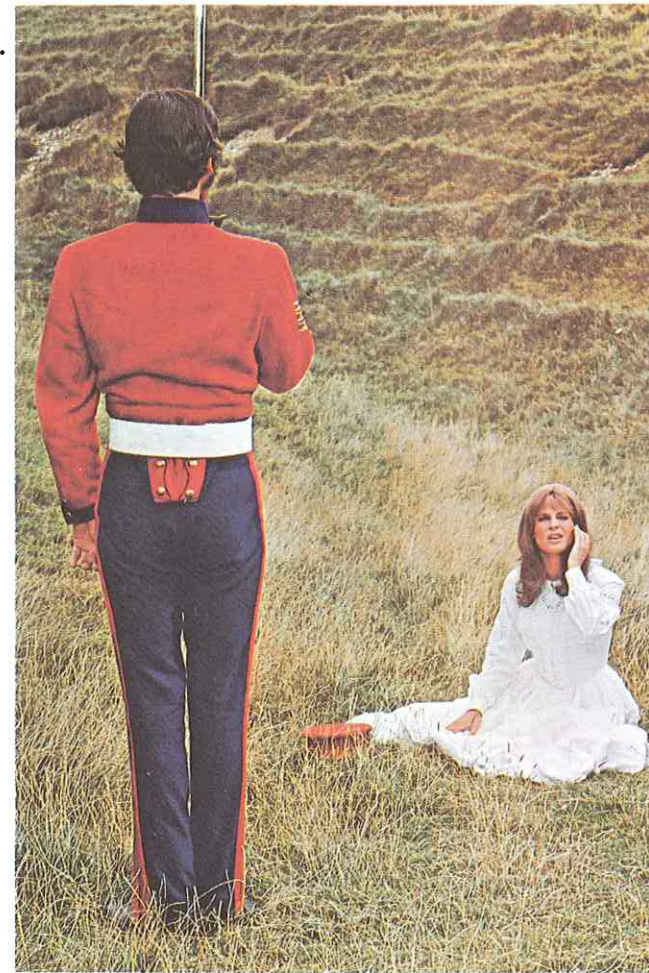
Hardy's search for the meaning of life is portrayed on the screen with skill and understanding. Some of the disasters that

overwhelm the various characters might have been avoided. But most of them are due either to the forces of nature or to some self-destructive urge. The course of each life is determined either by chance or an irrational impulse. In Gabriel's case it was the loss of his sheep and his arrival at Bathsheba's farm just in time to help put out the fire. In Bathsheba's, it was the encounter with Troy in the dark and, later, Joseph Poorgress's dawdling at the inn so that Fanny Robin's coffin had to be kept at the farmhouse overnight. In Boldwood's, it was Bathsheba's reckless sending of the valentine. In Troy's, it was Fanny's misunderstanding of where they were to meet for the wedding.

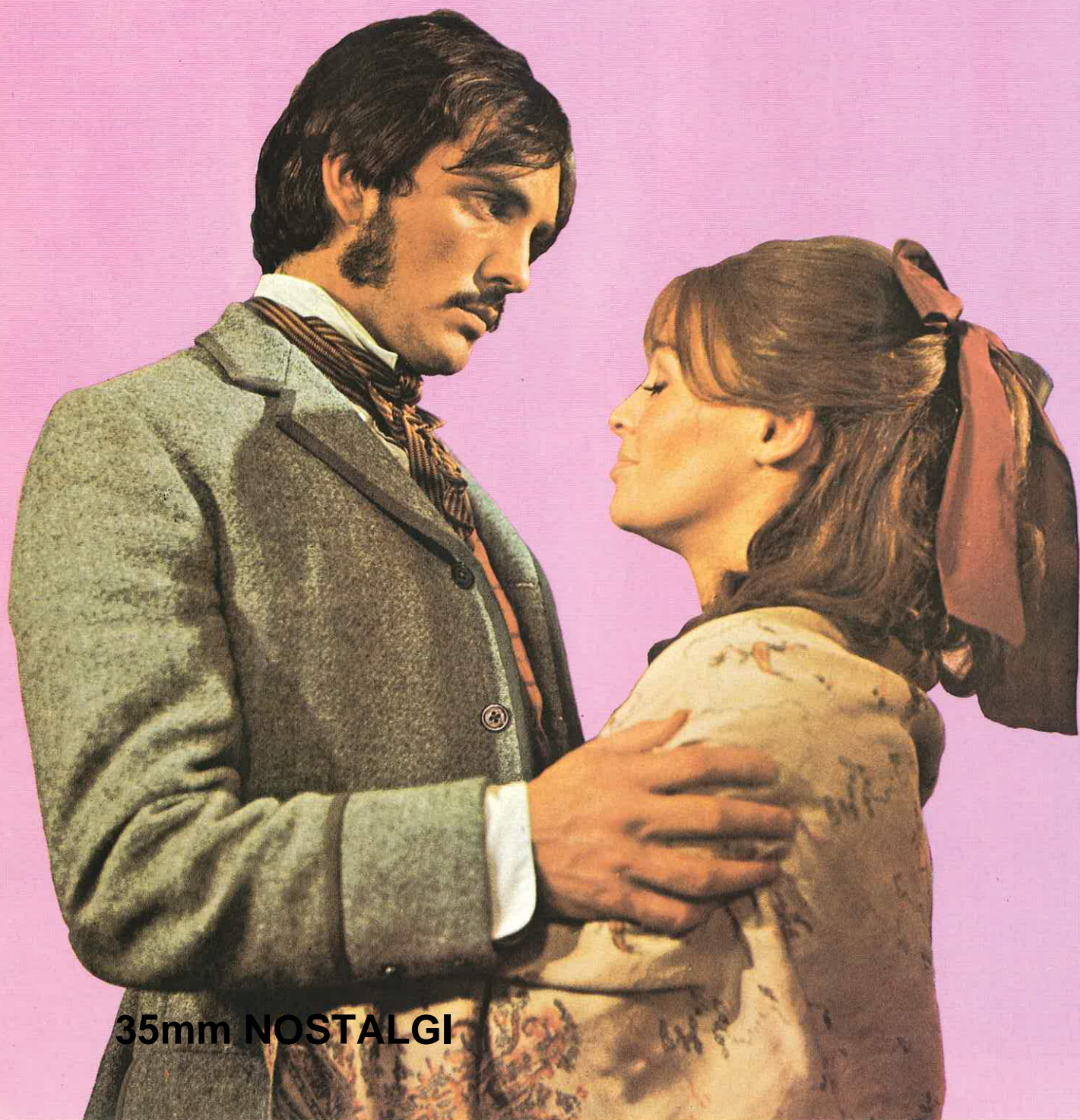
Neither as a novel nor now, as a film, is this a routine boy-meets-girl love story. Love, indeed, shapes the plot, but here it works with a destructive fury that leaves tragedy in its wake. This story is a vivid confirmation of Hardy's belief that some force of which we know nothing is using us for some end which we cannot understand.



"Ever since the saber became a national weapon it has not been more artfully shown than by the deft hand of Sergeant Troy. Never has he been in such splendid form for such a performance as now in the evening sunshine alone with Bathsheba. These circling gleams were accompanied by a keen rush... almost a whistling... springing from all sides of her... She was enclosed in a firmament of light... of sharp hisses, resembling a sky-full of meteors... she felt like one who has sinned... a great sin."



A willful, passionate girl and...



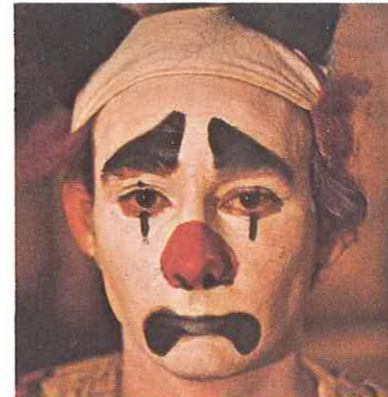
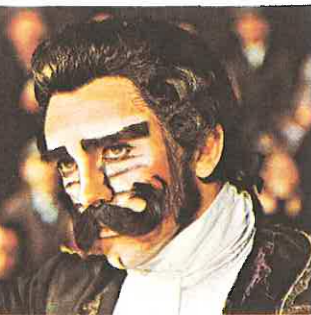
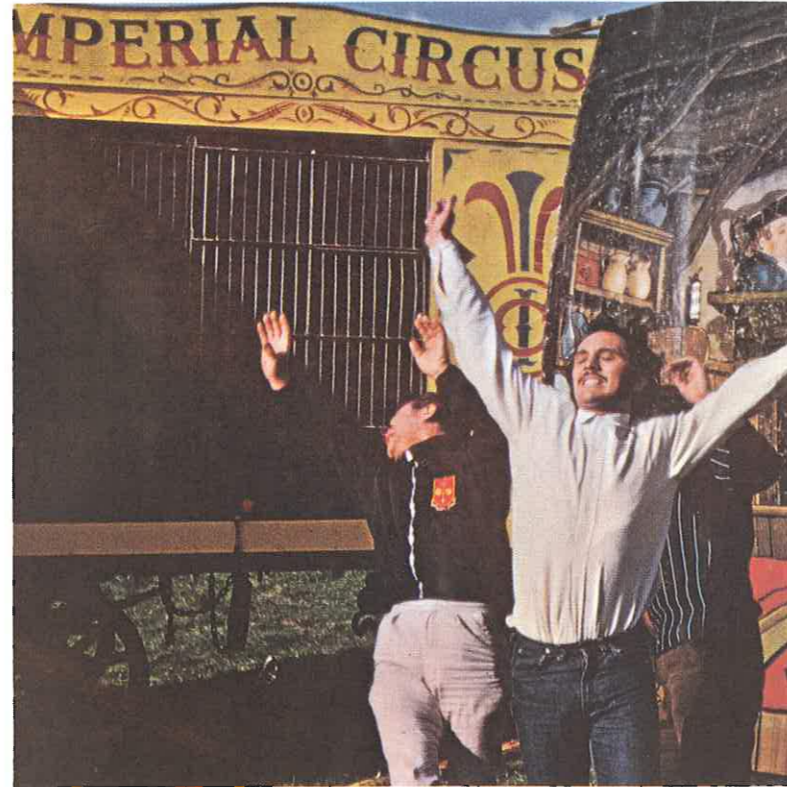
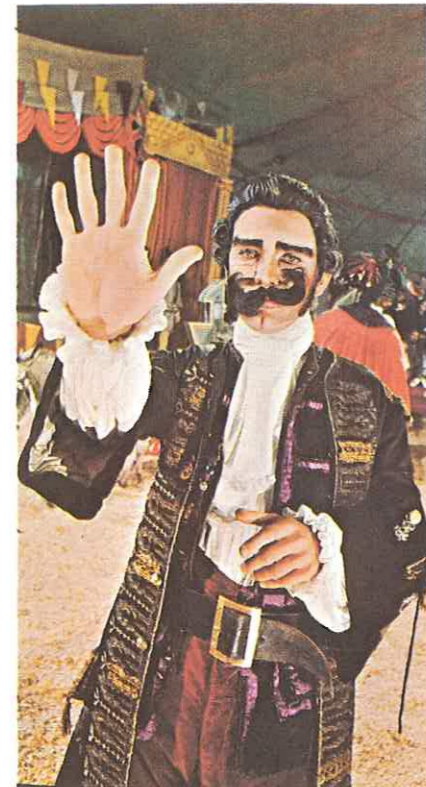
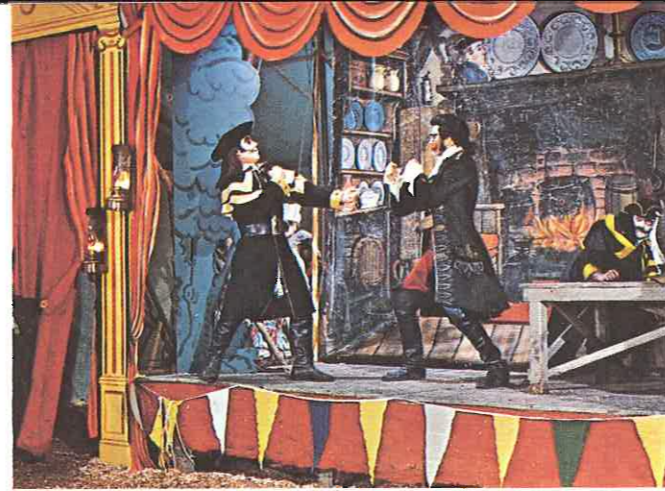
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three men who desire her 35mm NOSTALGI



“Such a circus....twill be something to tell of at Warren’s Malt-house in future years and to hand down to our children.”



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After searching for each other at the resort of Budmouth... Sergeant Troy and Bathsheba are finally reconciled through marriage.



"When shall we be married Frank?"



*"It was best
to know ... and
I know it now."*

*Bathsheba is caught by Troy in
the act of opening the casket
of Fanny and her
still-born child.*

*"I'll kill you...
and save
Bathsheba."*





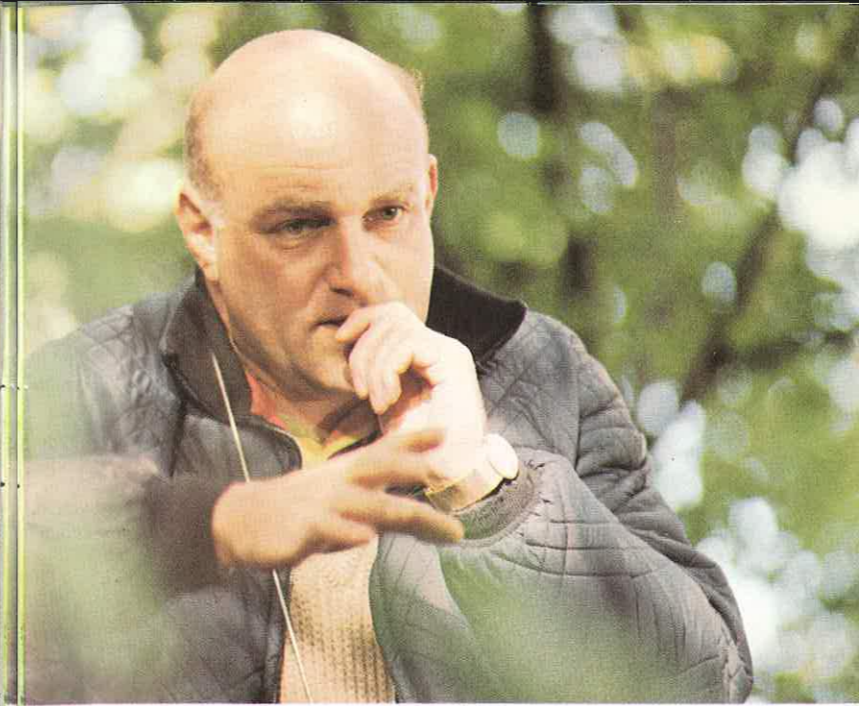
*And a musket screams
across the heads of
the horrified guests ...
the culmination of a tragedy which Bathsheba's
capriciousness has brought ... the death of
Sergeant Troy ... the imprisonment of farmer
Boldwood ... ruination for two
who love her.*

*Sergeant Troy
dies as he lived ...
in a festive atmosphere ...
an uninvited guest to the ball ...
loyal to none.*



*Nicolas Roeg
Director of
Photography and Director Schlesinger
work out the intricacies of filming
a complicated scene in the
mountainous countryside near
the English Channel.*

*Producer
Joseph Janni
and Director John Schlesinger discuss a scene in
lovely Dorset. These collaborators have
given film-goers similar pleasure
in BILLY LIAR and DARLING.*



*Screen writer Frederic Raphael,
who adapted Thomas Hardy's
dramatic story for the screen, discusses
a story point with the director. Raphael also wrote
the Academy Award
winning DARLING
for Miss Christie.*



*The talent
behind the
camera*

- PRODUCER *Joseph Janni*
- DIRECTOR *John Schlesinger*
- SCREENPLAY BY *Frederic Raphael*
- ASSOCIATE PRODUCER *Edward Joseph*
- DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY *Nick Roeg*
- PRODUCTION DESIGNER *Richard MacDonald*
- ART DIRECTOR *Roy Smith*
- COSTUME DESIGNER *Alan Barrett*
- SET DIRECTOR *Peter James*
- EDITOR *Malcolm Cooke*
- CONTINUITY *Ann Skinner*
- CAMERA OPERATOR *John Harris*
- PRODUCTION MANAGER *Frank Ernst*
- SOUND RECORDISTS *Robin Gregory*
John Aldred
- SOUND EDITORS *Gordon Daniels*
Alfred Cox
- MAKEUP ARTISTS *Bob Lawrance*
Philip Leakey
- HAIRDRESSER *Ivy Emmerton*
- CASTING DIRECTOR *Miriam Brickman*

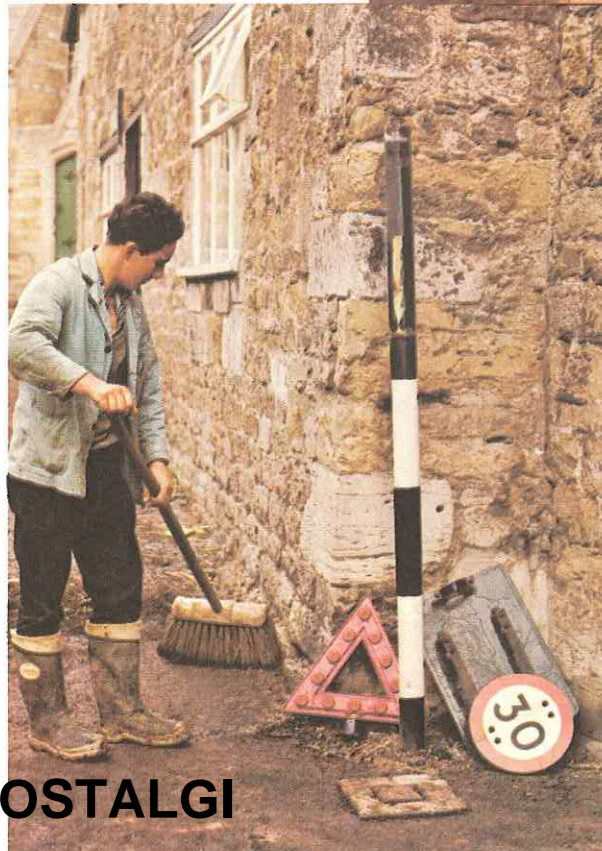
*The talent
in front of
the camera*

BATHSHEBA EVERDENE	<i>Julie Christie</i>
SERGEANT TROY	<i>Terence Stamp</i>
WILLIAM BOLDWOOD	<i>Peter Finch</i>
GABRIEL OAK	<i>Alan Bates</i>
FANNY	<i>Prunella Ransome</i>
LIDDY	<i>Fiona Walker</i>
HENERY FRAY	<i>Paul Dawkins</i>
ANDREW RANDLE	<i>Andrew Robertson</i>
JOSEPH POORGRASS	<i>John Barratt</i>
JAN COGGAN	<i>Julian Somers</i>
MRS. TALL	<i>Pauline Melville</i>
MARK CLARK	<i>Vincent Harding</i>
LABAN TALL	<i>Laurence Carter</i>
MARYANN MONEY	<i>Margaret Lacey</i>
TEMPERANCE	<i>Harriett Harper</i>
SOBERNESS	<i>Denise Coffey</i>
MATTHEW MOON	<i>Brian Rawlinson</i>
CAINY BALL	<i>Freddie Jones</i>
MRS. COGGAN	<i>Marie Hopps</i>
MRS. HURST	<i>Alison Leggatt</i>
OLD SMALLBURY	<i>Owen Berry</i>
JACOB SMALLBURY	<i>Walter Gale</i>
BILLY SMALLBURY	<i>Victor Stone</i>
TEDDY COGGAN	<i>Peter Stone</i>
SWORDMASTER	<i>Derek Ware</i>
FOLK SONG ARRANGER	<i>Isla Cameron</i>
REDDLEMAN	<i>John Brackley</i>
FAT LADY CLOWN	<i>Peggyann Clifford</i>
SAILOR	<i>John Donegal</i>
BOLDWOOD'S LABORERS	<i>Leslie Anderson Keith Hooper</i>
CIRCUS MANAGER	<i>Noel Henkel</i>
CIRCUS BARKER	<i>Bryan Mosley</i>
FIDDLER	<i>David Swarbrick</i>
HORSEMASTER	<i>Max Faulkner</i>
GENTLEMAN AT PARTY	<i>Julius Alba</i>



Off with the new—
on with the old!
TV antennas, street signs
and automobiles are stored
for the duration of the film's shooting.

Everywhere is the
sweet greenery of the
Dorset countryside.



A big hug for
Thomas Hardy
from Julie Christie in appreciation
of the role he created for her
103 years ago.

Even coffee breaks
are not sacred for
here the director confers with
Prunella Ransome
on playing
Fanny Robin
the forlorn.



Director
Schlesinger
in costume joins extras in the
final wedding scenes.
First he viewed the scene
from a helicopter, then mingled
with the cast to tighten
his direction.

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